

olibanum, myrrh, and *ambergris*; and among animals elephants, camels, rhinoceroses, spotted animals like asses, etc.*

It is, however, true that there are traces of a considerable amount of ancient Arab colonisation on the shores of Madagascar. Arab descent is ascribed to a class of the people of the province of Matitánana on the east coast, in lat. 21°-23° south, and the Arabic writing is in use there. The people of the St. Mary's Isle of our maps off the east coast, in lat. 17°, also call themselves the children of Ibrahim, and the island *Nusi-Ibrahim*. And on the north-west coast, at Babeluka Bay, Captain Owen found a large Arab population, whose forefathers had been settled there from time immemorial. The number of tombs here and in Magambo Bay showed that the Arab population had once been much greater. The government of this settlement, till conquered by Radama, was vested in three persons: one a Malagash, the second an Arab, the third as guardian of strangers; a fact also suggestive of Polo's four sheikhs (*Ellis*, I. 131; *Owen*, II. 102, 132. See also *Sonnerat*, II. 56.) Though the Arabs were in the habit of navigating to Sofala, in about lat. 20° south, in the time of Mas'udi (beginning of 10th century), and must have then known Madagascar, there is no intelligible indication of it in any of their geographies that have been translated.†

[M. Alfred Grandidier, in his *Hist. de la Géog. de Madagascar*, p. 31, comes to the conclusion that Marco Polo has given a very exact description of Magadoxo, but that he did not know the island of Madagascar. He adds in a note that Yule has shown that the description of Madeigascar refers partly to Magadoxo, but that notwithstanding he (Yule) believed that Polo spoke of Madagascar when the Venetian traveller does not. I must say that I do not see any reason why Yule's theory should not be accepted.

M. G. Ferrand, formerly French Agent at Fort Dauphin, has devoted ch. ix. (pp. 83-90) of the second part of his valuable work *Les Musulmans à Madagascar* (Paris, 1893), to the "Etymology of Madagascar." He believes that M. Polo really means the great African Island. I mention from his book that M. Guët (*Origines de l'île Bourbon*, 1888) brings the Carthaginians to Madagascar, and derives the name of this island from *Madax-Aschtoret* or *Madax-Astarté*, which signifies *Isle of Astarté* and *Isle of Tanit!* Mr. I. Taylor (*The origin of the name 'Madagascar,'* in *Antananarivo Annual*, 1891) gives also some fancy etymologies; it is needless to mention them. M. Ferrand himself thinks that very likely Madagascar simply means *Country of the Malagash* (Malgaches), and is only a bad transcription of the Arabic *Madagasbar*. —H. C.]

NOTE 2.—There is, or used to be, a trade in sandal-wood from Madagascar. (See *Owen*, II. 99.) In the map of S. Lorenzo (or Madagascar) in the *Isole* of Porcacchi (1576), a map evidently founded on fact, I observe near the middle of the Island: *quivi sono boschi di sandari rossi*.

NOTE 3.—"The coast of this province" (Ivongo, the N.E. of the Island) "abounds with whales, and during a certain period of the year Antongil Bay is a favourite resort for whalers of all nations. The inhabitants of Titingue are remarkably expert in spearing the whales from their slight canoes." (*Lloyd* in *J. R. G. S.* XX. 56.) A description of the whale-catching process practised by the Islanders of St. Mary's, or Nusi Ibrahim, is given in the *Quinta Pars Indiae Orientalis* of *De Bry*, p. 9. Owen gives a similar account (I. 170).

The word which I have rendered *Oil-heads* is *Capdoilles* or *Capdols*, representing *Capidoglio*, the appropriate name still applied in Italy to the Spermaceti whale. The *Vocab. Ital. Univ.* quotes Ariosto (VII. 36):—

—"*I Capidogli co' vecchi marini
Vengon turbati dal lor pigro sonno.*"

* Bretschneider, *On the knowledge possessed by the Ancient Chinese of the Arabs*, etc. London, 1871, p. 21.

† Mas'udi speaks of an island *Kanbālu*, well cultivated and populous, one or two days from the Zinj coast, and the object of voyages from Oman, from which it was about 500 parasangs distant. It was conquered by the Arabs, who captured the whole Zinj population of the island, about the beginning of the Abasside Dynasty (circa A.D. 750). Barbier de Meynard thinks this may be Madagascar. I suspect it rather to be *Pemba*. (See *Prairies d'Or*, I. 205, 232, and III. 31.)