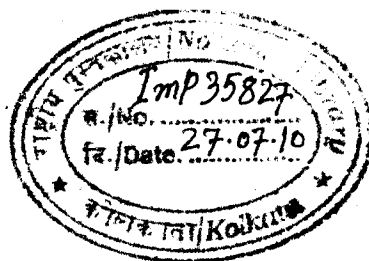


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THE
HISTORY OF MAURITIUS,
OR THE
ISLE OF FRANCE,
AND
THE NEIGHBOURING ISLANDS;
FROM
THEIR FIRST DISCOVERY TO THE PRESENT TIME;
COMPOSED PRINCIPALLY FROM THE PAPERS AND MEMOIRS OF
BARON GRANT,
WHO RESIDED TWENTY YEARS IN THE ISLAND,
BY HIS SON, CHARLES GRANT, VISCOUNT DE VAUX.
ILLUSTRATED WITH MAPS FROM THE BEST AUTHORITIES.

Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem.
Non quia vexari quemquam est jucunda voluptas;
Sed, quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est. LUCRETIVS.

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1801.



TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY DUNDAS,

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE,

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS

HISTORY OF MAURITIUS,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY

HIS MOST OBEDIENT,

HUMBLE SERVANT,

CHARLES GRANT,

VISCOUNT DE VAUX.

Feb. 2, 1801.

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P R E F A C E.

I PRESENT an History of the Island which gave me birth, to the Country that affords me protection. I shall only mention the Revolution in France, in order to observe, that the class of its people to which I belong, has had a full share of its miseries. I foresaw them all; and, being invited hither by the elder branch of my family in Scotland, I chose for my abode, the country which possessed a constitution, that I had openly proposed, while such propositions could be made, in my own.

I have endeavoured to alleviate my misfortunes, by literary pursuits; and having long formed the design of composing an History of the Isles of France and Bourbon, from the original materials which I inherited from my father, who had resided in the former of them during a period of twenty years, I have at length accomplished my purpose.

It may be said by some, that it is an indiscretion in me, to unfold the circumstances of these colonies, which have been, and, in some respects, still are, subject to the French Government; but it is not necessary, that this objection should be made to me, for I had long since made it to myself; and such a reflection had already delayed the publication of my work. I had flattered myself with the hope, that a general peace, founded on the enlarged principles of public justice, would place every one in his former situation: but being at length persuaded, that a termination of the present calamities is distant, or at least uncertain, I no longer delayed my work, which, being purely historical, may be considered as belonging to all governments, and every age.

In writing the history of a place, which is not without political interests, I had in view principally the advantages of my countrymen, the inhabitants of these colonies. I am well acquainted with the critical situation which they have for some years experienced: agitated by various civil commotions, they could scarcely be said to acknowledge any government; while the decree which abolished slavery, not only kept them in continual alarm for their property, but even for their personal safety; so that they were compelled to fortify their harbours, and prepare for resisting their mother country. Nay, dreading the execution of that decree, they had several times been on the point of applying to the protection of a foreign power. By their courage, prudence, and energy, they not only prevented the fatal effects which would have resulted from the fulfilment of that decree, and repelled the force which had been sent, in the time of Robespierre, to subject them to it, but had also delivered themselves from the armed and seditious banditti, who had threatened, more than once, to drench the island with blood. Under these impressions, I felt an additional motive to accelerate the publication of this work, from the hope I entertain, that the inhabitants of these colonies will thereby be no sooner known, than they will be found to deserve friends, as they have proved themselves superior to the attempts of their enemies.

I shall now proceed to lay before my readers, the plan of my work, and the arrangements which circumstances have obliged me to adopt in the order of it.

The description of the Isle of France is collected from my father's correspondence; the accounts given or communicated to me by my friends, as well as authentic papers which I have been permitted to examine, and the printed works of distinguished writers. I experience a sensible pleasure in unfolding the observations and important operations of those eminent persons who have acted their parts on the seas,

and in the country whose history has employed my pen; though I cannot but lament, that from the nature of it, I am so limited in my accounts of them.

I have given to my narrative all the regularity which the nature of my materials would allow; and I follow the chronological order of events, without wandering from the geographical path. The subject possesses importance, as well as novelty; but I trust, that higher emotions than those of curiosity, will be gratified by it.

An author must ever feel some disadvantage from being a stranger in the country where he writes; but, from the peculiar circumstances in which I am involved, I am disposed to hope for that indulgence, of which I stand in great need.

The different quotations will be found to produce occasional repetitions; but I am convinced, that a real advantage will result from it, by the accession of authorities which are produced by it. The history of islands so little known as those of France and Bourbon, may be considered, in a great measure, as places of new discovery; to obtain a knowledge of which, it is necessary to examine the accounts of every navigator who has successively visited them. Besides, each author whom I have cited, gives some specific information of his own, that has not been communicated by others.

As authenticity is the character which I wish, above all others, to attach to my work, I have preferred to let the authors whom I have quoted, speak literally for themselves; so that I ought, perhaps, as it was my first intention, to have given to this volume, the title of *Memoirs for an History of the Isle of France, &c.* But it has been suggested by my friends, that the whole contains a sufficient degree of connection and interest to receive the title of an History, and I have submitted, as became me, to their suggestion.

If the historians of all ages had given nothing more than simple

facts, supported by authentic documents, it would have been better for the world; the most important of all sciences, that of knowing the history of men and nations which have preceded us, would not then have been enveloped in obscurity and contradiction; but the desire to shine as brilliant writers, a passion for the marvellous, a rage for systems, or prejudice in political and religious opinions, and other similar motives, have frequently rendered it impossible, in many works of great character, to separate truth from falsehood.

The general plan of this volume, which is more detailed in the table of contents, is as follows.

It begins by instructing the voyager in the mode of approaching the harbours of the Isle of France, which is accompanied with a general description of the place, the nature of the air, water, and soil, and the geographical positions. But before I enter upon a detail of these circumstances, and the branches of Natural History, which arise out of them, I give a succinct and chronological account of those persons who have been appointed to the government and superintendence of the Island, from its first colonial establishment, to the present moment.—I then proceed to give a particular history of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; some account of the inhabitants, both white and black, succeeds, with their manners and customs; and is followed by a description of the beautiful scenery with which the Island is adorned.

I naturally introduce the reader, in the first place, to the Isle of France, which is the appropriate object of my History; but I suspend its historical narrative, in order to describe the Archipelago, with its various islands, that surrounds it: such as those of Bourbon, Rodriguez, &c. all of which is so necessary to be known, to facilitate the navigation of those seas. I then return to the Isle of France, to describe its agricultural, maritime, and civil, establishments, as formed by M. de la Bourdonnais. I display all the various operations of that distinguished character, and his successors; with the astronomical, geographical, and

maritime observations of the learned professors and eminent navigators, whom my father successively knew during their official visits to the Island.—I then proceed to state and explain the connection of India with the Isle of France, in all its different epochs; which conducts me through a long succession of curious and interesting events, to the death of Tippoo Saib, which rendered England the mistress of Indostan.

Such is the nature of my work: nor shall I endeavour to deprecate criticism, by stating the difficulties with which I have struggled, in bringing this volume into the form which it now bears.—It would indeed, have been less liable to the censure of the critic, if I had written under more auspicious circumstances; and it would have been more deserving the attention of the politician and the philosopher, if I could have had recourse to the books and authentic papers, which are to be found in the libraries and public offices of Paris; but still, I am rather sanguine in the hope of its being generally acknowledged, that I have enlarged the acquaintance of Great Britain, and of the public in general, with a very important part of the Eastern world.

I add the following letter of my father, in order to authenticate his original design of collecting those materials, which form a very considerable part of this History.

*First Letter of the late Baron Grant to his Father, on his arrival in the
Isle of France.*

Isle of France, October 15, 1740.

"After four months and an half of a pretty successful voyage, I am at last arrived at the place of my destination. I avail myself of the first ships that sail for France to send you some news of me.

"I have here met with every thing equal to my most sanguine hopes. My uncle, who is in perfect health, received me in the tenderest manner, and shows me all possible kindness. We often speak of you, and you are never out of my thoughts, which, I flatter myself, you will most readily believe. I am never oppressed with sadness but when I think of the distance which divides us, the length of time which this separation may endure, and of the impossibility of receiving intelligence of you as often as I could wish."

"You will see, by my journal, that I had, altogether, an agreeable voyage."

"The description of the Island will follow my journal of the maritime observations of the voyage,* because the first objects which naturally present themselves on our arrival in a country, are those which belong to local situation.

"I shall afterwards begin its history, the events of which I shall place in chronological order, from the epoch of its discovery; and I shall renew my narrative on the arrival of Mr. de la Bourdonnais, of my friend Count de Rostaing, and myself, at the island: in short of all those who have contributed to its settlement, as well as of the Isle of Bourbon.

"In the mean while, until I am better informed, I can assure you

* The journal and maritime observations are not printed in the present work, but may hereafter appear.

that I am in a country, in every respect, delightful. I already perceive that no one is tormented here by law-suits, as in Normandy and elsewhere, and that whatever is possessed may be enjoyed in tranquillity.

"The climate is charming, and the society is very agreeable: but you must first be acquainted with all that formerly related to this little terrestrial Paradise, before you read what is actually passing in it, or what I may hereafter experience in common with the other inhabitants of it.

(Signed,)

"GRANT."

HISTORY OF MAURITIUS.

CHAPTER I.

Observations on the Harbours of this Island.—Exact Dimensions of it, according to the Geometrical Operations of Monsieur D'Apres, in 1751, and those of the Abbé de la Caille, in 1753.—Directions for making the Island, and sailing into its Harbours, according to the Account of John Black, an English Captain, and other Manuscript Journals of Mr. Dalrymple and Mr. Parry, &c.—Particulars of the Forts of the Isle of Tonneliers, Fort Blanc, &c. which defend the Entrance of Port Louis, and the Town.—State of the Air throughout the Year.—Geographical Positions of the principal Points of the Island, and the Height of the Mountains.—Account of the several Settlements in it by the Portuguese, Dutch, and French.—The Governors, from the taking Possession of the Island by France in 1715 and 1721, down to the present Time.

THERE are two harbours in this island. That to the south-east is called the Grand Port, or Great Harbour; and there the Dutch first established themselves; some vestiges of whose buildings are still visible. It is entered with great ease, with the wind right aft; but it is very difficult to get out by the same passage, as the winds are almost always in the south-east: there is, however, another entrance by which vessels might clear out with a leading wind, if a certain point of this passage, where there are not more than three fathom water, were cleansed and deepened; an operation which is very practicable, and would communicate a free enjoyment of all its other advantages.

The lesser harbour, called Port Louis, is situated to the north-west, and it may be entered or quitted with a leading wind. It is situated 20 deg. 10 min. south lat. and 55 long. east of Paris. The larger harbour presents itself on arriving from the Cape of Good Hope, or from Europe; whereas, to get to Port Louis, which is on the other side of the island, the circuit to be made is very considerable, as the current and the winds coming from the east, vessels find it absolutely necessary to bear away at least an hundred leagues, as high as the island of Rodriguez. A more particular description of these harbours will be given hereafter.*

The principal town, or, as it is sometimes called, the Camp, because the Dutch, at first, formed a camp there, is situated at the extremity of Port Louis, and at the opening of a valley which is about three quarters of a league in length, and eight hundred yards in breadth, and is surrounded by mountains, which nature has covered with verdure; but as the grass, in the dry seasons, is oftentimes set on fire by the Maroon negroes, this part of the mountains assumes an arid appearance, which has deceived some navigators into a belief that this island was unproductive and desolate. The circle of mountains which form the valley of Port Louis is broken into various parts: that which rises to the highest degree of elevation, is terminated by an insulated rock, called *Le Pouce*. This part is also covered with wood, and contains the source of a rivulet which runs through the town.

As to the town, or camp, it is composed of wooden houses, which have only a ground floor, on account of the winds and the heat. They are separated from each other, and surrounded with palisadoes. The streets are tolerably straight, and it were to be wished, that rows of trees were planted to render them cool. The soil about it is slightly sprinkled with rocks. The town has no regular fortification, but to the left of it in looking towards the sea, there is an intrenchment of dry stone, extending from the mountain to the harbour. On the same side is Fort Blanc, which defends the entrance; and opposite to it, on the other side, is a battery on the island of Tonneliers.

According to the measurement of the Abbé de la Caille, Mauritius, or the Isle of France, is ninety thousand, six hundred, and sixty-eight toises in circumference;

* Port Louis, according to the observations of Mr. D'Apres de Mannevillette, in 1751, is situated 20 deg. 9 min. 40 sec. south lat. and 55 deg. 7 min. 30 sec. longitude east of Paris. Cape Malheureux, which is the northernmost part of the island, is 19 deg. 58 min. latitude, and the southernmost part is 20 deg. 31 min. These observations agree with those of the Abbé de la Caille.

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its largest diameter is thirty-one thousand, eight hundred, and ninety toises from north to south; and twenty-two thousand, one hundred and twenty-four from east to west. Its surface contains four hundred and thirty-two thousand, six hundred and eighty acres, at the rate of one hundred rods to each acre, and twenty-four feet to each rod. Thus, according to these calculations, the island is not more than thirty-one leagues in circumference, about eleven in length, and seven in breadth. The north-west part is level, and the north-east part entirely covered with mountains, from nine hundred to a thousand and fifty yards in height. The highest and most remarkable of them is at the mouth of the Black river, and is called Peterbottle. It terminates in the form of an obelisk, crowned with a large square piece of rock, which no one has ever ventured to ascend. At a distance, this natural pyramid and its capital, resembles the statue of a woman.

The island is watered with upwards of sixty rivulets, some of which are destitute of water in the dry season; more particularly since so much wood has been cut down. The interior parts of the island are full of ponds, and are frequently refreshed with rain, the clouds being continually broken by the summits of the mountains, and the woods which cover them: this circumstance is extremely beneficial to the island, and is the cause of its healthiness and fertility.

A particular acquaintance with the harbours is essential to the knowledge of any maritime country. We shall, therefore, offer the instructions for entering Port Louis, which have been partly communicated by Mr. Dalrymple, who, in every thing which relates to the navigation and circumstances of the Indian seas, is superior to any other man.

"Proceeding from the east, the first land you make is a small island, west by south, provided you come by the latitude of 20 deg. 5 min. 5 sec. Soon afterwards, you will see the north-east part of the principal island; then, keeping the same side, bear away boldly to the west, till you have the Isle Longue about three miles to the north-east, when the point you are to make, will be about a mile to the south: leave the latter at a convenient distance to the east; when, after having passed the two first points, direct your course to the body of the island, keeping, however, to the south-west of it, if you have a land breeze, but if the wind blows from the sea, keep more to the west, on account of the waves, which commonly bear towards the land. Then, leaving Fort Blanc to the right, steer into the port towards the south, or rather to the south-east, when you will be off the first buoy, which will be to the left of

the entrance. Thus advanced, and when the point of the north-west of the Island of Tonneliers is to the south-east, you will be abreast the second buoy. From thence keep to the south-south-east, till the fort on the point to your right appears to the south-south-west; then proceed south-east by south, till the same fort is seen west by south, and the north-west point of the Isle of Tonneliers due east, and you will then be at the entrance of the harbour. You must then take care to slacken sail, having but a small space to run, and you will cast anchor in a good bottom of black mud, with small sea-weed and young coral, in four fathom water.

"The rest of the course for the entrance of the port is as follows: The fort on the point to the right must bear north-west by west half-west, Fort Bullocks, south-west by west; the first windmill to the right on entering, south-south-west; the second windmill on the little island, south by east; Fort Saint Barbe, south-east by south; the head of Peterbotte, south-east half south; the north-east angle of the wall of the magazines south-east half east; the south-east point of the Isle of Tonneliers north half east; the redoubt of La Bourdonnois north-west, and the westernmost point of the Isle of Tonneliers, north-north-west.

"The bottom of the harbour, though it has no great depth, is very level.

"During the time when we were moored in the harbour, which was from the 15th June, 1752, old stile, to the 20th of October following, we experienced frequent sea breezes for the space of five or six hours; and I have observed that the wind would remain sometimes in the east or north-west, for two or three days together without changing; and at other times there would be a sea breeze in the course of a fortnight. In such a circumstance, you may wait for a favourable wind to enter, by casting anchor in the Bay des Tortues,* in thirty or thirty-five fathom water, where, as soon as the point to be made, shall be to the north-east — Browns-bay, $1\frac{1}{2}$ south-south-east, and the northern extremity of the Isle of Tonneliers, at about four miles, south-south-west: the westernmost land in view, south-west by west, you will be ready, on the first favourable breeze, to enter; and, while you, moreover, observe the directions already given, take care to make soundings

* The author of these observations is mistaken respecting the Bay des Tortues; he must mean the Bay du Tombeau, which is near it, and is situated between it and Port Louis. The anchorage is very good in the Bay du Tombeau, being from four to twelve fathom water. The Bay des Tortues has not sufficient depth or breadth. (*Note of the author.*)

on both sides the vessel, the channel being very narrow at the entrance of the harbour."

On a chart of the harbour on the north-west, and the forts of the island of Mauritius, taken at 20 deg. 10 min. latitude, and 54 deg. 55 min. east longitude, from the meridian of London, the following directions for entering this harbour, were written by an English navigator.

"A fleet, arriving at the island of Mauritius, from Europe, must bear away at first, towards the south-east part, and then double it, so as have the east side well open: then proceed west by north, till you enter the track pursued by the Shrewsbury, a ship belonging to the East India Company, keeping at the distance of about two miles from shore. The Shrewsbury cast anchor in the road, in about eight fathom water; the flag-staff of the town, being south-east by south, and the extremities of the land from south-west by west to the north-east, at the distance of about three miles from the flag-staff. I found by several observations taken in the road, that the variation of the needle is from 15 deg. 17 min. west. The island is situated in the latitude of the south-east trade winds: it is refreshed with frequent sea-breezes, which seldom fail blowing at the new and full moon from south to south-west for three or four days. If at this time a fleet should find itself near the island, it might, I think, safely run down the west side, keeping at a proper distance, as far as the entrance of the road, and without being incommoded with any battery; whereas, by entering on the east side, it would be obliged to pass before a chain of batteries. The pilot informed me, that a chain or boom had been lately fixed, to reach from the Isle des Tonneliers to the point of Fort Royal. On doubling the side of the road, I saw several poles in the water, with white flags arranged or planted on the edge of the shore; but fearing some deception, I ventured to examine them during the night; but when I approached one of the flags, I found that it was fixed to a buoy, and the rope to which this buoy was tied, kept it floating two feet under the surface of the water, so that the flag seemed fixed in the sand at the bottom. On sounding I found eight fathom water."

The following observations were written on a chart of the island of Mauritius, and signed J. B. supposed to be Captain John Blake.

"The body of the island is situated 20 deg. 10 min. south, 20 deg. 20 min. It is about sixty miles in length, and forty-five broad; * is inhabited by the French, and

* According to another copy of the same chart, the Abbé de la Caille determines the length of

is their general rendezvous for refreshment for their ships, in going to, or coming from India. It is likewise appointed, from its convenient situation, to receive ships of war and privateers, for the purposes of refreshment, or refitment, &c. as well as in time of war, to intercept or disturb the commerce of other nations to the East Indies. The town and the port in the north-west part of the island, form a magazine for all kinds of maritime stores and provisions, so that it may be considered of the same importance to the French in the East Indies, as Port Mahon is to the English in the Mediterranean; and it may hereafter become a dangerous place for the commerce of other nations engaged in the commerce of the East. It is a fine country, ornamented with trees of all sizes. The western parts, from Port Louis to the savannah, the country is mountainous and rocky, and is inhabited by goats and wild boars in great numbers. From Port Louis, stretching towards the east to the savannah, the country is very beautiful. In the environs of Flac, the country is level and without stones, watered by a great number of small streams.

"Port Louis is situated in about 19 deg. 50 min. south latitude, and is very discoverable from the mountain Peterbotte, towards which you must direct your course south-east by south, and enter the harbour by the Point Relief, bearing towards Peterbotte, and the small point below it. It is not necessary to take soundings till you enter the channel, where you will find from forty, thirty, twenty, to nine fathoms water; when you may advance till it is necessary to be towed; and which cannot be avoided, as the winds generally blow from the land, and the channel is too narrow to admit of tacking. When you have once entered the upper part of the harbour, you are secure from the wind and bad weather, and in about four, or four fathom and a half water. You moor with the best bower anchor to east-north-east; and small bower to the west-south-west, so as to ride between both to the south, south-east, which blow fresh in flurries. You also lay your stream anchor to the north-west, astern, to prevent your ship tending to the sea-breeze, as the harbour is narrow." J. B.

To the foregoing curious and instructive information, we shall add the following remarks.

The length of the channel, on entering Port Louis, from the first small white the island, from 20 deg. to 20 deg. 28 min. south; so that the middle would be in 20 deg. 14 min. south. From the observations of the Abbé de la Caille, the island is not of so great an extent as is here represented.

flags, which have been placed there to mark out the passage, to the extremity of the harbour, is about a mile and three quarters. In the first part of the channel there is about eighty feet water; at one-third the length of it, between Fort Blanc, and the forts of the Isle of Tonneliers, there is forty-eight feet water; and in the remaining third of the channel, within the Isle des Tonneliers, near the bulk for careening vessels, there is sixteen, eighteen, and twenty feet water; and in the harbour, without the mole, before the powder magazine, there is from eight to fourteen feet water.

On the left side of the port, on entering, there is a natural bason called *Le Trou Fanfaron*. This bason, which is three hundred fathom in length, and sixty wide, is not more than eight or ten feet deep, on account of the earth or land which had been carried into it by the water, and on account of the coral banks which have grown there; but, as we shall state hereafter, according to the observations of M. de Tromelin, M. de Rochon, and others, this bason might be cleared out, and put into a condition to receive a considerable number of vessels, and to afford them the most perfect security, even against the effects of hurricanes.

We shall not enter at present into any further details respecting this harbour. The chart of the island, which forms an important part of this volume, and an account of the different points which will be given hereafter, will afford all the illustrations necessary to this branch of the general subject.

The tides are not very perceptible at this island. Those of the equinox rise three feet; the common tides rise at most but two feet two inches. It is always high water about noon, at the new and full moon. The winds also have a considerable influence on the tides; which are elevated by those of the west and north-west.

The following letter of Captain John Blake, of the ship *Halifax*, dated off Mauritius, the 19th July, 1753, respecting Port Louis, and the manner of entering it, forms a natural sequel to those which have preceded.

"It is a very convenient port, in which vessels may refresh and repair at a very small expence, and with the greatest expedition; this place being a magazine of all kinds of materials and provisions which a ship may stand in need of. Good beef costs but two-pence a pound, fish a halfpenny, and venison at the same price. Turtles are in great abundance, and are brought from Rodrigue Island, where, on that account, there is always a detachment of eight men. I mention this circum-

stance, lest any of our vessels, passing near this island, and perceiving a building and smoke, may imagine that they are persons cast away, and lose their time, as I did, in the endeavour to get them off the island. The vessels which come here (to Mauritius), endeavour to put in there; and although our charts place the rocks that surround it at five leagues distance, it does not exceed more than two miles.

"On the 24th June, steering west-north-west, I discovered the Island Mauritius, fourteen leagues distant, *baving 16 deg. 30 min. west variation*; I bore towards the north-east part of the island, until I had passed near the Round Isles, keeping two miles without the coast of the island, until I arrived at a mile's distance from the Coin de Mire. The French Captains told me, that the sides of this rock were so perpendicular, that a ship may approach near enough to admit almost of throwing a biscuit ashore. After I had passed this point, I bore away towards the land, south-west by south, and south-south-west, until I was near a ledge of rocks which run out before the long point, for about two miles from the shore, though they may be approached to at the distance of a mile without danger: I found no bottom with sixty fathom line, at the distance of two miles, after which there is no hazard. The town and the mountain of Peterbotte are then visible; the latter of which is very remarkable, and serves for the point of direction to enter the harbour.

"After having passed the ledge, which has just been mentioned, and keeping close to it, as the wind blows off shore, you may cast anchor in fifteen or twenty fathom water, though the bottom is not very good till you arrive near the port. I mention this circumstance, because if you sail during the night, the currents are so strong, particularly near the island, that they would carry the vessel to the leeward before it was day, and it would be absolutely necessary to bear away to the east, to regain the wind. There is no danger whatever between the ledge and the port: so that you do not get into less than twelve fathom water, you may sail by night as well as by day. Every vessel that arrives here, after having passed the ledge and drawn near the land, must hoist her flag and fire two guns. If in the night, the lantern must be lighted up, when a pilot comes on board, who brings vegetables with him, and steers the ship to the entrance of the port. The port captain then comes on board, with a boat, chains, &c. to assist the ship in entering the harbour, and to moor it there, which he sees properly done before he quits the vessel. As the channel is very narrow, and the wind is generally contrary, it is frequently necessary to tow vessels

into the harbour, which, by means of long chains, is no difficult operation; and, in the course of the day, the vessel is moored. We had the good fortune to enter straight before the wind; but such a circumstance does not often happen. I must also observe, that, on the summit of a very high mountain, there is a very good light-house, as a guide to vessels that arrive by night, and in the day-time it displays a flag.

"The French always approach Mauritius between the Hanging Rock, which is called le Coin de Mire, and l'isle Longue, passing very near the Hanging Rock to avoid a reef, which stretches out two miles before l'isle Ronde. There is a good channel here, in passing which there is no danger. The French come within sight of land, as we did; they then touch at the Isles, reach the Hanging Rock, pass the reef off Long Point, and follow the same track which has just been described. No one on board my ship had been in this island, and our charts were very defective, making no mention of the passage between the isles; and as I was totally unacquainted with the navigation, I did not think it prudent to run any hazard; but I consider it as the surest and the best passage; although there is some difficulty in passing by the isles, from not discovering the land. But if the Hanging Rock should not be perceived in time to get beyond the reef off Long Point before night, it would be better to bear away to the east until morning, as there is no danger to be feared but which is perceptible. The vessel I command is the first English ship that has visited this island, since it has been in possession of the French; and I was received with the greatest civility."

It is necessary to communicate the following circumstances of the Isle des Tonneliers, at the entrance of Port Louis.

1. The redoubt, called le Bourdonnois, is bomb-proof, and is defended by at least thirty pieces of heavy artillery.
2. It is covered by a battery, which juts on the shore of the island, with a postern and a trench to communicate with it.
3. There is another battery to the left of the redoubt, with a covered way of communication.
4. About three hundred yards to the right, there is another redoubt or battery.
5. About two hundred and fifty yards still further to the right of the last, is another battery.

6. A small battery at the east point of the Isle des Tonneliers, near a bridge, which communicates with another small and narrow island, at the extremity of which there is also a small redoubt.

7. There are two swamps behind the redoubt.

8. There are two reefs of rocks before the Isle of Tonneliers, towards the north, and facing the redoubt. They are extended to a sand-bank, which stretches out about two-thirds of a mile to the north, when there is about six fathom water, which diminishes on approaching the island.

9. But this bank does not extend itself, in the same manner, on the side of the island which borders on the channel at the entrance of the port, as it contains twenty-five fathom water; so that the largest vessels may pass through it.

10. It is but lately that a kind of causey has been erected to connect the Isle of Tonneliers with Mauritius.

11. There are several windmills round the harbour and the town.

12. In the midst of the channel, or of the port, between the Isle of Tonneliers and the town, a pontoon is fixed with anchors, in three fathom water, for careening vessels.

Fort Royal, or Fort Blanc, on the point opposite the Isle of Tonneliers, contains thirty-five pieces of large cannon. The fire of this fort crosses that of the Isle of Tonneliers, in order to defend the entrance of the port. The breadth of the channel between the fort and the latter island does not exceed five hundred yards.

Fort Blanc is situated on a kind of island that stretches along the coast, with which it is connected by a bridge or causey, communicating with the narrowest part of a swamp, which separates it from the body of the island. This fort contains several covered batteries, and is flanked by others to the right and left. A mole has also been constructed, which stretches out into the sea, before, and to the right of the harbour.

In the middle space between Fort Blanc and the port or town, on the same side as the channel which forms the entrance, and at about six hundred yards from Fort Blanc, there is a small square fort, containing twelve eighteen-pounders. At the distance of five hundred yards from the latter fort, and near the harbour, begins a line of entrenchments, which stretches out as far as the mountain to the right of the

entrance into the port, or to the west of the town. On the side of the channel, and before the entrenchments, are some salt-works. Within the entrenchment is the Bason des Tortues.

The extreme part of the harbour, before the great hospital, is defended by another fort, which is distinguished by a flag. It is likewise furnished with heavy artillery. The powder magazine is situate on a small island, which is connected with the shore, by a causey almost opposite the governor's house. This causey serves also for a quay; and it incloses a part of the great basin, where vessels enter to be careened. At the end of this causey, on the left, is a small inner basin for the refitment of vessels, and near it they take in their fresh water with the greatest convenience. Here also is the curious machine invented by M. de la Bourdonnois, by which vessels are lifted out of the water; so that they are cleaned and repaired with the utmost expedition.

The place of arms and the parade is before the governor's house; and behind the large buildings of the hospital is the Fort Sainte Barbe.

Unfortunately Port Louis is choked up in different places by the hulls of several vessels, which have been lost from an ignorance of the navigation, which is now so well known.* Many of these dangerous circumstances, however, no longer exist,

* The number of these hulls amounts to thirty-four. The names of the greatest part of them are still remembered; and their respective situations are marked in the chart of this port by M. D'Apres. They have been adopted, after him, by M. de Boiesquesnay, officer in the French navy in 1775, as well as by Mr. Dalrymple in 1793.—The names of these vessels are as follows:

a - La Renommée,	p - L'Illuminate,	aa - Le Mars,
b - La Clotilde,	q - Le Grantham,	ab - La Corisante,
c - La Colomb,	r - Le Desir,	ac - Le Moras,
d - La Pierre,	s - Le Machault,	ad - Les vaisseaux
e - Le Bourbon,	t - Le Bertin,	— - Le Duc d'Orleans,
f - La Danae,	u - L'Auguste,	— - Le Duc de Bourgogne,
g - L'Aigle,	v - Le Duc d'Anjou,	— - et les flutes La Reine,
h - Le St. Philippe,	w - La Fulire,	— - et Le Silhouette,
k - Le Maurepas,	x - Le Choiseuil,	
l - Le Walpole,	y - Le Necessaire,	
m - Le Centaure,	z - La Penelope,	
n - Le Vigilant,		

from the changes and settlements that have taken place; as well as from the cessation of the periodical hurricanes in the month of February, which have not happened for the last ten years: a very fortunate change, which has been attributed to the diminution of the wood and the clearing the land.

The port on the south-east of the island, called Port Bourbon, is in 20 deg. 30 min. south latitude. It has two entrances, but that to the west is by far the most commodious, on account of its depth, though it is rather narrow. It is necessary on entering to pass near the small island which is just off the shore; and, having doubled it, you must bear away to the east, to avoid the point of the reef to the west, and cast anchor in the basin in twenty or thirty fathom water. On entering the port you may distinguish the channel by the colour of the water; there being no danger which is not sufficiently apparent. The harbour is protected from bad weather by a reef of rocks, the greater part of which is visible at low water, and contains a small basin, in which vessels of any size may be careened. At the foot of the reef it is four fathom and an half water. It is, however, very difficult to get out of the harbour, from the stationary nature of the winds, which blow into the port, and when they change, are generally variable, with occasional breezes. There is, however, another channel, which, if it were cleared, would afford a practicable passage, in all weather; and were that necessary object accomplished, Port Bourbon would be the best in the island.

The general state of the weather throughout the year is as follows.

January.—Rainy and warm. Storms, which are sometimes accompanied with thunder, though by no means violent; and, as the tempestuous season approaches, all navigation is suspended till the month of April; when the fields become green, and the whole landscape assumes a more cheerful appearance.

February.—Violent gales of wind, and hurricanes, with thunder. These hurricanes, which, till the year 1789, were constant in this month, have since that time entirely ceased: but the inhabitants have not a sufficient dependence on this circumstance, as to be wholly unprepared for them, in case they should return, and renew their former ravages.

March.—The rains are less frequent, the winds always in the south-east, and the heat moderate.

April.—The season is fine, and the grass begins to wither on the mountains.

May.—Westerly and north-west winds; the season dry, but in the low grounds and the interior parts of the island, the air possesses an agreeable freshness.

June.—The winds are stationary at the south-east, from which point they very seldom vary. The rain falls in small drops.

July.—Wind in the south-east; strong breezes during the day, which subside at night, when it becomes calm. The rain falls in slight dropping showers; and the air is so cool as to require warm clothing. In short, it is now winter, if such an expression may be employed in a country where the trees never lose their leaves.

August.—It rains almost every day. The summits of the mountains are clad in cloudy vapours, which descend into the vallies, accompanied with gales of wind.

September.—The same weather and the same wind. It is now the time of harvest.

October.—The temperature of the air is somewhat warmer; though it is still fresh in the interior parts of the island. At the end of this month the corn is sown, and in four months it is reaped. It is sown again in May, and is ripe in September; so that there are two harvests in the course of the year.

November.—The heat is now very sensibly felt; the winds are variable, and are sometimes in the north-west. The rains are accompanied with storms.

December.—The heats increase. The sun is vertical, but the heat of the air is moderated by the rains, which destroy the rats, grasshoppers, ants, &c. In short, the winds and rains produce the same beneficial effect, which other climates receive from the cold and frosts of the winter season.

M. le Gentil* gives the following account of the climate of this island, in his Voyage to the Indian Seas.

“There are four seasons in the island of Mauritius. The first begins in May, and is accompanied with south-east winds. At this time the island is subject to squalls and rain. The rains are in general very beneficial to the corn, though they sometimes injure it,

“The second season begins in September or October, at which time the south-east winds are succeeded by those of the north-west. The sun now approaches the zenith of the island, warms the atmosphere, and causes the rains and winds, which generally begin in December, when the third season commences, which extends to

* Royal Academician.

March. The fourth season then takes its turn, and lasts no more than six weeks. This is the dry season.

" This division of the year more particularly relates to the general cultivation of the island, than to any other circumstance; as, in fact, there are but two seasons, that of the winds from the south-east to south, and that of the winds from north-east to north. The two intermediate seasons are caused by the change in the air, which is a kind of monsoon, blowing from south-east to north-east. The south-east winds are strong and violent, but they are not dangerous to the shipping, as they never exceed a certain degree of force; on the contrary, the winds from the north-east to the north-west are weak and interrupted by calms. This is called the rainy, tempestuous, and hurricane season. It is, indeed, considered as the winter, though it is the hottest period of the year; and receives that denomination because, while it lasts, no ships venture out to sea, and the voyage to the Indies can only be made by a very long and circuitous course.

" The south-east winds give a certain freshness to the air, but while they blow, every thing ceases to vegetate, more particularly in those parts which are exposed to them. Hence it is, that trees and fruit seldom attain any degree of growth or perfection in the district of Pamplemousse, which is almost entirely cleared of its wood. Orange and lemon trees suffer the most from the south-east winds, as they require shelter. Those, indeed, which grow in the woods are flourishing and lofty, while such as inhabit the plain are shrunk or mutilated. This wind is so obnoxious to vegetation, that trees bear no fruit on the side that is exposed to it, while the opposite parts yield a comparative abundance. The tamarind, which possesses a more hardy nature, braves the malignity of the wind, and would therefore form a protecting shelter for the more tender fruit trees, which are planted in gardens; but it is of such a slow growth in this island as to be thought undeserving of any care or cultivation. The Dutch at the Cape of Good Hope shelter their fruit trees from this wind, by intersecting their gardens with thick planted lines or hedges of oak. In fact, there is no prospect of forming such a protection for the fruit trees in this island, but after a long course of years, as the growth of trees there is so very slow. The bamboo has, indeed, been planted for this purpose, but its roots spread to such an extraordinary distance around it, as to be injurious to the very trees it might be intended to protect.

" The nights are generally very fine, particularly in the season of the north-east

winds. At this period, the sun rises with a sere aspect. At about ten o'clock small clouds appear, and continue to accumulate without any menacing appearance; they occupy but a small space, while their motion is almost imperceptible. A few drops of water fall from them, a certain sign of the rain which follows; for the sky is almost immediately, and so insensibly overcast, that it is impossible to perceive from whence the clouds have proceeded: at the same time the rain increases in such a manner, as to render it impracticable to see any object at the distance of an hundred yards. These rains continue about two hours, but fall only when the wind sets in from the sea. When these inundating showers cease, vapours arise from the sea, and are stopped by the mountains. On the contrary, during the season of the south-east winds, particularly in the evening, a small rain is seen to fall, though the sky appears without a cloud, and adorned with stars in full lustre. At the extremity of the harbour, rainbows are also produced by the moon; a phenomenon very seldom seen in our part of Europe."

TABLE of the GEOGRAPHICAL POSITIONS of the most remarkable Points in the ISLE OF FRANCE, with the Height of its Mountains above the Level of the Sea, according to the Geometrical Operations de L'ABBE DE LA CAILLE, made in the Year 1753.

	South Latitude.	East Longitude from London.	Height above the sea, in fathoms.
Summit of the Isle of Serpents, called Parasol, or Small Round Isle	19 48 55	57 46 10	83
Summit of the Great Round Isle	19 50 34	57 45 6	165
Summit of le Coin de Mire	19 56 12	57 34 37	81
Point of Cannoniers	19 59 50	57 30 49	
East point of the great Isle d'Ambre	20 2 9	57 40 28	
Point of Roche	20 2 39	57 29 13	
Foot of the flag-staff on the first discovery of the ships	20 6 44	57 35 14	134
Foot of the flag-staff of the Long Mountain	20 7 56	57 29 51	89
Front of the new church of Port Louis	20 9 45	57 28 0	
Point of Flac	20 9 49	57 44 9	
Foot of the flag-staff at the opening of Port Louis	20 10 8	57 27 10	166
Summit of the mountain called Peterbotte	20 11 21	57 30 48	420
Summit of the rock called Le Pouce	20 11 40	57 29 25	416
Point of the entrance of the Small River	20 12 49	57 21 14	
Summit of the Piton de la Payence	20 14 28	57 39 13	223
Summit of the mountain of the Corps de Garde	20 15 22	57 26 48	369
Point of the middle of the Isle	20 17 9	57 33 10	302
The Isle Roche, at water level, at the entrance of E. channel, P. Bourbon	20 17 26	57 47 8	
Summit of the mountain Du Rampart	20 18 2	57 23 23	396
The highest point of the Three Mamelles	20 18 28	57 24 42	342
Summit of the mountain of Bamboo	20 18 57	57 42 46	322
Summit of the mountain of the Little Black River	20 20 40	57 20 13	283
Summit of the mountain of Port Bourbon	20 21 29	57 41 14	249
Flag-staff of Port Bourbon	20 22 20	57 41 9	
Middle of Isle Marie Anne	20 22 34	57 45 3	
Middle of the Isle du Passage	20 23 44	57 43 51	
Point of the mountain of the Little Black River	20 24 18	57 22 7	424
Summit of the mountain of the port	20 26 50	57 19 27	309
Summit of the Morne du Brabant	20 27 1	57 17 11	283
Summit of the mountain de la Savanne	20 27 2	57 27 30	355
South-east point of the Isle	20 27 50	57 16 8	

To trace the origin of the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, we shall give a brief sketch of several navigators who co-operated to their establishment.

1. Vasco de Gama, whose first voyage, in the years 1497, 1498, and 1499, was confined to the coast of Malabar, the discovery of Calicut, and the small island of Ankedives, on that coast.

2. After him, Don Emanuel fitted out a fleet of thirteen vessels to the same coast, under the command of Pedro Alvarez Cabral. He set sail in the month of March, in the year 1500. Cabral having stood out too far from the coast of Africa, and towards the west, by chance discovered the Brazils; after which he steered the same course as Vasco de Gama, and arrived on the coast of Malabar.

3. Vasco de Gama performed a second voyage towards this coast, in 1502. He manifested more courage than humanity, and returned into Portugal, without having made any new discovery.

4. In 1503, Don Emanuel sent three small squadrons; the first of which, commanded by Antonio de Saldagna, was destined to defend the entrance of the Red Sea: the two others, by Francis and Alphonso Albuquerque, were bound to the coast of Malabar. It was not here, however, that Alphonso first distinguished himself in the Indian seas. The early exploits of this famous man were confined to the Arabian and Persian Gulfs, and the coasts of the sea which separates the Peninsula of India from Africa.

5. In 1504, Alphonso Albuquerque being returned to Portugal, Edward Pacheco courageously sustained the interests of the Portuguese on the coast of India, in the war he had to maintain against the Zamorin of Calicut, in favour of the King of Cochin, their ally. He was well supported by Laurentio Moreno and others. But the discoveries of the Portuguese were not yet extended beyond Cape Comorin, nor across the Indian Ocean.

6. It was but in the year 1505, that Don Emanuel determined to establish a Viceroy or Governor-general on the coast of India: this post was entrusted to Don Francesco d'Almeida, who held it from that period to the year 1509; when he was succeeded by Alphonso Albuquerque. Almeida never revisited his country, being massacred near the Cape of Good Hope by the Hottentots, on his return to Europe. It was in the first year of the government of Almeida, that the islands of Mauritius, Bourbon, Madagascar, and some others, were discovered.

Don Laurentio d'Almeida, son of the Viceroy; Don Pedro Mascaregnas,

Tristan d'Acugna, Diego Fernand, Soarez, and Ruy Pereira, Ruy Laurentio Ravasco, and others, were the first Portuguese gentlemen who immortalized their names, by the discovery of these islands, and several other important places in the Indian seas, under the orders of Governor Almeida.

But it was under the great Albuquerque alone, when he was Governor-general of the Indies, in 1509, that the astonishing discoveries and conquests of this nation were extended in a very surprising and glorious manner, by the valour of those eminent persons who commanded these extraordinary enterprizes. Among them are Francis Pereira Berredo, Sebastian Rodriguez, Fernando de Beja, John Serran, Pelagius Sala, Manuel de la Cerda, Christopher de Britto, Don Garcia de Morogna, Diêgo Mendez de Vasconcellos, Rabelo, Manuel d'Acugna, Francis Pantoja, Gonzales Siqueira, and many others whom it is not necessary to mention.

1505.—Ruy Pereira was the first who, in part, discovered the island of Madagascar, and called it St. Laurentio, in the year 1505.—Fernandez Soarez discovered the south and west parts of it. Tristan d'Acugna was sent there by Albuquerque to examine the coasts of it; and in 1510, John Serran and Pelagius Sala had the same commission.*

Finally, Don Pedro Mascaregnas, one of the first whom I have mentioned, discovered the Isles of France and Bourbon, under the government of Don Francis Almeida, in 1505; which important circumstance, being added to his former military exploits, obtained for him the honour of being afterwards named, by his court, Governor of Cochin.

1505.—Mascaregnas gave the name of Cerné to the Isle of France, without doubt, from the appellation of *Cerna Ethiopia*, which is given by Pliny to the island of Madagascar. But there is no reason to suppose that Pliny, or any of the ancient writers, were acquainted with this island; or that there had been any discovery of it, previous to that made by the Portuguese, or of the other, now called the Island of Bourbon, and to which Mascaregnas gave his own name. At the same time, it has not appeared, from our inquiries, that the Portuguese made any settlements on either of these islands while they were masters of them,—a period that comprehended almost the whole of the sixteenth century. All they did, on

* I shall not follow the Portuguese throughout the career of their discoveries and conquests, as the history of them will belong rather to another work, which I have already announced, and will form the eighth grand epocha of Navigation, since the origin of the world.

their discovery of them, was to people them with some animals; with goats, monkeys, and pigs.

1580.—In the year 1580, the Spaniards became masters of these islands: Philip the II^d, King of Spain, having usurped the government of Portugal in this year, on the death of Henry of Portugal, became possessed, at the same time, of the Portuguese possessions in the Indian seas. The two islands which bore the names of Cerné and Mascaregnas, during the greater part of this century, had not yet experienced any of those advantages of which they were susceptible, nor were any settlements made on them; as the other conquests and discoveries of the Portuguese were too numerous and considerable to allow any attention to these objects.

These islands suffered the same neglect under the dominion of the Spaniards, which did not exceed a period of eighteen years. But if Portugal was not in a condition to maintain all its possessions, Spain, though a widely extended power, laboured under superior difficulties. She had to preserve, at the same time, her discoveries and conquests in South America, as well as those in the East and West Indies, whilst, in Europe, she could not quell the increasing efforts of her own rebellious subjects in Belgium. The consequences of that rebellion are well known; and Spain, by losing this essential part of her dominions, was forced, in the year 1598, to abandon to the Belgic insurgents, or the Dutch, the whole commerce of the East Indies.

At this epocha, and even from the death of King Sebastian, Portugal was fallen into a state of confusion which had brought on its ruin, and was the cause of her passing, by degrees, under the dominion of Philip the Second. Accordingly, the Portuguese settled in the East Indies, considering themselves as deprived of their mother country, some of them assumed independence, others became pirates, and the rest entered into the service of the country princes, where many of them, from their superiority over the natives, became ministers or generals. They, however, acted without zeal for their general interests, which they sacrificed to their own individual objects; so that their separate enterprizes and conquests at length terminated in three distinct and hostile governments. They therefore lost their power, when the Belgians, or Dutch, actuated by a more humane and tolerating spirit, appeared in India, to dispute with them the empire of it.

The Dutch having revolted from, and maintained a successful war against, their

King, Philip the Second of Spain, were, from subjects, elevated into sovereigns; and their first expedition, commanded by Cornelius Houtman, to the Indian seas, in the year 1595, laid the foundation of that power which they afterwards displayed there in 1598; a power, which they would have preserved entire, had not some very formidable rivals appeared in the English and French nations. At the latter period they had possessed themselves of the conquests made by the Portuguese, as well as the Spaniards, in the Indian Ocean, and consequently of the islands of Cerné and Mascaregnas. Admiral Van Neck was the first who landed on the Isle of Cerné, in 1598, when it proved to be uninhabited. He gave it the name of Mauritius.

If even this enterprize, which took place on the return of Houtman, were not connected with the former one, whose disgrace it was formed to repair, and whose pilots it employed, particularly Guzarate Abdul, whom the Dutch had brought from Java with that intention, it would be nevertheless necessary to give an account of it in this place, as it relates to the establishment of the Dutch trade at Bantam.

The importance of this object occasioned the equipment of a more considerable armament than the former. The number of vessels was doubled, and a whole winter was employed in the necessary preparations. On the first of May this fleet set sail from the Texel, under the command of Admiral James Cornelius Van Neck. The names of the vessels have been preserved, and were as follow: the Admiral's ship was called the Mauritius; the second, commanded by Wybrand Van Warwick, whose name has been celebrated from his conduct in subsequent expeditions, was the Amsterdam; and the six others received the denominations of the six provinces of Holland, Zealand, Gueldres, Utrecht, Friesland, and Overysse. The whole equipage amounted to about 560 men.

This voyage presents nothing more than the ordinary transactions of maritime life, until the month of September, when, having been separated in a violent storm, off the Cape of Good Hope, five of them were driven towards the Isle of Madagascar. They doubled the Cape St. Julien, and, on the 17th, discovered the island, which the Portuguese had denominated the island of Cerné. The Dutch, knowing nothing of it but its name, ordered out two boats to reconnoitre the shore, one of which discovered the south-east port, which is sheltered from the winds, and appeared capable of containing fifty ships, with an excellent bottom. The seamen had brought on board in the evening several large birds, and a great number of small ones, which

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had suffered themselves to be taken by the hand. They had also discovered a stream of fresh water, which flowed from the mountains; and, from their account, the island promised abundance of refreshments. The Vice-Admiral, Van Warwick, however, not knowing as yet that it was uninhabited, and not having time, from the sickly state of his people, to make discoveries, ordered on the 20th a large party to land, and to take such a station as would secure them from any sudden attack. On several succeeding days he ordered out boats to examine other parts of the island, to discover if it was inhabited. The parties continued to meet with great numbers of birds, who were all so insensible of danger, as not to make the least attempt to avoid the people that took them: they saw also large groves of cocoa-trees. They discovered on the shore about three hundred weight of wax, which was impressed with Greek characters; near the same spot they also saw a hanging stage, the spar of a capstan, and a large yard, the remains of some unfortunate vessel which had been buried in the waves. They could not, however, find the least traces of human or quadruped inhabitants.—After having ordered public thanks to be returned to God, for having conducted them to such a fair and secure harbour, the Admiral named the island Mauritius, in honour of the Prince of Orange.

In the accounts of this voyage the following description is given of it.

They represent it as being situated 11 deg. 30 min. south latitude, and that it is about 15 leagues in circumference.* The depth of the sea at the entrance of the harbour is about 100 feet. On every side lofty mountains present themselves to the view, which are clothed with trees of the finest verdure, and whose summits are frequently enveloped with clouds, or dimly seen through floating mists. The soil is stony, but at the same time so entirely covered with wood, that it was impossible to force a passage through it. The wood is in general black, like the finest ebony, or of a very fine red, or a deep yellow, having the appearance of wax. The Dutch took samples of these different woods to Amsterdam, where they were universally admired for their beauty. The palm-trees, of which there were great abundance, afforded to the fleet a very agreeable refreshment; the pith of them resembling in taste the flavour of a turnip. The extraordinary quantity of wood enabled the sailors to build very convenient huts, and the speedy recovery of the sick justified the opinion that the air was salutary. So abundant is the sea in fish, that one drag

* These observations are very erroneous.—The island is situated 20 deg. 10 min. south, and is about 35 marine leagues in circumference; according to L'Abbé de Caille, M. D'Apres, &c. &c.

of the net, took half a ton weight of fish. A thornback was taken of such a size as to furnish a ship's company with two meals.—The turtles were of such large dimensions that one of their shells was sufficiently capacious to admit of six men to take their seats in it. *Exaggerated I should think*

Turtle-doves were in great abundance, and the sailors sometimes caught an hundred and fifty of them in an afternoon. The herons were wild, and when they were pursued, first perched on the trees, and then entirely disappeared. They saw very few geese; but the grey paroquets were innumerable. There was a very extraordinary bird of about the size of a swan, whose head was remarkably large, with a skin hanging from it in the form of a capuchin: three or four black feathers served it for wings; and about the same number, of a greyish colour, and which curled at their termination, composed its tail. Except the breast, every part was so tough, that the Dutch gave it the name of Walg-vogels, or disgusting fowl. Besides, the abundance of turtles made them less anxious about other food.

The Dutch commander ordered a board to be fastened to a tree, on which were sculptured the arms of Holland, Zealand, and Amsterdam, with this inscription in the Portuguese language: *Cbristianos reformandos*. A piece of ground was also inclosed with stakes of about four hundred fathom in circumference, which was planted and sown with vegetables and seeds, to make an experiment of the soil. Some hens, &c. were also left there, that vessels which should hereafter stop at this island might find other provisions than the natural produce of it.

At this period the Dutch must be considered as masters of the island of Mauritius; but it does not appear that they ever occupied the island Mascaregnas, because it did not afford them a secure harbour. They had not even in the year 1601, formed any settlement in the former of them, from the following circumstance, which is the most remote of any we have been able to collect concerning this island, since its discovery by the Portuguese.

On the 12th of August, 1601, Hermansen determined to put into the island of Mauritius to get water and provisions, which began to fail. He had accordingly dispatched a yacht, called the Young Pigeon, to make discoveries for that purpose. It was, however, a month before this vessel returned, when it had a Frenchman on board, whom it brought from this island, and who gave the following account of himself.

He had embarked in England some years before, on board a vessel which set

sail in company with two others, on a voyage to the East Indies. One of these vessels was lost off the Cape of Good Hope; and the crews of the two which remained were so greatly reduced, that it was thought right to burn one of the ships, and to consolidate the two crews on board the survivor. Still, however, they were the prey of continuing sickness, till not a sufficient number of seamen remained to work the vessel, and she went ashore on the coast of Pulo Timon, near Malacca; where all the crew died, except himself, four Englishmen, and two Negroes. These forlorn people, therefore, had got possession of an Indian junk, with the extraordinary design of returning to England. The commencement of their voyage was successful; but the Negroes, alarmed at being so far removed from their own country, had conspired together to get possession of the vessel; their design, however, being discovered, they threw themselves into the sea, from despair, or the fear of that punishment with which they were threatened. After being tossed about by successive storms, they were at length driven to the island of Mauritius: but, unfortunately, at a moment when harmony was essential not only to their comfort, but almost to their existence, these wretched voyagers disagreed among themselves, before they had been eight days on the island. The Frenchman wished to remain there till it should please Heaven to send them relief; while the English insisted on putting out to sea, and determined to continue their voyage. They did not hesitate to execute their design; and the Frenchman was equally determined: so his comrades hoisted their little sail, and left him to the solitude of this uninhabited spot: there he had passed near two years, sustaining himself with the fruit of the date-tree, and the flesh of turtles. In every thing that related to corporal strength, he was as vigorous as any seaman on board the Dutch ships; but his understanding appeared to have sustained a shock, which appeared very evident when he was pressed with a succession of questions, or when a conversation was continued beyond a certain period. His clothes had, by degrees, fallen from him, and he was found in a state that approached to nakedness.

It appears that in the year 1606, and since that period, the Dutch sometimes put into this island, but, there is no authentic reason to suppose that they really began to form settlements there till the year 1644. According to the information afforded by the voyage of Admiral Matclief, that naval commander put into the island of Mauritius, on the 1st of January, 1606, where he met Admiral Vander-Nagen, who had a few weeks before set sail from Bantam. At that time the Isle of Mascaregnas had been abandoned by the Dutch. The first navigator who is related to have

visited it since the foregoing period, was Captain Castleton, who commanded an English vessel named the *Pearl*: he touched there in the year 1613. It appears, at that time, that this island was uninhabited: though it is difficult to ascertain who were the first settlers of it. It is, indeed, generally believed, and the conjecture is certainly well founded, that they were some of those pirates who are known to have infested the Indian seas during this century.

In the collection of voyages undertaken by the Dutch, there are some which are no less interesting for their sentiments, than the curious circumstances which awakened them. That of William Isbruntsz Bontekoe is among the number; and such was its character for fidelity of narration, that Thevenot enriched his collection with it. This distinguished seaman commanded the ship the *New Hoorn*, which was sent to the East Indies in 1618 for commercial purposes. He set sail from the Texel on the 28th of December, and on the 5th of January following encountered a most furious and unrelenting storm, which lasted nineteen days, and it was not till the twentieth day, that the weather was sufficiently moderate to enable the crew to put the ship in a condition to pursue the voyage; in which they were materially assisted by two Dutch ships from Amsterdam, with whom they fell in, at a time when they were in great difficulty from the damages which they had received from the tempest. The *New Hoorn* was soon separated from them, but fell in again with them off the Cape de Verd Islands, when they agreed to pass the line in company; which they effected, after being becalmed for several weeks. After various dangers, disappointments, and difficulties, with a very sickly and dis-spirited crew, Captain Bontekoe arrived at length off Cape Mascaregnas, in seven fathom water. Although this situation was not altogether safe, from its vicinity to the shore, it was thought proper to anchor there, the sick men being so anxious to land; but in this expectation they were disappointed from the violence of the breakers. The long boat was therefore sent out to examine the island, and returned with a large quantity of turtle-doves, the sight of which inflamed the desire of the sick part of the crew to get on shore, which was afterwards effected, with every possible convenience their commander could afford them. They found plenty of wood-pigeons, which suffered themselves to be taken without attempting to fly away. Turtles were very easily taken; and the sick people, who were forty in number, found plenty of those refreshments which promised to restore them to health and strength.

The anchorage appeared to be so bad, that Bontekoe went in the ship's boat to

discover a better; and, at about five miles from the ship, he found a bay with a sandy bottom. At a small distance within land he discovered a lake, the water of which had a brackish taste. He saw abundance of geese, pigeons, grey paroquets, and other birds. He found twenty-five turtle-doves under a single tree, which were so fat that they could scarcely walk. If he caught a paroquet, or any other bird, and hurt it so as to make it cry out, those of its own kind would instantly fly about it, as if to defend it from further injury, and thus suffer themselves to be taken.

Having examined the bay, he sent an account of it to the sick people on shore, who willingly re-embarked, and the ship came to an anchor there in seven fathom water. Detachments of the crew were permitted to go on shore in search of refreshments, while others were employed in fishing the lake, in which they took carp, and a kind of salmon, which was very luscious and of a delicious flavour. They caught a bird which the Dutch called *dod-aers*; it has very small wings, and is extremely fat. They discovered also a rivulet of fresh water, which flowed from the mountains, and was pleasantly bordered with trees. On the shore they found a plank, on which was engraved an account that Adrian Martin Blok, who commanded a fleet of thirteen vessels, had, on that spot, lost several boats and the sailors that manned them, on approaching the shore. Bontekoe, however, does not remark that the breakers were dangerous.

As the island was not inhabited, the sailors were free to wander over it, and to amuse themselves with fishing, shooting, or bird catching. They made wooden spits which served to roast the birds, and, by basting them with the oil of turtles, they were rendered delicious food. They discovered a second river, in which plenty of large eels were taken, which were well tasted. They also saw some goats, but those animals were so wild and swift that they caught but one, which was old, and whose horns were half eaten by worms. His flesh was not eatable.

With this abundance of refreshments the greater part of the sick were speedily and perfectly recovered, and but seven of them remained on shore till the departure of the ship, which was furnished with a large store of provisions, the produce of the island, which had been salted and dried. The birds, however, during the excursions of the ship's crew, had been taught all the wildness natural to them in the haunts of men.

Bontekoe took leave of this island with the design of touching at Mauritius, but the ship having fallen too low, they saw it only at a distance to the windward.

Some of the crew not being yet recovered, and fearing, if the voyage was lengthened to Bantam or Batavia, that the alarming sickness which so many had escaped, might return, the Captain was determined to bear away for the island of Saint Maria, near Madagascar, and facing Antongil Bay. They accordingly arrived on the eastern side of the island in two fathom water. The islanders, though less used to an intercourse with Europeans than the inhabitants of Madagascar, came on board with fowls, lemons, and a small quantity of rice; and made it understood by signs that they had cows, sheep, and other provisions. They had no other clothing than a small piece of cloth which passed round their middle: their colour was of a blackish yellow. Some of the ship's company went on shore to barter with them; when a small quantity of bells, knives with yellow handles, and glass beads, &c. were considered as equal to the purchase of their cattle, sheep, hogs, water-melons, &c. They carried their milk in large leaves laid one within the other, and which were so contrived as to contain it, as well as earthen vessels. Oranges and lemons, which were more peculiarly necessary for preserving the health of the crew, being scarce in this spot, Bontekoe determined to go, in an armed boat, to Madagascar, with such an assortment of articles as would enable him to return with a considerable quantity of the fruit he so much wanted. He accordingly entered a river, but could not proceed further than a league up it, from the over-arching boughs of the trees on either side of it, which hung down to the water. He saw no appearance of fruit or of habitations, and accordingly returned to his ship. On a succeeding day he was more fortunate, by extending his researches in the island before which his vessel lay at anchor. On a more distant part of the coast he found abundance of oranges, lemons, bananas, and rice; so that his crew regained the strength and health which they possessed on their departure from Europe. The natives of this island were idolaters, and the heads of bulls, elevated on poles, were the objects of their adoration.—Bontekoe's ship being refitted, he quitted the coast of Madagascar for the Straits of Suada; but before he reached them, his ship unfortunately took fire and blew up; by which melancholy accident he was blown into the sea; but was taken up by the long boat, which had left the vessel, with a part of the crew, previous to the explosion, who, with their Captain, arrived at the Isle of Sumatra; from thence they obtained a passage to Batavia.

From this period to the year 1712, when the Dutch evacuated the island of Mauritius, little is known concerning this settlement, the administration of its

government, or the different governors who have been sent there. We have been successful only in obtaining the names which follow.

In the year 1648, Vander-Mester was the Dutch Governor of Mauritius. He is mentioned in a voyage to Madagascar, by the Abbé Rochon, as follows :

" Pronis, who had been commissioned to take possession of Madagascar in the name of the King of France, &c. was a man of inferior talents. He added to his other malversations, that of selling to Vander-Mester, then Governor of Mauritius, the unfortunate Malegaches, who were in the service of the settlement ; but it excited the islanders to the highest pitch of indignation, when they found that among these slaves there were sixteen women of the race of Lohariths."

According to Le Guat's account of the islands of Rodriguez and Mauritius, M. La Mocius was Governor of the latter, when he arrived at the former in the year 1690. And, according to the same author, M. Rudolphe, or Rodolphe Doodaté, a native of Geneva, was Governor of Mauritius, when he was detained prisoner there during the years 1693, 1694, 1695, and 1696 ; as will hereafter appear in the subsequent account of the island of Rodriguez.

Before we enter on the History of Mauritius under the French government, it is necessary for us to recur to the first settlement of that nation in the island of Mascaregnas, or Bourbon ; as it was from the latter that the French came to establish themselves in the former.

The first appearance of an establishment at Mascaregnas was, according to the Abbé Rochon, in his work already mentioned, in the year 1657, when M. de Flacourt, who was the first Director of the infant company of the Indies at Paris, arrived in that island. He mentions that M. de Flacourt was sent to Madagascar in the year 1648, and consequently in the reign of Louis XIV. to consolidate there, the establishments already begun : but the French under his direction, in the southern part of that great island, having been attacked by the natives of the country, M. de Flacourt went with a part of them to settle in the island of Mascaregnas, in the course of the year 1657, when he gave it the name of the Isle of Bourbon ; and hoisted the standard of France, in the very place where that of Portugal had already been elevated, as he had done at Madagascar.

The history and progress of the settlements formed in the island of Madagascar will have their appropriate place ; though we may be previously obliged to mention it from its relative connection with the isles of Mauritius and Bourbon. We

shall only observe in this place, that the first company which was established in France, with a view to make settlements in Madagascar, was not that which was erected by the famous Colbert, in 1664, but which served as a kind of superstructure to it.

The account given by M. de Flacourt of the reverses sustained by the French settlement at Madagascar, and the particulars of the establishment he had just formed in the island of Bourbon, with the wreck of that at Madagascar, induced the company to pay attention to the new object; a circumstance which caused the little colony to wear an increasing appearance. Since that period we have little to communicate concerning this island, but a chronological statement of the governors who have presided over it to the present moment.

The population of the Isle of Bourbon having become considerable in 1712, an opportunity was offered of forming a French settlement on the island of Mauritius, which the Dutch had at this time abandoned. Accordingly a small number of French people landed there at this time, and changed its name to that of the Isle de France. It was not, however, formally taken possession of in the king's name till the year 1721.*

* The following account is taken from the Geographical Dictionary of M. de la Martiniere.—

“ The Isle of France was called Mauritius by the Dutch, and is marked by that name, not only in all the ancient maps, but in those of M. de L'Isle. In 1721, the Chevalier Fougeray finding it advantageous for the French East India Company, took possession, fixed a pole in the ground of forty feet in height, decorated with a white flag, and to which was attached the following inscription :

Vivat Ludovicus XV. Rex Galliarum et Navaræ
in æternum vivat.

Hanc ipse insulam suis dictionibus voluit
adjungi, illamque jure vindicatam in
posterum insulam francicam nuncupari.

In gratiam honoremque tanti principis,
istud vexillum niveum extulit Joannes
Baptista Garnier de Fougeray, Dux
Navis dictæ, le Triton ex Urbe
San Maclovio oriundus, in minori Britannia,
cum ipse huc appulerit, die 23 Septembris,
eodem anno, in Galliam navigaturus.
Des favente anchoras solirt.”

Within a cannon shot of this place he set up a cross, on one side of whose transverse beam was

The Dutch made their first settlement in this island on the south-east harbour, which is of the greatest extent; but having found it much easier to get out of the north-west port, they abandoned the houses which they had already built near the former, and where their tombs are still visible, to build others at the latter. At this time, the Dutch having possessed themselves of the Cape of Good Hope, and being anxious to put it in a state of defence, they by degrees transported thither all the troops they had at Mauritius; and, as has already been observed, in the year 1712, entirely abandoned it. But though the French maintained a preponderance in both these islands, their inhabitants, for a long time, consisted chiefly of adventurers of all nations, pirates, &c. many of whom, as the only means of enjoying connubial comforts, had married the Negro women of Madagascar. It was not till the year 1730, that the government and East India Company of France began to pay a serious attention to it, by sending engineers and other persons, properly qualified to form a regular establishment. But, in fact, the real founder of these two interesting colonies was M. de la Bourdonnais, who was sent here, the first time as Governor-General, in 1734.

Such is the origin of the French possession of these islands; and we shall now proceed to the more regular history of them.

The following chronological series of the Governors of the Isle of France, is extracted from the Journals of the Isles of France and Bourbon, which were printed in the former, in the years 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1788, &c.

In 1715, M. du Fresne, Captain in the naval service of the King of France, arrived at the north-west port, and gave the island the name which it now bears, of the Isle of France.

It was M. de Beauvilliers, Governor of the Isle of Bourbon, who sent a party from thence to take possession of the island of Mauritius.

inscribed—"Garnier de Fougeray of St. Malo, C. the Triton;" with the arms of France, and on the other side the following distich:

Lilia fixa crucis capiti mirare sacratæ

Ne stupeas; jubet hic Gallia stare crucem.

Anno 1721.

There appears to be a difference between the commanding officer mentioned in this account, and the person named in the list of governors for the year 1721: but it may be fairly presumed, from the resemblance of their names, that it is a mere nominal error; and that both accounts comprehend one and the same person; which the reader will immediately perceive as he proceeds.

In 1721, M. du Rougay began to form a settlement there; and M. de Nyou was named the Governor of it on the 11th of October in the same year; and he arrived there in January, 1722.

M. Dioré, Lieutenant-Governor of the Isle of Bourbon, commanded in the interim at the Isle of France.

In 1722, a Provincial Council was established there.

On the 28th of August, 1726, M. Dumar, who resided at Bourbon, was named Governor of both islands.

October 26, 1728, M. de Maupin was named Governor of both islands.

On the 10th of November, 1734, M. de la Bourdonnais was named Governor-General of the two islands, and the Superior Council was established on his arrival, in 1735.

M. de St. Martin commanded there during the expedition of M. de la Bourdonnais to the Indies, till 1746.

In 1746, M. David replaced M. de la Bourdonnais, at that time employed in an expedition to Madras.

In 1750, M. de Lozier Bouvet, brother-in-law of M. David, commanded provisionally.

In 1755, M. Magou, Commander-General of the two islands.

In 1759, M. Desforges Boucher, Governor-General.

In August, 1764, the administration of the island passed from the hands of the East India Company into those of the King.

July 14, 1767, M. Dumas, Governor of the two islands, and M. Poivre, Commissary-General of the Marine, executed the office of Intendant.

November 27, 1768, M. Steinaver succeeded M. Dumas.

June 6, 1769, the Chevalier des Roches, Governor-General.

August 21, 1772, the Chevalier de Ternay succeeded M. le Chevalier des Roches; and, on the same day, M. Maillard de Merle succeeded M. Poivre.

December 2, 1776, the Chevalier de Guiran la Brillanne was named Governor-General.

November 17, 1777, M. Foucault was Intendant of these islands.

May 1, 1779, M. le Vicomte de Souillac, Governor-General.

July 4, 1781, M. Chevreau, Intendant-General of the two islands.

October 12, 1785, M. Motais de Narbonne, Commissary-General of the two islands.

November 5, 1787, the Chevalier de Bruny d'Entrecasteaux, Governor-general. He was succeeded by General Conway, in 1789.

In 1791, M. de Cossigny was Governor, and was succeeded by M. de Chermont.

General Malartic is the present Governor, to which place he was appointed by his most Christian Majesty Louis XVI. in the year 1792.

CHAPTER II.

The Soil, and natural Productions of the Isle of France; Shrubs, Plants, &c.—Its Agriculture.—Some Account of M. Poivre, Intendant of the Island, &c.—Trees and aquatic Plants.—Trees, Shrubs, Plants, &c. brought into the Island from the North Part of Madagascar, in 1768, by M. Rochon.—Herbs, Vegetables, and Flowers, introduced there—various other Shrubs and Trees brought thither.—Fruit Trees.—Marine Productions.—Native and other Animals of the Isle of France.

THE earth is almost universally of a reddish colour, and mixed with ferruginous matter, which often appears on the surface in small orbicular shapes of the size of a pea. In the dry seasons the ground becomes extremely hard, particularly in the environs of the town. It resembles potters' earth, and when cut into trenches it is divided like lead with hatchets. After rain it becomes viscid and tenacious, but it is very fertile when cultivated; and the cultivation does not require extraordinary labour.

There is no real sand; and that which is found on the sea-shore is formed of the madreporæ and shells, and calcines by fire. The ground is covered with rocks, from the size of a man's head to that of a large barrel. They are full of holes, at the bottom of which is an opening in the form of a lentil. Many of these rocks are in the shape of kidneys. In some places they appear in large masses; in others they are broken, but in such a manner as if they had suffered a separation, and been reunited. The mountains are formed of them, which, though parallel with one another, present themselves obliquely to the horizon. They are of an iron-gray colour, vitrify in the fire, and contain ferruginous matter; small pieces of very fine copper and lead have been extracted from them. In fragments of these stones are small crystallized cavities, some of which contain a very fine white down.

The island produces three kinds of grass:—Along the sea-shore there is a thick elastic turf, whose herbage is fine, and the blade, which grows to a sharp point, is sufficiently strong, when dried, to pierce woollen cloth. In the hottest parts of the island the pastures are composed of a kind of dog-grass,* that runs along the ground, and shoots forth small branches from its stems: though it is very tough, the cattle are fond of it in its verdant state. But the best grass grows in the more moist parts, and the windward situations of the island. It produces very large leaves, and is green and tender throughout the year.

The other herbs and shrubs possessed by the Isle of France are as follow:

A plant that yields a kind of pod, filled with a silky substance, of which, it is probable, some manufacturing use might be made.

A species of asparagus, armed with thorns, which shoots up to the height of twelve feet, and attaches itself to trees, in the manner of a bramble; but it does not appear that any attempts have been made to discover its qualities as a vegetable food.

A kind of mallow, with a small leaf, which flourishes most in the court-yards of houses, and by the side of highways.

A plant which bears a resemblance to the lily; is fond of marshy spots, and bears an odoriferous flower.

On walls and by the side of roads a tufted plant is frequently seen, whose flower resembles that of the common red single stock.

At the foot of the mountains near the town is found a vivacious sweet basil, whose odour is like that of the gillyflower. Its stem is ligneous, and an excellent vulnerary.

The Racquette,† which makes a very formidable hedge, bears a yellow flower streaked with red; it is thick set with very sharp thorns, which cover its leaves and fruit. Of the latter, which is acid, no use is made.

The Veloutier grows in the sand on the sea-shore; its branches are covered with a down resembling velvet, its leaves produce a shining hair, and it bears bunches of flowers. At a distance this shrub emits an agreeable smell, which is not perceptible on a nearer approach to it.

There is a kind of plant, half bramble and half shrub, which produces, in bristled pods, a very smooth hard nut, of a grey pearl-colour, and about the size of a musket ball. Its kernel is very bitter, and the blacks employ it in venereal complaints.

* *Gramen caninum.*

† *Cactus cochenillifer, Linn.*

In those parts of the island which have been cleared, a shrub grows in great abundance whose leaves wear the form of an heart; its smell is grateful like that of balm, whose name it bears. It is employed to medicate baths.

The Fausse Patate runs along the shore, like rope-weed, with red flowers, in the form of bells. It delights in the sand.

In the very borders of the woods, a ligneous plant is found, called the basket plant, and tolerable thread is made from it: its leaves, which are small, when taken in barley water, are remedial for disorders in the breast.

There are a great variety of plants or shrubs comprehended under the name of Lianes, some of which attain the thickness of a man's thigh. They attach themselves to trees, to which they give the appearance of masts trimmed with rigging, while they protect them by their ligatures from the violence of the hurricanes. Nor can a tree, attached by them to the soil, be taken away after it is cut through, till these creepers are separated from it. The ropes made of their bark are stronger than those which are manufactured from hemp.

There are several shrubs whose leaves are like those of box.

There is also a spongy and thorny shrub, which has a large round leaf, and whose tufted flowers are of a deep red. Fishermen employ its stem, which is very light, instead of cork.

There is another very pretty wood, called Bois de Demoiselles: the leaf is indented like the ash leaf, and its branches are covered with small red berries.

According to M. Poivre,* who was appointed Intendant of the Isles of France

* M. Poivre was born at Lyons in 1719, and entered at a very early age into the Congregation of foreign Missions, who sent him to China. He travelled through several parts of that empire, and paid particular attention to the agriculture of it. On his return to Europe, the ship in which he was a passenger was attacked by a British ship of war, and, during the engagement, he had the misfortune to lose an arm, that was carried away by a cannon shot. This accident obliged him to renounce the ecclesiastical state: but the East India Company being well acquainted with his activity and knowledge, selected him for the purpose of establishing a new branch of commerce at Cochin China. Having succeeded in this undertaking, he was appointed, by the Duke de Choiseul, Intendant of the Isles of France and Bourbon, in the year 1766: and in this situation, he fully answered the expectations of the French Minister. He encouraged among the inhabitants a spirit of agriculture, as well as a taste for the arts and other improvements. He sent to Madagascar for a supply of cattle and sheep to stock the island; he naturalized the tree that bears the bread-fruit; and, notwithstanding the many difficulties he had to encounter, succeeded in procuring plants of

and Bourbon, during the administration of the Duke de Choiseul, in 1766, the Isle of France possesses a fertile soil, with brooks that are never dry in the hottest season, and water the island like a garden: nevertheless the harvest often fails, and the place is always, more or less, in a state of want. Since the government of M. de la Bourdonnais, which continued for twelve years, and who must be considered as the founder of the colony, since he introduced agriculture there, the inhabitants have wandered from project to project, and endeavoured to cultivate every kind of plant, but without persevering to secure success. Coffee, cotton, indigo, sugar canes, the pepper plant, the cinnamon tree, the tea plant, the mulberry tree, the cocoa, and the roucou,* have been cultivated in their turns, but without that knowledge and attention which is necessary to establish experiment. If they had followed the simple plan of their founder, which was, in the first instance, to secure a plentiful supply of bread, the island would, at this time, have been in a very flourishing state, abundance would have reigned, and the vessels which touched there would have found plenty of provisions and refreshments. The cultivation of corn, however, though neglected and ill understood, succeeds the best; and the land which is employed in tillage bears, in the same year, a crop of corn, and another of rice or

the nutmeg and cinnamon trees, which he flattered himself would hereafter furnish France with a very valuable article of commerce.—M. Poivre, after having exerted himself to the utmost, for the advantage of this settlement, returned to France, and died at Lyons, the place of his nativity, on the 6th of January, 1786. The works which he published are sufficient to prove that he was a man of sound judgment and philosophic inquiry. They are, 1st. *The Voyages of a Philosopher*, which contain observations on the manners, arts, and agriculture of the people of Asia and Africa. 2d. *A Memoir on the Preparation and dying of Silk*. 3. *Remarks on the History and Manners of the Chinese*. 4th. *A Discourse addressed to the Inhabitants of the Isles of France and Bourbon*; with various manuscripts, which were collected by the Academy of Lyons, of which he was a member.

In order to enrich the colony committed to his care with the useful productions of other parts of the globe, he purchased of the old East India Company the large garden of Montplaisir, in order to cultivate and naturalize exotic plants. He undermined the ground in order to complete a radical destruction of the weeds; and, by his persevering spirit, the nutmeg and the elove, the reina, the bread-tree, and the dry rice of Cochin China, were introduced into this island. The care of cultivating and multiplying these valuable exotics has since been entrusted to M. Ceré.

* *Bixa Orlana*, Linn.

Indian corn, without ever lying fallow, or receiving manure, and with no great exertion of labour.

The Manioc,* which was brought from Brazil by M. de la Bourdonnais, and was at first cultivated by compulsion, is, at present, the principal resource of the colonists for the maintenance of their slaves. Their manner of cultivating it is the same as in America.

There were originally brought from Madagascar into this island considerable herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep; but since it has been discovered that more is to be gained, by individuals, from importing slaves than cattle, the latter have been neglected, and continue to be diminished, by the consumption of the island and the supply of vessels. Besides, the ground which has been prepared for pasturage has been so injudiciously disposed and managed, that there is not sufficient herbage for the maintenance of the cattle. In different districts there is a very fine grass, which shoots forth at the beginning of the rainy season, attains to the height of five or six feet, and arrives at its full growth in the space of three months, while that season lasts. At this time the colonists send their herds to graze on it, where they soon grow fat; but when the vegetation ceases it becomes dry and hard, so that the cattle cannot eat it. By a thousand accidents the dried grass is frequently set on fire, a circumstance which sometimes occasions a conflagration in the adjoining woods. During the remainder of the year the flocks and herds are left to wander about the forests in search of a precarious subsistence.

The great error which has been committed in this island, and has proved most prejudicial to its agriculture, is the injudicious manner in which the ground has been cleared. The first settlers effected their purpose by fire; so that they opened large spaces of country, without leaving any intervals of wood, which could alone attract the clouds to the new-formed fields. The rains are the best, and, indeed, the only manure in this island, and they confine their course to the forests, leaving unbedewed the tracts that are cleared. Besides, deprived of the surrounding woods, these fields have no protection against the violence of the winds, which often destroy an entire harvest. The Dutch, who had no woods at the Capé, have been careful to plant trees for the safeguard of their buildings. The Isle of France was covered with forests, and the inhabitants have destroyed them, in the cultivated parts.

* *Jatropha Manihot*, Linn.

The greater part of the trees natural to this island have received their names from the arbitrary fancy of its inhabitants.

A large and very uncommon tree is found among the rocks, whose substance is as soft as the flesh of a turnip. It is called Mapou, or stinking-wood, from its offensive odour, and is considered as unwholesome.

The Bois de ronde is small, hard, and twisted; when burning it emits a lively flame: it is formed into flambeaux, and is considered as incorruptible.

Bois de Cannelle. The cinnamon wood, so called from a slight resemblance to the real spice tree of that name, is among the largest of the island. Its wood is useful in joinery work, and resembles that of the walnut tree, both in colour and veins. When first worked up it emits a fœtid smell, like that of excrement, a peculiarity which it possesses in common with the flower of the cinnamon. Its seeds are enveloped in a red peel of a sour but very agreeable taste.

Of the Natte, there are two kinds: the one bearing a large and the other a small leaf. The carpenter finds it a very useful wood.

The Bois d'Olive, so called from a slight resemblance of its leaves to those of the olive tree, furnishes very durable timber for building.

The Bois de Pomme, is a red wood, in little or no estimation.

The Benjoin,* so called from its compact quality, is admirably calculated for the purposes of the wheelwright. It is very thick, and never splits.

The Colophane,† which yields a resinous juice, like that of the real rosin; is one of the largest trees in the island.

The fictitious Tatamaca, is very well adapted for building; it is of a very large size, and its trunk has been sometimes known to measure fifteen feet in circumference. It weeps a gum like that of the real Tatamaca.

Le Bois de lait. The milk-wood, so called from its milky juice.

Le Bois puant. The stinking-wood; which, though it emits an unpleasant odour, is excellent timber.

The Iron tree,‡ Its trunk is, as it were, blended with the roots; while from its sides a kind of small wing projects in the form of planks. Its wood is so hard as to turn the hatchet's edge.

The Bois de fougue, is a large creeping tree, whose bark is very tough: it also yields a milky juice, which is esteemed to be an excellent vulnerary.

* Benzonium.—roton Benzoe, *Linn.*

† Colophonia.

‡ Lignum ferri.

The Fig tree, is of a large size; but neither its leaves or fruit resemble those of the same name so common in Europe. The figs are of the same shape, but they grow in bunches at the end of the branches. Its juice when dried becomes an elastic gum.

The Ebony tree. Its bark is white, with a large and stiff leaf, which is pallid beneath, and whose upper surface is verdant. Its heart alone is black, while its top is white. In a trunk of six inches square there is not more than two inches of ebony. The wood of it, in a fresh state, smells like human excrement, and its flower throws forth the odour of the clove: it produces a fruit like the medlar, full of a viscous juice, which is sweet, and of an agreeable flavour. There is also a kind of ebony, whose surface is white with black veins.

The Lemon tree does not produce fruit but when it grows in cool and moist situations. Its lemons are small, but full of juice.

The Orange tree loves the same damp soil, and its fruit is either bitter or sour. It abounds in the environs of Grand Port; but the China orange tree is rare, even in private gardens.

There is a kind of Sandal wood, though by no means common; its colour is of a greyish white, and it emits a faint odour.

The Vacoa, is a kind of small palm tree, whose leaves grow in a spiral form round the trunk. They serve to make mats and sacking.

The Latanier,* is a larger tree of the palm species; on its summit it produces leaves in the shape of a fan. They are used as coverings for houses: though but one is produced in the course of a year.

The Palm, (Palmiste†) is the most lofty of the forest; on its top it bears a bunch of palms, from whence proceeds a sprout, which is the only part that is esculent, and to obtain it the tree itself must be cut down. This vegetable, which is called a cabbage, is formed by young leaves rolled up together: it is very tender, and of an agreeable taste.

The Manglier, grows in the sea; its branches and roots twine along the sand, and are so interlaced that it is impossible to disembark where these trees grow. The wood produces a dye of a red colour. The greater part of them have but a very thin bark, and some of them nothing more than a slight skin; in which they particularly differ from those of the north, where considerate nature preserves them

* *Corypha umbraculifera*, Linn.

† *Palma dactylifera latifolia*.

from the rigour of the climate, by clothing them with several coats. Their roots run generally on a level with the ground, and with them they cling to the rocks: they are low, and their tops are but thin of foliage: they are of a sturdy form; so that their native strength, when added to the plants to which they are attached, enables them to resist the hurricanes that root up the proudest trees of the forest.

The banks of the streams, which alternately wind in silence or impetuously rush through the woods, are covered with trees; from whence are suspended bunches of the *Scolopendria*,* and flowers of the creeping plants. Among the rocks and in the shade, the mosses and capillary plants are seen to flourish. The fallen trunks of trees are covered with enormous fungi waved with different colours: there is, also, an infinite variety of ferns; and the common moss of Europe is here seen, but of a much larger growth. Instead of the reeds which we are accustomed to see on the sides of rivers, the songes grow in abundance along these streams; they are a kind of *nymphaea*, and resemble the water-lily, so great an ornament to our tranquil pools.

To these we shall add a description of several trees, shrubs, and plants, which grow in the north part of Madagascar, and were brought from thence to the Isle of France, in the latter part of the year 1768, by M. Rochon.

The *Malao-manghit*, is a tree whose bark is brown, the trunk straight, and its wood black; the sap is naturally white and milky, but when exposed to the air becomes red as blood. The leaves of this tree have a sweet and aromatic smell, and its fruit is a kind of nutmeg. The *Malegaches* suppose that it possesses the same virtues which we attribute to the true nutmeg.

The *Rarabe*. It is a wild nutmeg tree, and a much larger, as well as finer tree than the *Malao-manghit*. It produces a nutmeg that yields an aromatic oil, with which the *Malegaches* rub their bodies and anoint their hair. It is also employed to dissipate cold humours; and, taken inwardly, fortifies the stomach.

The *Bachi-bachi*. It resembles the *Rarabe*; though there is some difference in the fruit and leaves. This tree delights in elevated situations. The rind, the mace, and the nut, are all aromatic.

The *Rharha-horac*. It is the real wild nutmeg: its trunk is large and its branches bushy, and it flourishes in marshy situations.

The *Foumigo-mena-rubou*. A large blue pigeon is very fond of the fruit of this tree, and sows the nut in all parts of the islands.

* *Ceterach* aut *Asplenium*.

Ravend-sara. Of all the various nutmeg trees in Madagascar, this more particularly attracts the attention of the botanist. The essence which is extracted from its leaves, possesses the united perfume of the clove, the cinnamon, and the nutmeg: they also produce an oil which is more esteemed than that of the clove, and it is preferred in culinary preparations, by the cooks of the Indies, to any other spice. It is a very precious tree, and loves a moist soil, though it is seen to flourish in a dry one: it grows to a large size, and its pyramidal head is well furnished with leaves. Its wood is white, hard, heavy, and without smell; but the bark sends forth a very powerful odour. The fruit of the Ravend-sara is of a globular form, flattened on its two extremities: its odour, as well as that of its shell, is not so strong as the perfume of the leaf, but is of a more delicate fragrance.

The Harame. It is the loftiest and largest tree of the country of Foule-pointe: its wood is white, but red at the heart. When it has attained its full growth, it sheds its exterior bark every year, which is of a greyish colour, and thick contexture. The trunk of this tree is smooth, and without any branches, but at its extremity, where it is well dressed with foliage, and the tuft which crowns it is a pleasing object. The least incision made in this tree procures an abundance of a white resinous and aromatic juice: the female Malegaches make a paste of it, which they consider as a very valuable cosmetic for the preservation of the skin. On burning this resin, it dispenses perfume like that of incense. The fruit consists of a nut, whose outside skin alone gives an aromatic fragrance.

The Laben. This tree grows on the sea-shore, and consequently loves a sandy soil: it rises to a great height, and its wood is hard, of a reddish hue, and suited to the purposes of joinery. The fruit is of the size and shape of an olive, and its kernel is of a white colour and delicate taste.

The Fouraha. It is a very fine tree, and one of the most useful productions of hot countries. Except the teak, it is the best wood that the Indies afford for the construction of ships. It produces a balm of a green colour, which is a very excellent vulnerary. It is large, with spreading branches and tufted foliage; but the most remarkable circumstance belonging to it is its extraordinary height.

The Tevartna. This tree presents, amidst the wild irregularity of the forest, all the symmetry of art: it has all the appearance of having been clipped into the form of a pyramid, consisting of seven distinct stages.

The Huinchy. This is the most common tree in the forests of Foule-pointe; and,

from the thick foliage of its top, is calculated to form avenues: it resembles the plumb tree, and rises to a similar height. Its wood is red, and may be used in joiner's work: its bark is very smooth and white, and its leaves, which are large, possess a very brilliant verdure.

The Fotersbé. It is among the largest trees of Madagascar; but its wood is fit only for fuel. There is another kind of it, which grows in swamps and marshy places. M. Flacourt describes it under the name of Voua foutra.

The Tanguem. It grows on the sea-shore, and its wood, which is hard and veined, is employed in cabinet and ornamental work. The Malegaches make a fatal use of its fruit, which contains a deadly poison. It is an undoubted Manchenillier.

The Antafara. This is known in the Isle of France by the name of the milk tree; its flower has the odour and figure of the jessamine. A slight incision produces, in great abundance, a caustic, milky juice.

The Assy. This is a fine palm tree, which grows to the height of ten or eleven feet; its trunk is impressed with the mark of its leaves, which it successively sheds. Its top is crowned with three or four rows of leaves, from four to five feet in length, and about an inch and an half broad, which resemble the leaf of the flax plant: they possess the consistence of palm leaves, and are manufactured into umbrellas.

The Tafoumonna. This tree is large and tufted; the bark is smooth, and the wood white. Its fruit is an acorn, like that of the oak; whose kernel has an aromatic taste, with a slight flavour of turpentine.

The Hounits. It is a large and very fine tree; the bark is red, and the wood yellow. On an incision, a red juice issues from it of the colour of coral. From the bark of the root the Malegaches extract a fine red dye, by means of a common lie.

The Zavin-raven. It grows in marshy situations, rises to a moderate height, and is somewhat tufted: the trunk is covered with knots; the bark green, and the wood white.

The Lingo. This is a woody creeper, of about two inches in diameter, which ascends to the top of the highest trees: the wood is yellow, as well as the inside of the bark. The Malegaches employ the bark and root of this plant to dye the thread of their *pugue* of a red and yellow colour.

The Harongan. It rises to the height of fifteen feet, and grows in a sandy soil: its leaves are employed to dye hats and baskets. The rosin extracted from this tree is a kind of dragon's blood.

The Tancarson. This is a wild vine, whose fruit is sour, but rather palatable, and esteemed by the natives. This creeper attaches itself to trees, and winds itself to the top of them: its root is diuretic. M. Flacourt, who has described several kinds of the wild vine, has not mentioned the tancarson.

The Taco. It is a kind of vine, like that which has been just described.

The Voua-lomba. This is the fruit of a vine, which Europeans prefer to every other; it is called the Madagascar grape, and has a sharp taste. This plant dies every year; its root is a kind of igname. (*Discorea oppositifolia*, Linn.)

The Anakuey. A sensitive plant.

The Aresou. A kind of elder tree.

The Tounounan.

The Tafoumounam. An acorn fruit with a small white flower.

The Racoudrit. A green fruit in bunches.

The Uvangkiri. A plant with large square pods, which contain a bean that is an anti-hemorrhoidal.

The Tevarte. A shrub of a pyramidal form, that ascends in natural stages.

The Azambou. A fruit that has the appearance of a bunch of red flowers.

The Una-he tatchou. An eatable fruit.

The Sampan-lea. A fruit which grows in the form of a chaplet.

The Tchingbit. A bean, with a yellow flower.

The Lacca. A small berry, like a pepper-corn; the flower like those of the hazle nut.

The Voguindosong.

The Farpechourou. A kind of lily, in the shape of a star. It announces the season of the whale fishery.

The Voua-hintchi.

The Fila v. *equisetum arborescens*.

The Voantlisan. A thorny tree, whose leaves are confined to its top.

The Tchusi-ovi. A kind of *ipeacuanha seriploca*.

The Jacuan. A species of almond; a tree without leaves, which emits a gum.

The Timbalave. A shrub with a white bell-flower.

The Ampalt. A round leaf, that files iron.

The Anghivi. A kind of bréde; whose red fruit is used to give a bitter, but agreeable, taste to the drink of the natives.

The Azou-ranou.

The Farafer. (Plante parasite), with a long red flower in the shape of a hand, or a fork with five prongs.

The Vongo. A fine tree, whose fruit is called Vaassou voura. On incision, it yields a yellow juice.

The Vua-mitsa voi. An Aster.

The Tougouna-lein-tein. A kind of mint.

The Sanoang-matan-nahaurou. A kind of creeping asparagus.

The Ranga-zaa. A bulbous root, with a white flower.

The Tchilotou. A white tulip.

The Fifoutche. A tree, whose leaves resemble those of the mallow, with flowers round its trunk.

The Shira. A palm tree, from whose bark, when burned, an eatable salt is extracted.

The Raven-tongharts. A balsamic plant.

The Tanroujou. A kind of benjoin.

The Azou-ranou. A shrub, whose fruit has the flavour of cinnamon.

The Afatraha. A shrub, with an odoriferous bark.

The Vaing-bare. A plant, with an hairy leaf and a white flower.

The Talate. Its leaf is thick and its fruit red, like that of the holly-oak.

The Jang. A tree that produces large bunches of flowers.

The Vua-tani. Its flower resembles that of the Lihou of China.

The Vua-montucung. A plant, with a leaf like that of the tamarind, and its fruit resembles a bean.

The Vua-toutouc. A shrub, with red fruit, which is eatable, and has the flavour of the strawberry.

The Moulton-rongou. It has a resemblance to the rara; its leaf is small, and its fruit is of an oblong angular shape.

The Vouang-titirang. A kind of nut, whose outward shell is yellow and hairy.

The Voua-malim. A kind of Gousse d'houate.

The Voua-rougui. A kind of Manglier.

The Voua-tourindi. A large tree, which bears a small red flower in great bunches.

The Ampali. It bears a large leaf, which polishes wood, and rubs off the rust of iron.

The Joudi-fafal. Semper vivens.

The Voua-severantou.

The Vouang-taé. *Malum cidonium.*

The Voua-futre. A kind of box tree, whose aromatic fruit is eatable.

The Enghi-panza. The lesser indigo.

The Enghi-bé. The large indigo.

The Vua-macaliong. A kind of taarin, from which oil is extracted.

The Sacaviro-ambon. A species of the Zedaire.

The Vua fao. A kind of palm of Sagou.

The Ouvi-rombé. A creeper, whose leaf is small, and in the form of a heart with a very sharp point.

The Chifontsui. The leaf is small, and in pairs, like that of the small haramé; its flower has four green leaves, which form a cup.

The Vua horda. A fruit, in the shape of a cucumber, and which smells like a quince.

The Sanguamou-batou. A plant, whose leaf has the same effect on fish as the coque du Levant. It must be bruised.

The Vaint-sombou. An herb, which has the same qualities.

The Sanga, sanga. The real papyrus.

The Vua-tondinga. A fruit like the pipar of China.

The Vua carabo. A kind of large flat chesnut, which grows on a creeping plant.

The Vua nantoula. It contains a large almond, of the same shape as the kernel of the sapotilla, but much thicker.

The Vouang pin-lela: with leaves like the cinnamon tree, but without odour.

The Vua-tingui lé-pas. Fruit of a green colour, whose leafy bulb opens like the petal of a flower. The seeds are contained in a triangular pod.

The Anja oidy. A kind of heath, which grows to a considerable height.

The Vua tchirie. A kind of vacoua, with long and narrow leaves.

The Vua-khieason. A small fruit, like the ragoustah.

The Tehouti moron, or ranou. A plant, with a small husk.

The Vua-hia-vave. A creeping plant, with white female leaves.

The Vua nambouavon. A red fruit in bunches; with flowers of a violet blue, and whitish leaves. It is esteemed as a vulnerary.

The Vua rhe. A kind of fig tree, whose fruit is excellent.

The Vua he taitson.

The Varou. A kind of mallow.

The Lindern. A kind of palm tree, with the leaf of the seolopente.

The Angnan-rambou-lahe.

The Tongou hintchi.

The Harame; whose rosin partakes of the nature of ambergris.

The Chingolpont.

The Christala.

The Alut mandrout.

The Vangoni nangbona.

The Bakrang. A plant, with large buds.

The Ardouranga. A small plant, with vegetable flowers and red husk, like that of indigo.

The Vaguinang boua. A shrub, with a white hairy leaf, and white flower; the root is a fine vulnerary.

The Cani-prouti. A grass, with a large leaf; from whence the natives extract a juice, with which they paint their bodies.

The Chipoulou pouli.

The Adabou. A large tree.

The Ouoi-randra. An aquatic plant, with an indented leaf; the flower has two horns: the root is eatable.

The Tottlas. A kind of laurel, whose leaf and berry are aromatic.

The Voua-houda. A large fruit, like the mangue, of an oblong and cylindrical form; of a pleasant odour, with a ramified kernel, and leaves arranged opposite to each other.

The Mounou founace. A shrub, with a blue flower and a trefoil leaf.

The Azou-minti. A very curious pyramidical shrub.

The Azou-minti-be. A very fine tree, of the same form, with large leaves.

The Toucam-boudi. A small palm tree, with large leaves divided at the extremity.

The Fourangdra. A kind of winter cherry, with a triangular leaf, like that of parsley.

The Vua mandroucou. Bunches of flowers issue from its trunk, with spiral petals.

The Voua-mena. A sweet fruit, of a red colour, like that of coral; both the wood and leaves are red.

The Mang. A tree, whose leaf is like that of the mallow, but larger and stronger: its flower is downy, like that of the ketmia, and of a red colour, like the rose.

The Angue-malou. A kind of aromatic brède; its flower is of a golden colour.

The Voulang-boudi-pouni. A red wood, which in time becomes black: it is used in dying.

The Tsimamasoo. A creeping plant, whose red flower is in the form of the jessamine.

The Manouquibonga. A shrub, with branches like those of the vine, and whose beautiful red flowers are ranged like an aigrette.

The Maan. A kind of veloutier, with leaves like the mallow.

The Sonmouterang. A downy flower.

The Lalong.

The Via fouchi. A woody creeper, whose fruit is inclosed in a cup, in the form of a star.

The Diti-azou. A fruit, which has the form of a small pear.

The Tavoutala. A small bulbous plant, of the orchis kind; its flower is of a grey colour.

The Chetchia. A kind of hieracium, with a yellow flower.

The Agnan rambou. Another hieracium, of a violet colour.

The Cutoubanda. A kind of pimperl, which is applied to swellings.

The Nanton. A twisted tree, of two kinds, the large and the small leaf.

The Ampelang-thi-fouhe. Gentianella, with violet flowers.

The Campoudi. A kind of alsiné.

The Veloutier. Pithonia.

The Oubave. A tree, which produces a gum, like gum arabic.

The Bontou. A tree, whose root gives a yellow dye; it grows on the side of water, and its leaf is thick and in pairs.

The Voai-morang. A shrub, whose bark possesses astringent qualities.

The Vuendrang. A kind of galenga.

The Afé. A large polipode, whose seed is eatable.

The Tabouronangat. Bethel.

The Voua-rozan.

The Voua-assim.

The *Ampelantghi*. An agreeable plant, which grows to the height of twelve inches.

The *Sondi-fa-fat*. A plant, which is found on the sea-shore. The Malegaches rub their bodies with the leaves when they have suffered fatigue; and these frictions revive and refresh them: they pretend that its leaves are incorruptible. When medically applied, they are found to possess healing qualities.

The *Vognin d'oseng*. A plant, whose leaf resembles that of the lily; the time of its flowering marks the season for the whale fishery: the prows of the piroguas, employed on that commercial service, are adorned with garlands of these flowers.

The *Azimena*. A very agreeable shrub, that grows to the height of four feet: its top is tufted, and its leaves are thick and of a fine green: its flower emits a very fragrant odour.

The *Toulon gouala*. A shrub, whose odoriferous leaves serve the Malegaches for pillows: it rises to the height of four feet, and its fruit is bitter, oily, and aromatic.

The *Voua-azigné*. This is the straightest and loftiest tree of Madagascar; its yellow, hard, and compact wood is employed in building houses, and forming the keels of the great piroguas. The resinous juice that flows from it is yellow, like amber, and of a glutinous quality, but without any smell. The Malegaches extract from this valuable tree a clear oil, which, when fresh, is of an agreeable flavour; rice when mixed with it becomes a more delicate food; and this application of it is very common among the natives of the island.

The *Tougonnam*. This tree grows on the summit of the mountains; its wood, which is weighty, and of a yellowish-bronze colour, is used for inlaying, and to make sagayes.

The *Vohan silan*. This tree attains the height of twelve feet; its trunk is straight, and covered with thorns, but without leaves, which form a thick tuft round its top: they are of a very fine green, are four inches and an half in length, and two and an half in breadth. The wood-pigeons are greedy of its fruit, which is of a very singular shape.

The *Toulou*. A shrub, which grows in a bushy form, in any kind of soil; the fruit is called the Madagascar strawberry; it has a very agreeable flavour, and is esteemed by Europeans, as well as by the natives.

The *Voua-sévérantou*. A shrub, which also grows in a bushy form, to the height of seven feet, and loves a sandy soil: its wood is white.

The Chifont-fui. A beautiful shrub, whose trunk is straight and without any leaves, but those which adorn its round and tufted top.

The Finguere. A kind of wild fig tree, which, on incision, yields a milky juice, that, on coagulation, forms an elastic rosin; such as flows from the caout-chouc. The Malegaches make torches, which burn without wicks, and afford a sufficient light, when they pursue their nocturnal fishery. Spirit of wine have no effect on this rosin, but it dissolves in ether or linseed oil; other fat and oily substances have also a considerable effect on it. This tree rises to the height of twenty feet; its leaves are eight inches long and four broad, and its fruit resembles a round fig, which is full of small grains: the Malegaches eat it with pleasure, though it is sour and caustic. This elastic gum is well known in Europe, and when used as bandages, probes, &c. greatly facilitates certain chirurgical operations.

The Bagnets. A plant, from which the true indigo is extracted at Madagascar: this the natives perform by a very simple operation; they lay the leaves and the stem to soak in water, when the plant begins to flower; after putrefaction, the water becomes of a violet colour; and when it has attained a deep tint, the leaves and stems are taken out of it, and a certain quantity of oil poured into it; when the sediment has subsided the water is poured off; and the deposit, being dried in the shade, produces a fine indigo.

The Ravendras is not a muscadier, but, in the opinion of M. de la Mark, a proper species. It is the Bagato phyllum.

The Intchy, according to the same skilful botanist, is a basil hymenea.

The Antafara also, in his opinion, is among the genera of the Tabernamontana species.

The Filao is the Casuarina of Forster, and of Linnæus junior.

And, lastly, the Vua-tchirie is the Pandamus.

In the enumeration which has been made of the plants and trees of Madagascar, no notice has been taken of the following fruits, &c. &c.

The pine-apple, water melon, white pepper, and the banana; the saffron of the Indies, the great cardamum, the ginger, the veronica, the vesicaria, the pourpier, and the basil; the aster, the gentiliana, the bagnaudier, the veroche, and the papyrus of the ancients, called sanga-sanga, &c. &c.

Ambergris is found in the Isles of France, Bourbon, Rodriguez, &c. and the shores of the former are covered with coral.

The French caused the greater part of the plants, trees, &c. hereafter described, to be introduced into the island. Some of the inhabitants have also made considerable contributions; among others, Messrs. De Cossigny, Poivre, Hermans, &c.

1st. The reproductive plants, and which are, as it were, naturalized in the country.
 2d. Those which are cultivated in the fields. 3d. Such as are esculent, and belong to the kitchen garden. And, 4th. The different kinds of flowers.

Among the wild plants, a kind of indigo grows in the plains near the town.

The Pourpier is a native of the country, and loves sandy places.

The Water-cress is found in the rivulets, where it was sown some years ago. The dandelion and wormwood grow freely among the rubbish, and in earth that has been moved. But, above all, the *Molene** spreads its large and downy leaves, and shoots up its cluster of yellow flowers to an extraordinary height.

The Squine, (which is not the Chinese plant of the same name) is a grass, that grows to the height of the finest rye, and chokes up the other herbs by the quickness of its growth; but it must be eat while it is green, as it is too tough when dry to be used as food for any animal. It is green only five months in the year; and the black Maroons sometimes set fire to it, in defiance of the ordinances published against such a conflagration.

The Brette, whose name, in the Indian language, signifies an eatable leaf, is a species of morel. There are two kinds of them; the one called the Brette of Madagascar, whose leaf is somewhat thorny, but of a sweet taste, and a purgative quality. The other, which is in more common use, is served at table as spinage. It grows every where, and the water in which it is boiled is very bitter. The blacks moisten their manioc in it.

The plants which are cultivated are as follow:

The Manioc, of which there is another kind, called camaignoc, grows in the driest spots. It is a shrub, whose leaf resembles that of hemp; its root is as long, and as large as a man's arm; and, when grated, is made into cakes: three pounds of it are given to each Negro for his daily food. M. de la Bourdonnais procured it to be brought from the island of Madeira, and, as it quickly multiplies, is sheltered from the hurricanes, and gives a nutritious subsistence to the Negroes, is a most valuable plant.

The Maiz, or Indian corn, grows here to great perfection. It is a valuable grain, from its productive nature; though if it be kept long, the insect gets into it.

* *Verbascum.*

Wheat also flourishes here, though it does not grow to a great height. It is sown by hand on account of the rocky soil; and is seldom kept more than two years. Although its flour is never very white, its bread is preferable to that produced by the flour of Europe, for long voyages.

The cultivation of rice is very successful; this grain produces more abundantly than the wheat.

The small millet yields a very plentiful harvest.

Oats succeed well in this island, but they are little cultivated.

The Negroes grow tobacco for their own consumption.

The fataque, is a grass with large blades, like those of a small reed: artificial meadows are made of it. It is a native of Madagascar. *Onobrychis.*

M. de St. Pierre mentions that attempts have been made to cultivate sainfoin, trefoil, flax, hemp, and hops, in this island, but without success.

The culinary and fructiferous Plants.

The greater part of the vegetables degenerate, and those who are curious in them, must annually obtain their seeds from Europe, or the Cape of Good Hope. The peas are tough, and without sweetness: the kidney-beans are hard; but there is a kind of them, which are larger and more tender, called the Cape pea. There is another kind, with whose vines arbours are formed. Horse beans are successful. There is also a kind of bean, whose pod is a foot in length; its grains are large, but are never eaten; and its branches are so luxuriant as to form verdant bowers.

The artichokes put forth large leaves, but produce small heads, which are very tough, unless the root has been well manured. Hedges are formed of them, as they are very thorny, and rise to a considerable height.

The Giromon is a small pumpkin. The cucumber is also diminutive, and less productive here than in Europe. The melon is in great estimation; and the Pastèque, or water-melon, is excellent: the climate is very favourable to it, as well as the soil, when improved by manure.

Gourds grow here to an enormous size, and are of great use, as they form the utensils of the Negroes.

The Bringelle, or Aubergine, is of two kinds: the one, which is a native of Madagascar, has a very thick bark, and produces a round and yellow fruit; the other, which is known in Europe, yields a blue fruit of the size of a large fig.

There are two sorts of pimento; the one which is known in Europe, and the other which is natural to this island. It is a shrub, whose fruit is very small, and shines like grains of coral, on a foliage of the finest green. The Creols use it in all their ragouts; it is a very strong pepper, and burns the lips like a caustic: it is called the fiery pimento.

The Ananas, the finest of fruits, is known here; and the strawberry begins to multiply in cool situations: they however are not very productive, any more than the raspberry, whose fruit has degenerated. There is a very fine sort from China, which attains the size of cherries, and is very abundant; but it is neither sweet nor fragrant.

Spinage, cresses, sorrel, parsley, fennel, and celery, are of difficult cultivation: the beet, lettuce, endive, and cauliflower, are much smaller and less tender than they are in Europe. The cabbage, which is among the most useful vegetables, flourishes here. The pimpernel, purslain, and sage, increase here; but, above all, the cistercian, which is a long-lived plant.

Asparagus, carrots, parsnips, sassafrass, radishes, and turnip radishes, require cultivation; but as cattle are scarce, manure is proportionably rare. There is a kind of Chinese radish, which is successful. The red beet flourishes, but is very woody. The Pomme de terre, *Solanum Americanum*, is not larger than a walnut, from being ill cultivated: those of the Indies, called Cambar, weigh often upwards of a pound: its skin is blue, like a violet; but it is white within, and its taste very insipid: it affords a variety to the food of the Negroes. It multiplies considerably, as well as the potatoe, some kinds of which are preferable to the European chesnut. Saffron is used to give a colour to culinary, or cari, preparations, like the pistil in Europe. The ginger is not so hot as that of the Indies. The pistachio, which is not the fruit of the pistachio tree, is a small nut, that grows in the ground, in a rough shell: to be eaten, it must be roasted; but it is principally cultivated in order to extract a lamp-oil. This plant is a phenomenon in botany, as it is very rare indeed that oily qualities are found in those fruits which grow beneath the surface of the earth.

The mignonette, balsam, tuberose, larkspur, China-aster, and small pinks, all flourish as in Europe. The large pinks and lilies put forth abundance of leaves, but seldom bear flowers. Anemones, ranunculas, and the Indian rose, as well as the stock and the poppy, flourish in this island.

Among the more common flowering plants of Africa there is but one, which is the fine everlasting of the Cape; whose berries are large and red, like strawberries, and