



eight Andamanese Mr. Corbyn took with him to Calcutta in November, 1865, two were drowned, one was murdered, one had died a natural death, and four, of whom two were murderers, were still in the Settlement.

Major Ford did not approve of Mr. Homfray's proposal to hang Jim, so the latter suggested that he should be sent to Burmah for a year, as were Crusoe and Friday in Major Haughton's time, to be under the care of some Government schoolmaster or chaplain there, to be taught English, and be so trained that on his return to the Andamans he could be made some use of. This, however, was not done.

Jim remained by himself in hiding in the jungle, and Mr. Homfray sent out a notice to the other Andamanese of his tribe that when caught he would be punished. Jumbo's friends connived at Jim's escape and refused to assist Mr. Homfray in apprehending him as, angry as they were with Jim, and anxious to wreak their own vengeance on him, they did not wish to see him hanged. Mr. Homfray was under the impression, though wrongly, that Moriarty was sheltering Jim, so turned him away from the Settlement on this account. Moriarty felt this unjust treatment, and a short time afterwards came to Mr. Homfray with a present of some honeycombs, asking him to allow him to again visit the Home. Mr. Homfray noticed that, at this time, the Andamanese used to bring in pán leaves, and jungle canes for the convict Parawallahs of the Andaman Homes, who ordered them to do so. There can be no doubt that, from this time onward, the convicts had considerable power over the Andamanese, who thought that the former had the ear of Mr. Homfray, and ill-treatment of the men and intrigues with the women were common, resulting in the latter case in the introduction of syphilis among the race, an evil Mr. Homfray never seemed to have feared, or made any attempt to guard against. The Burmese convicts had by this time taught the Andamanese to use dogs for pig hunting, and they had also all taken to tobacco smoking.





The Sept of the *Áka-Béa-da* living in Port Campbell now came to the Home, and Mr. Homfray regarded them as the most powerful among the South Andaman Septs. He states that "the Andamanese suffer much from chest diseases at the commencement of the rainy season, and approve of our treatment of them when they are ill."

By March 1866, he was slightly acquainted with all the tribes of the South Andaman Group (except the *Áukāū-Júwōi* and Kol) and their Septs which he considered to be separate Tribes. He noticed that each Sept had a Chief, and that the Septs quarrelled with each other; also that they had head-quarter stations where stores were accumulated and the sick were kept. He states that, in a quarrel the Andamanese separate to avoid a fight, keep apart for some time and then patch up a peace.

During the month of March an Andamanese from a Northern Tribe died at the Home, and being a stranger the other Andamanese would take no trouble about him, but let Mr. Homfray bury him.

The following report on the Andamanese for the year 1865-66 by Lieutenant-Colonel B. Ford, Superintendent of Port Blair, is inserted in full :—

"The intercourse that has been held with the Andamanese, during the year under report, has been satisfactory. Mr. Homfray, in charge of the "Andaman Home," has great influence and control amongst them, and has done much to advance the good understanding which now exists generally between the Andamanese and the inhabitants of the Settlement. Several visits have been made during the year under report to the aborigines on localities which are distant from the Settlement. On the first opportunity, the Andamanese of the Archipelago were visited on Outram Island, on which occasion the Superintendent met them accompanied by several officers of the Settlement. The following is Mr. Homfray's account of the meeting :—

"As our boat approached the shore, four of the Andamanese came out from the jungle, apparently preparing their arrows to fire on us, when I hailed them, threatening them if they attempted to fire, that I should punish them. There were four Andamanese with us who accompanied our party in the boat, who I knew well and could be depended on. They did their best to explain to those on shore, by calling to them from the bows of the boat, that we were friendly, having brought them food and presents, and told them that if they





aimed any arrows at the boat, they would be the sufferers, as we had muskets prepared to meet any hostility. It was not until after 15 minutes talking and every possible show of friendship, (keeping the boat out of reach), that they laid down their weapons, giving them up to our Andamanese, who swam to the shore and brought off the bows and arrows to us.

"We then landed guarded by Marine Service men, and remained on shore some time. There were 20 men, women, and children, apparently of one family; all appeared to be in good condition. They had also a canoe with some articles in it that must have been carried off by runaway convicts, in their possession.

"The women and children at the first sight of the rifles, which were out of view as far as was possible, were frightened and hid themselves. It is very curious that with them, as I make out, the presence of women should be an indication of peace, and it was noticeable that, as soon as the women came forward, the men thought it time to lay down their arms, and become peaceably disposed. We gave them a good many presents and food, at which they seemed pleased. Where I landed, I planted young cocoanuts, plantains, and pineapple shoots, and several kinds of seeds, of which I had brought a supply."

"The second meeting was held shortly afterwards with the Rutland Islanders. The Chief of this Tribe, that of the south coast, named Myo-ba-la-lah (Māia Biala.—*M. V. P.*) (Myo being a prefix signifying a friend) is a most remarkable man. His bearing being so different and superior to that of any other of the Andamanese that have yet been seen; his demeanour is at all times quiet and composed. He is tall and good-looking, having a very intelligent countenance, and his gentleness of manner, so opposite to the somewhat boisterousness of the Andamanese generally, is as remarkable as it is engaging. On this occasion there was no mistrust; the Southern Tribe people coming on board the steamer in the most confident manner. Mr. Homfray thus describes the meeting:—

"Three canoes filled with Andamanese came off to the steamer. The crews came on board, and after enjoying themselves on meeting with their friends, and partaking of the food and presents that were





given them, invited me on shore. I went with my party, and was surprised to see their large camp, with a family group of about 50, in half a dozen huts, with canoes, bows and arrows, knives, several pieces of iron, an old 32 lb. shot, (Government property), and some fine turtles which abound there, and are principally their food. On account of there being a shoal, the boat was not able to get there, when one of the chiefs came and carried me on shore on his back.

"The first amusement was a great dance, in which my party of Andamanese had to join. After a couple of hours, we returned to the steamer, bringing away several articles which they exchanged with us for food, beads, and old iron. Sixteen souls of this place accompanied us back to Ross; some of my party were related to them, and remained behind."

"Mr. Homfray shortly after again visited this Tribe on the occasion of his search for a lost boat. He found it, (he says), but the Andamanese had cut out of the boat pieces of iron thereby injuring it to a considerable extent. "I found some of them near the boat, who were pointed out by the runaways, (convicts), as being those who took away the boat and provisions from them. They at first feigned surprise at being taxed with this, but afterwards confessed that they were guilty, and offered to compensate me with their own canoe for the injury done to the boat. I at first doubted their sincerity, and sent the canoe back to them after a day with some food, but, to my surprise, when at anchor on the east side of Macpherson's Straits, on the afternoon of that day, by the bird's nest cave, and while watering the ship, they brought the canoe off a second time to the steamer, and were particular in explaining to me, that the canoe was no longer theirs. I was glad to see that they understood what wrong they had done, and were sorry for it."

"Later in the year Mr. Homfray visited the Port Mouat tribe at that place. On this occasion he had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of Oo-loo-golo, (Wologa Jôla.—*M.V.P.*) the Chief of the tribe resident about Cape Bluff. Mr. Homfray thus describes his meeting with the tribe: "As I was reaching the end of the Port Mouat road, I perceived in the Harbour a canoe with a number of Andaman-





ese in it. On hailing them, they instantly advanced, and were glad at meeting me. They took me over in their canoe to their camp on the sea shore by Grub Island, a distance of five miles to sea from the road to Port Blair (on the mainland at Port Mouat), where I met a number of them, who were familiar with and glad to see me.

"During the day, I was fed with the fruit, (sappota), (?) and fish, which the women got at low water for me amongst the rocks. Some of the men went out hunting pigs, and some a few miles further to the south, where they were making a canoe. I returned in the evening with a number of them in their canoes, amongst whom were the Chiefs. They brought me to the shore north of Port Mouat, being anxious to visit friends there."

"Lastly, Mr. Homfray visited the tribe resident in the vicinity of Port Campbell on the western coast. Not only did he on this occasion meet them, but many aborigines also coming from 20 miles further north from that place. Of this meeting, Mr. Homfray states :—

"Wherever I met with the Andamanese, they welcomed me, as they had all seen me before at the Home. I was surprised myself in having met my friends so high up the coast. They gave me all the information I required, as also some fish, and showed me fresh water springs, which quite refreshed me."

"Of other circumstances connected with this trip, more information will be given further on. The visits of the Andamanese to the Home established on Ross Island, have been both numerous and frequent during the year.

"Several Chiefs have also been encouraged to come in and visit the Superintendent, amongst others, Myo-ba-la-lah, (Māia Biala), the Chief of the Southern Tribe; the Chief of Middle Straits, Dos-may-blee, (Méba); the Chief of Cape Bluff, Oo-loo-golo (Wologa Jóla); the Chief of the North Tribe, Jacko; the Port Campbell Chief, and the Port Mouat Chief, while the chiefs of tribes living nearer about Port Blair, have constantly been into the Settlement. On one occasion no less than the heads of five tribes, with a number of followers were assembled on Ross Island. The occasion was that of the introduction of some 20 men of the Eastern Archipelago Tribe, who made their first.





visit to the Settlement, they being brought over by our oldest friends the people of the North Tribe. There were thus, the North, South, Port Mouat, the Rutland, and the Eastern Archipelago Tribes, all assembled at the Home. "Such a meeting," Mr. Homfray observes "I am confident never occurred ere this, even amongst themselves, bringing with them, as they did, such a large number of their different families."

"The new comers appeared surprised at meeting so many people of different tribes in one place, as well as the state of harmony that appeared to exist amongst all. They were greatly amused, of course, with everything that they saw: the whole party occupied themselves in feasting, dancing, fishing, and hunting excursions. The new visitors remained a week, after which time they appeared anxious to return home, being like all new comers, somewhat timid. They went off in great spirits, in their three canoes that they brought with them, taking many presents, and assured of the good will of the Government and Superintendent towards them.

"A good understanding now exists with nine tribes, North tribe South tribe, Rutland Islanders, Port Mouat tribe, Port Campbell tribe, Middle Straits tribe, Middle Andamans tribe, (!?) Eastern Archipelago tribe, and Labyrinth Islanders, having Chiefs or Elders, whom all the rest respect and obey. There can be no doubt but that the friendly treatment they have received in the Settlement is now known throughout the Middle Andamans, and that by next year the Settlement may be visited by their chiefs, by whose assistance a friendly acquaintance will, it is hoped, be made with the tribes of North Andaman. It will then remain to acquire some knowledge of the tribes of the interior of the Islands, located somewhat more on the north-west coast, as also of the inhabitants of Little Andaman, lying some 20 miles south of Rutland Island. Mr. Homfray remarks that "it is extraordinary how our kindness has drawn these savages even on mere hearsay to flock in, and put themselves under our charge, and who would," he believes, "willingly give themselves over to our entire care." This is good progress with people who, a couple of years ago, would have fled from us or fired on us if followed. (As soon as



friendly relations were established with one Tribe of a Group, they were extended in time to the remaining Tribes in that Group as a matter of course.—*M. V. P.*)

"The question naturally occurs, what return have we received for all this kindness lavished upon these Islanders. To expect a direct return from the untutored savage would be absurd, but indirectly this conciliatory treatment of them tends to do good. To expect labour (*i.e.*, manual field labour) is equally out of the question, at all events at this early stage of our intercourse with them. To remove their fear of the strangers upon their shores has been no small task.

"There was a time when they dreaded the appearance of a sail or the landing of a human being upon their shores with a skin less black than their own. Such comers, mostly from the Malayan Islands, sought the Andamans but to seize and capture the Islanders for sale as slaves at the Courts of "Siam," "Atheen," or "Cambodia." These were adventures of risk; what wonder then that the savage drew his bow upon the stranger that would rob him of his kin, or that the pirate fought fiercely to retain the unfortunate victim within his grasp. Thus the Islanders regarded all, save those who were joint occupants of the land they lived in, as their enemies; and thus it was that when the storm-driven vessel was thrown a wreck upon their island reefs they and their tribes, exasperated by former wrongs, also their natural cupidity intensely excited in view of the plunder thrown within their grasp, would fall upon the lost and weary mariner, now an easy victim and make the wreck their own. Thus it is that the belief exists, even in these days, amongst seafaring people even of education, that the "Andaman Islanders" are blood-thirsty and ruthless cannibals!

"In the intercourse that has been held with the Andamanese during the past two years, particularly latterly, it has been the desire of the Superintendent, in which he has been ably seconded by Mr. Homfray, to make these poor people understand that all new comers on their shores are their friends and not their enemies. That the kidnapping that once prevailed is now no longer tolerated, and that every protection will be afforded them therefrom. That information should always be given by them, of all foreigners that they might find in distress, no





matter of what colour. That they should succour them, and that reward would be sure to follow; and there are strong grounds for hoping, from their bearing towards the inhabitants generally of this Settlement, whether within its limits or at a distance from it, that those who might hereafter be unhappily cast away upon the shores of the "Andamans," would not only meet with forbearance, if not kindly treatment from them. That they have much disposition so to act, and are willing to be useful, may be inferred from the following occurrences which have taken place at various times during the year under report.

"In the early part of the year Mr. Homfray had occasion to proceed to Port Mouat, for the purpose of endeavouring to intercept some runaway Burmese convicts. 40 Andamanese on his invitation accompanied him, and "gave him all the information that he wished for," and though the search was then unsuccessful as regards the capture of the Burmese, they busied themselves in searching for, and found indications of their recent presence in Port Mouat, which they guided Mr. Homfray towards, and showed him.

"On another occasion, the Andamanese, discovering a party of escaped Burmese constructing a canoe on the western coast, voluntarily came and gave Mr. Homfray information of the fact, offering to guide him to the spot.

"Again, Mr. Homfray being out some eight miles north of Ross Island endeavouring to intercept some runaways, and landing on seeing some fires on the shores, was entirely surrounded by a number of armed Andamanese. So soon as they saw who he was, "Crusoe" (as he is called here) the head of their party, at once in friendly spirit gave over his bow and arrows to Mr. Homfray, and carried him and his party to their camp, where they spent the night in rude but hearty and hospitable demonstrations of welcome, rejoicing with dancing and singing, in their way, until daylight.

"In the month of April, 1865, the Andamanese brought Mr. Homfray information of having seen certain runaways steering through Middle Straits, who they noticed making their way to Strait Island, and it was in pursuit of these men that they, accompanying Mr. Hom-





fray so far as Port Campbell, afforded him information as to the whereabouts of four other runaway convicts, towards whose concealment they led Mr. Homfray, and actually assisted him in their capture. This was very satisfactory.

"On two occasions also, finding runaway convicts in the jungles, the one a half-witted creature, probably reduced to that state by privations, and the other in a shockingly emaciated and weak state from the same cause, while wandering without sustenance in the wilds of the forests, the Andamanese brought them in towards Viper Island, and when near that place one of the aborigines went across to the Island and gave information to the Overseer of the proximity of these escaped convicts, who thereon was enabled to send out for and bring them in.

"Again, under Mr. Homfray's orders attached to the "Andaman Home" was a prisoner named Peterson. This man accompanied by one or two natives of India had been sent out to the jungles to bring in some fibre material and had wandered to some distance on the mainland west of Chatham Island when they were unexpectedly met by a large number of Andamanese, who came out from the forest and met them in a very friendly manner, took them to their camp, and there offered them a meal which was specially prepared for them, nor were they content with this display of hospitality, for while thus entertaining them others went hunting and fishing, and having accompanied and assisted them in procuring a supply of the fibre that they required, they presented them with the results of their sport, and accompanied Peterson and his party to their boat on their return, and it may be considered that no better proof of the friendly feeling now existing amongst them towards those they know could be shown, than this unexpected and spontaneous offer of hospitality on the part of the Andamanese.

"It was no uncommon thing, until recently, when convicts might be returning from foresting, for the Andamanese to hang about their track, and surrounding any straggler, to deprive him of his axe or dah. The convicts now say that the Andamanese never molest them; and some of the Burmese who supposed that the Aborigines had a particular ill-feeling towards them (from their resemblance to the Malays, who in their former piratical excursions to these shores caused such





alarm and hatred of themselves amongst these Islanders) now describe frequent and friendly visits of the Andamanese to their camps.

"Now perhaps of all convicts none get on so well together as the Burmans do with the Aborigines, and neither appear to have any fear of the other in their jungle meetings.

"During the year Mr. Homfray has taken much pains to acquire a knowledge of the Andamanese tongue. He now talks to them freely and both seem readily to understand each other. He has the material which will be of very great use in compiling a vocabulary. A convict munshi and three parawallahs also have acquired some knowledge of the language of the Andamanese, and can make themselves pretty well understood by, and are successful in managing, them.

"The Superintendent and Mr. Homfray have made many efforts to induce the Aborigines to bring in bamboos, thatch, wild fruit, and game, etc., for barter, but so far as these efforts have been made, they have not been very successful. If the Andamanese could be utilised in this way, such supplies would meet with a ready market. But strange though the statement may appear, these people do not seem to have any capability of counting, nor is it found that they have any words expressive of numerals in their language. Efforts have been made frequently to teach them, by placing bundles of tobacco, biscuit, beads, etc., in certain numbers or parcels before them, and placing bamboos or other articles desired of them opposite. That exchange was wanted they could understand, but the number of this or that article required for such exchange, they could not be made to comprehend.

"Mr. Homfray, who is very patient with them, has not been able to make them count beyond four or five. Under circumstances so disadvantageous to *them*, it is almost better to refrain from attempts to barter with them, rather than that they should think themselves under any compulsion, or, (though unintentionally), unfairly treated with. But they have still made themselves useful in other ways also; on one occasion their assistance was of much value in endeavours that were being made to lift a valuable lighter that had sunk laden with stone. They had assisted in heaving her up, and at length by diving got out





her ballast and lightened her. These people can dive and bring up comparatively heavy weights from a depth of six fathoms.

"On another occasion their cleverness in diving was turned to a good account, by employing them to clear the screw of H. M.'s Steamer *Dalhousie*, which was jammed by the coiling about it of a hawser, all efforts having failed to free the same. These people successfully accomplished this very difficult work for the reward of a few biscuits. They have been taught to make mats, at which work they are very handy, and did a good deal in that way in the construction of the Andaman Home on Ross Island.

"It may also be mentioned that they have been always very useful in affording information as regards the practicability of creeks, course of streams, and jungle routes. They are also anxious to show the trees, the wood, bark, or roots of which they make use, the earth they use for colouring their utensils, canes, and fibres, edible plants, etc. All this information will come to good account when more time can be spared for explorations into the interior.

"In the month of August Mr. Homfray, having occasion to visit Calcutta on duty, was permitted to take seven of the Andamanese with him. He speaks very highly of their good behaviour while away from Port Blair, and describes them as greatly interested in the new and various objects they encountered or were taken to see.

"In the month of April, 1866, a party of Andamanese at Mr. Homfray's request were permitted to accompany him on the occasion of a steamer being sent to Barren Island. It appears that they were greatly surprised at the sight of the volcano on this island, for which it would seem, (though some of the Archipelago Tribe were on board), they had no name, nor had they ever heard of the Island before.

"It is gratifying to report that since June, 1864, there has not been one single act of violence on the part of the Andamanese towards any of the inhabitants on the Settlement. One case of murder is known, however, to have occurred among themselves. On Ross Island a lad of the South Tribe, in a quarrel at night with one of the North Tribe about some food, stabbed him in the stomach with a piece of iron, and immediately took to the water, and swam to the mainland. He has





since been apprehended, and is in custody on Ross Island pending a reference to Government.

“ Endeavours have been made by the Superintendent and Mr. Homfray to arrive at some approximate estimate of the Aboriginal population of these Islands, but it is impossible to obtain any facts on the subject.

“ Mr. Homfray is of opinion that the whole of the tribes of the Great Andamans cannot far exceed 3,000 souls in population.

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