



Crozet's Voyage to Tasmania, New Zealand, the Ladrone Islands, and the Phillipines, in the Years 1771 1772 by H. Ling Roth

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The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 21 (1892), pp. 205-206

Published by: [Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2842292>

Accessed: 16/06/2014 07:40

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“Crozet's Voyage to Tasmania, New Zealand, the Ladrone Islands, and the Phillipines, in the years 1771 1772.” Translated by H. Ling Roth. (Truslove and Shirley, London, 1891.) 8vo., pp. xxiii, 148. (Plates.)

In this translation of what is commonly known as “Crozet's Voyage,” Mr. Ling Roth has unearthed and made accessible to the ordinary reader an interesting account of the adventures of a party of Frenchmen who went, under the command of Marion de Fresne, in search of the great land which was supposed to be situated somewhere in the Southern Ocean. Crozet was Marion's lieutenant, and took command of the expedition after the murder of his chief by the New Zealanders.

To anthropologists the work is of interest as giving a brief, but vivid account of the natives of New Zealand as they were before they had been brought into close contact with the Europeans. The following extracts will serve to show that the author was not a bad observer:—“I remarked with great astonishment that amongst the native savages who boarded the vessels in the early days there were three kinds of men, of which those who appeared to be the true aborigines were yellowish-white and the biggest of them all, their mean height, 5 feet 9 to 10 inches, and their hair black, glossy and straight; others were more swarthy, and not quite so tall, their hair slightly frizzled (? curled); finally there were true negroes with woolly heads, not so tall as the others, but generally broader in the chest. The former have very little beard, and the negroes have very much. . . . Generally speaking, these three kinds of men are handsome and well formed, with good heads, large eyes, well-proportioned aquiline noses, and well-proportioned mouths, beautiful and very white teeth, muscular bodies, vigorous arms, strong hands, broad chests, extremely loud voices, small stomach, almost hairless, well-proportioned, but slightly gross legs, broad feet, and the toes well spread out. The women are not so good-looking on close examination; they have generally a bad figure, are short, very thick in the waist, with voluminous mammæ, coarse thighs and legs, and are of a very amorous temperament; while on the contrary the men are very indifferent in this respect.” Elsewhere Captain Crozet remarks: “It is, no doubt, surprising that we should have found at this corner of the earth, in islands unknown until the present day, and cut off from all communication with other parts of the globe, three varieties of man: whites, blacks, and yellows. It is almost certain that the whites are the aborigines. Their colour is, generally speaking, like that of the people of Southern Europe; and I saw several who had red hair. Amongst them were some who were as white as our sailors; and we often saw on our ships a tall young man, 5 feet 11 inches high, who, by his colour and features, might easily have passed for an European. I saw a girl, fifteen or sixteen years of age, as white as our French women.”

The book is well illustrated, and contains figures of several weapons and implements which are not commonly found in

museums. One of the most interesting is, perhaps, that of a beautifully carved funnel, used to feed a Maori Chief when his face is being tattooed, for at that time, owing to the inflammation set up by the operation, he has to be fed on liquid food, being unable to move his jaws.

An appendix by Mr. J. R. Boose, the Librarian of the Royal Colonial Institute, contains a brief summary of the principal works that should be studied by the student of New Zealand affairs.—[G. W. B.]

“The Melanesians, Studies in their Anthropology and Folk-Lore.” R. H. CODRINGTON, D.D. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1891. 8vo., pp. 419, Map and 33 Illustrations. Price, 16s.)

In his extremely valuable book, “The Melanesians,” Dr. Codrington has brought together the result of twenty-four years’ work in the West Pacific. Although the title is comprehensive, the observations here recorded are limited to that portion of Melanesia embracing the more southerly of the Solomon Islands to the northern New Hebrides. Melanesia is the meeting ground, as the author points out, of two currents of influence, one from the Polynesian Islands of the East Pacific, the other from the Asiatic Islands of the Malay Archipelago. Upon these currents float respectively the kava-root and the betel-nut. This mixture of races is apparent in the region studied by Dr. Codrington, but it is evident that the book deals almost entirely with customs which are truly Melanesian. The author appears to have overlooked the fact that the kava has crossed the track of the betel-nut as an outlier is found in the Fly River district of New Guinea. The occurrence of the loom in Santa Cruz only “may connect the people of that group with those of the Caroline Islands”; but our author makes no attempt to deal with the Ethnology of Melanesia.

The people are divided into two or more exogamous classes (clans), in which descent is counted through the mother. There are no tribes, no clan property in land, no hereditary chiefs. An exception to what elsewhere obtains is found in Ulawa, Ugi, parts of San Cristoval, Malanta, and Guadalcanar in the Solomon Group. A district in which the languages, decorative art, and appearance of the people differ from those of their neighbours; here there are no clans, and descent follows the father. In the Torres Islands and Northern New Hebrides there are only two clans which have neither name nor emblem; but names are given where there are more than two clans. Totems in the usual acceptance of the term are absent. The wife does not go over to her husband’s “side of the house,” nor he to hers; the children belong to the mother’s side. A man’s nearest relations are his sister’s children; his sons are not of his own kin, though he acts a father’s part to them. A youth looks to his mother’s brother, not to his father, for social advancement. There are no traces of a communal system of marriage. Although close relations belonging to different clans may lawfully marry, public opinion discountenances such unions.