

diffused themselves over the eastern islands of the Pacific in the course of the trade winds. Most writers have regarded their origin as Asiatic. Some of these consider that they are derived from the Malays,¹ hence the term Malayo-Polynesian so often applied to them, others again consider that both the Polynesians and Malays sprang from a common Asiatic stock, and that they both migrated from this common centre along independent routes to their respective geographical areas. Mr. W. H. Ranken considers² that this stock was Mongolian, as oblique eyes are common in Samoa, and in Tahiti many a Chinese labourer might be mistaken for a native. Others again think that we are to look to Hindustan for the origin of the Polynesians. Others again have accounted for the people of the Pacific, both Polynesians and Melanesians, on the theory so ably advocated by Charles Darwin that the Pacific is an area of subsidence, "and its great widespread groups of coral reefs mark out the position of former continents and islands," and that "the races of men now inhabiting these countries are therefore most probably the descendants of the races which inhabited these continents and islands."³

Dr. Krause accounts⁴ for the Melanesian people of the Pacific by supposing that in prehistoric times a great south oceanic continent existed, which extended from the east of Africa up to the Indian Ocean, from which the black race spread into both Africa and the South Seas, to their present habitat. The deep sea investigations of the Challenger, as well as the absence of characteristic continental rocks in Oceanic islands,⁵ have, however, by the demonstration of the great depth of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and by the apparent absence of any great changes in the bed of those oceans since Tertiary times, thrown great doubt upon the possibility of such an extensive continent ever having had any existence in either the Indian or Pacific Oceans.

As regards the hypothesis of Mr. Wallace—that the brown and the black peoples, the Mahori and Melanesian, are merely varying forms of one great Oceanic race, the diversities of which are to be accounted for from "the old but certain effects of the varying physical conditions which have resulted in the present state"⁶ of the surface of the land in Oceania—it is difficult to understand wherein such varying physical conditions could reside in islands subject to such uniform or closely allied climatic conditions, as the New Hebrides and Tonga, even on the supposition that they had at one time been the tops of continental mountains, so as to produce in one a black-skinned, frizzly-haired, dolichocephalic stock, and in the other a brown-skinned, straight-haired, brachycephalic people.

¹ Amongst recent writers the Rev. S. Whitmee has most strongly advocated the affinities between the Malays and Polynesians (*Contemporary Review*, Feb. 1873).

² *Op. cit.*

³ A. R. Wallace, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. Lond.*, vol. iii. p. 196, 1864, and *Malay Archipelago*, vol. ii.

⁴ *Die ethnograph.-anthr. Abtheilung des Godeffroy Museum.*

⁵ Paper by Mr. John Murray, *Coral Reefs*, *Proc. Roy. Soc. Edin.*, April 5, 1880, also joint paper by the Abbé Renard and Mr. Murray, *Proc. Roy. Soc. Edin.*, vol. xii. p. 495, 1884, and *Nature*, vol. xxx. pp. 84, 114, 132, 1884.

⁶ *Man in the Malay Archipelago*, *Trans. Ethn. Soc. of Lond.*, vol. iii. p. 213.