

bodily and mental qualities. They are generally above the middle height, and well formed. The forehead is high, and the cheek-bones prominent; the nose sometimes straight and sometimes depressed; the lips not very thick; teeth small and perpendicularly set; the hair is woolly, and the colour an umber or reddish brown, approaching to black.

The look and bearing of the Mina blacks are expressive of intelligence and dignity, and they betray little of the levity usually ascribed to the negro race.

In Brazil they occupy the highest position that slaves are allowed to attain, being employed as confidential servants, artisans, and small traders. They look down upon, and refuse to have any connexion with, or participation in, the employment of the other negroes. Many of them write and read the Arabic, and all can repeat some sentences of it. The greatest number of slaves who purchase their freedom belong to this race.

There is one singularity which seems to be common to the inhabitants of both regions, and which may be compared with the practice of tattooing which prevails throughout the tribes of Polynesia, viz., the custom of cutting or branding certain marks upon the face and body, by which the individuals of one tribe may be distinguished from those of any other. This practice is general among all the Minas, and also prevails along the eastern or Mozambique coast of Southern Africa. Among the western or Congo tribes it does not appear to be universal. It will be readily understood that these marks are of great service to the slave-traders, and all that have much to do with native Africans soon learn to distinguish them; and the price of a slave is depressed or enhanced accordingly. Among the Mina nations, so called after a port on the Slave Coast in Upper Guinea, where these slaves are obtained, this practice is carried to its greatest extent. Each province or city of importance has a distinct brand or mark, which is invariable for all the inhabitants.

Of the tribes speaking the Houssa language, the Goobere, or Gu-beri, from the kingdom of Bornou, have three or four marks on each side of the mouth, converging towards the corners.



Those from the town of Kano, inhabited by a population of traders, have several perpendicular and parallel marks on each cheek.



The same mark prevails among the people of Kashua and Labbi, neighbours of the foregoing.