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TRAVELS
IN WESTERN AFRICA,
IN 1845 & 1846,

COMPRISING

A JOURNEY FROM WHYDAH,
THROUGH THE KINGDOM OF DAHOMEY,
TO ADOFOODIA,
IN THE INTERIOR.

BY JOHN DUNCAN,
LATE OF THE FIRST LIFE GUARDS, AND ONE OF THE
LATE NIGER EXPEDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

IN presenting the following Work to the public, it may be deemed proper that I should preface it by giving some account of my previous career, and of the reasons and circumstances which led to my Travels in Western Africa.

I was born in the year 1805, of humble parentage, on the farm of Culdoch, near Kirkcudbright, in North Britain. I had, at a very early period, a strong predilection for a military life, being of robust health and an athletic frame. In 1822 I therefore enlisted in the First Regiment of Life Guards, the discipline and appearance of which are, I may say, universally admired. During the hours not devoted

to military duties, I applied myself to the cultivation of the art of drawing and painting, in which I attained some proficiency, and acquired also considerable knowledge of mechanics, all of which I found of great service to me when I afterwards became a traveller.

After serving sixteen years in this distinguished regiment, I felt anxious for a field of greater enterprise, and therefore obtained my discharge, on the conditions of the late good conduct warrant, early in 1839. In consequence of meritorious service, I obtained the appointment of master-at-arms in the late expedition to the Niger. In this unfortunate enterprise, I narrowly escaped the melancholy fate of so many of my brave and talented countrymen. Of upwards of three hundred, not more than five escaped! When at Egga, on the Niger, I volunteered to proceed up that river, with a few natives only; but, on account of the increasing sickness of the Europeans, the project was abandoned. Before the *Albert*, indeed, had descended the

Niger nearly all of them were either attacked by the fever or were dead! The season was declared by the natives themselves to be particularly fatal, even to them.

On my arrival at Fernando Po, I was myself attacked with fever, which so seriously affected a wound that I had previously received in my leg,* that gangrene commenced, and was only checked by the application of a powerful acid, which destroyed the part affected. At this time my sufferings were extreme; part of both bones of my leg was entirely denuded of flesh a little above the ankle-bone. I strongly desired to have the diseased limb amputated, but having already lost much blood, and the climate of Fernando Po being unfavourable to such operations, (in fact, it was considered that it might prove fatal,) my medical friends, Drs. M'William and Thompson,

* I was wounded at the Cape de Verd Islands by the natives, while aiding my men, upon whom they were about to make a murderous attack. On retreating, one of them threw a poisoned arrow at me, which I parried from my face and body, but which struck my leg.

promised to perform it when I should arrive at Ascension. The climate of that island is much superior to any other on the coast of Africa. Fortunately, by the unremitting attention of the medical officers, and the kindness of Commander Fishbourne, my wound and my general health much improved during my stay there. From its serious nature, however, I returned to England in an emaciated condition. Having naturally a very robust constitution, I rapidly recovered; but my limb never entirely regained its former strength.

This, however, did not prevent me from offering my services to the Royal Geographical Society, to proceed to Africa and penetrate to the Kong Mountains from the West Coast, the narrative of which journey I now have the pleasure of submitting to the reader. I ought to add that the Society provided me with the necessary instruments and instructions; and that the Lords of the Admiralty directed that I should have a free passage to Cape Coast. The country I

traversed had been hitherto untrodden by any European traveller, and reached as far as $13^{\circ} 6'$ North latitude, and $1^{\circ} 3'$ East longitude.

In conclusion, I beg to state, that the Royal Geographical Society and several other gentlemen liberally contributed funds in aid of my enterprise, for which I cherish the warmest feelings of gratitude.

JOHN DUNCAN.

FELTHAM HILL,
August, 1847.



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DESCRIPTION OF THESE WEAPONS:—

- No. 1.—A long straight dagger, with snake on the hilt, to bite the Mahee people.
- No. 2.—A large heavy knife, with imitation of tigers' claws on the back, to hook the Mahee people when running away. This knife is about the substance of the English bill-hook.
- No. 3.—A very broad, thin knife, with a Dahomey man in the act of shooting a Mahee man. This knife is made of silver, and is more for ornament than use.
- Nos. 4 and 5 are King's battle-sticks: the angle of the handle into which the blade is fixed is the natural growth of the wood.
- No. 6 is a battle-stick, carried by all soldiers, male and female. This stick is used to beat people to death, when silence is necessary, as the report of a gun might give an alarm. By examining No. 6, five large knobs of iron are seen fixed to the under part of the head of the weapon.

LA

John
1800



L. C. Walker

TRAVELS

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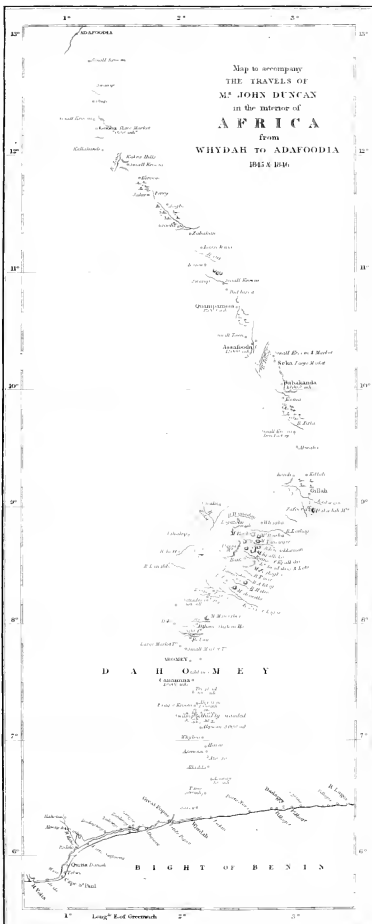
WESTERN AFRICA.



CHAPTER I.

Departure—Arrival at Tangiers—Description of the Town—Market—Price of Provisions—Method of Storing Grain—Inhabitants—The Jews—A Jewish Dwelling—The Moors—Fruits and Flowers—Desolate State of the Town—Moorish Market-women—Gibraltar—Ascend to the Highest Point—A Pic-nic and an agreeable Reconnoitre—Cleanliness of the Inhabitants—Arrival at the Gambia—Bathurst—The Mandingos—Massacre of the Crew of the *Margaret*—Encounter of the Crew of the *Courier* with Pirates—Sierra Leone—Dr. Ferguson—Mr. Oldfield, his Hospitality—Gave Chase to a supposed Slaver—Cape Coast—Governor Hill—Cape Coast Castle.

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THE Lords of the Admiralty having given orders that I should have a free passage to any port of the west coast of Africa, and Lord Stanley having also provided me with letters of introduction to the governors of the different settlements at the Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Cape Coast, with

orders to render me every assistance in their power, and being also furnished with letters by Mr. Bandinell, of the Foreign Office, to the different Commissariats on the coast, requesting them to render me assistance, I made preparations for my departure forthwith. The Geographical Society had kindly furnished me with the necessary instruments to make my geographical observations, and with the maps of Africa; and, in a generous and delicate manner which I shall never forget, presented me with a small sum of money. I now, therefore, merely waited for an official order to proceed by any vessel which might be directed to take me. This order soon arrived, and I went on board the *Cygnets* brig of war, Captain Layton.

I was received by the captain and the rest of the officers in the most cordial manner. After getting my luggage, however, on board, another order was forwarded from the Admiralty, transferring me to the *Prometheus* steamer, Captain Hay, then under orders for the Gambia with money. Accordingly, my luggage was put on board the last-named vessel, and on Sunday afternoon, the 16th of June, 1844, I and my servant, William Stevens, went on board at Spithead, where the several vessels, the *St. Vincent*, *Prometheus*, and *Cygnets*, were riding at anchor near each other. I was received in a very kind

manner by Captain Hay and Lieutenant M'Gregor, and the other officers of the *Prometheus*.

I must not forget to mention that Captain Johnston assisted me in obtaining a knowledge of the sextant, and Lieutenant Raper presented me with a copy of his valuable work on "Practical Navigation." Captain Johnston, moreover, came on board the *Prometheus* at Portsmouth to request Captain Hay to make me as comfortable as possible, as well as my servant and my dog.

At four o'clock on Monday morning, June 17th, we weighed anchor (with steam up), taking the *Cygnets* in tow as far as Plymouth Sound. At a late hour on Sunday night Captain Hay unexpectedly received despatches ordering him to go to Tangiers and Gibraltar, at which I felt not a little disappointed, for I had fully expected to have an opportunity of visiting the island of Madeira, and of seeing my friend and countryman Mr. W. Gordon, whose kindness I had already experienced. However, my disappointment was fully compensated by being thus allowed to visit Tangiers, off which we anchored on the 23d. As Captain Hay had despatches for the Governor, I had an opportunity of going on shore for a few hours.

On landing I was stopped by several Jews as well as Moors offering their services to show me

the town and market, this day (Sunday) being their principal market-day. The town of Tangiers is strongly fortified towards the sea, but quite defenceless from the land. The houses are generally square, and nearly flat-roofed, and the whole town is built on a steep declivity towards the bay. There is no regularity in the streets. The main street is from the bay, or landing-place, close to which is the custom-house. It is about a quarter of a mile in length, narrow, crooked, and very badly paved, with shops on each side, similar to the butchers' shops in England, but not so clean. This street leads through the centre of the town to the outer wall, immediately behind which the market is held. The market-place is in a hollow immediately behind the town, but not enclosed in any way. It appeared to be well supplied with cattle and meat.

In the market-place meat may be purchased at $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per pound, but a duty is paid upon every article of consumption taken from the town to any other country, unless for the British navy. Vegetables are also very cheap, new potatoes (very fine at this season) are about one shilling per bushel; large oranges twelve a penny. The market is a miniature Smithfield with respect to cattle, owing to the great number of horses, camels, and asses, used in bringing goods to it, as

well as bullocks, sheep, and goats for sale. All goods are transported from one place to another on beasts of burden. I observed a great number of fowls at a dollar per dozen.

Their method of storing grain, in case of its not being sold or in case of rain, is very simple. At short distances from each other in the part of the market arranged or allotted for the sale of grain, holes are dug, about four or five feet square, and the same in depth, into which the corn is deposited until the next market-day. These pits are lined with wood, and when the grain or other goods are deposited, the cover is sealed by the market officer or sheriff, who regulates the price of every article of consumption exposed for sale.

The foreign inhabitants consist of various races, chiefly from France, Spain, Portugal, and England; the fewest in number are English, comprising only the English Consul's establishment. With the exception of the native Moors, the French and Jews are the most numerous, and their character is the same as I have found it in all countries wherever I have met them. The moment you set your foot on shore you are assailed by a host of Jews and Moors, eager to direct you to their houses to trade with them. The Jews are generally most successful, being

more civilized than the Moors. They speak good English, as well as many other languages, and most of the Moors who can speak English or French, are employed by the Jews as "cads" to direct strangers to their employer's house. If they find you at all impatient at their solicitations, they invariably invite you to go to their house and drink a glass of wine with them. If you deal with them, you are supplied with a glass, or even two, but are sure to pay for it in the price of the article purchased. If you should not purchase any thing, whatever wine or spirit happens to be your choice, they are sure to be in want of, or it is so bad that they cannot recommend it; yet upon the whole they are preferable to the Moors. If you have money they treat you with great civility.

Their houses are remarkably clean, and their dress is very simple and graceful. Both male and female Jews dress in the Moorish fashion. They seldom seat themselves otherwise than on a mat. Upon my entering a Jewish dwelling, in a hall on the left-hand side, the occupant's daughter was seated busily engaged in sewing. She was certainly one of the most beautiful and graceful women I ever beheld, and readily offered to shake hands with me. On the opposite side of the entrance-hall lay a heap of wheat. The latter no

doubt for sale, and probably the former also to be disposed of in the matrimonial market. On entering an inner apartment, I was introduced to the rest of the family, five in number, all remarkably clean. In the corner of this apartment was a young man, about twenty years of age, apparently a Moor, who showed article after article for sale, as a hawker would in England. Amongst the articles exhibited were French and Spanish cottons, morocco slippers of various patterns, silk girdles beautifully embroidered, and ladies' reticules of a very rich pattern, also beautifully embroidered with gold, on velvet of various colours, chiefly green or red.

I observed during my short stay only two different kinds of trade practised in Tangiers—shoe-making and gun-making. The gun-makers showed much ingenuity, considering the clumsiness of their tools: they even twist their barrels. In general, I cannot speak very favourably of the cleanliness of the Moors, as compared with the Jews. Their streets are very dirty,—sheep-skulls, horns, and other parts of different animals, being thrown into the streets; and on the outer skirts of the market-place may be seen a number of dead dogs and kittens, which have been carried there and left to perish, for they have not the humanity to put them to death by any other means.

I had an opportunity of visiting the Swiss Consul's garden, which is laid out with considerable taste, and abounds with fruit, among which I observed very fine oranges and citrons, and remarkably fine figs. There is also a burial-ground, where Christians of all nations are interred, amongst which were pointed out by my Moorish guide the graves of an English family, consisting of a father, mother, and two children, who had been robbed and murdered by the Moors.

I was informed by several of the inhabitants that it is very dangerous for any stranger to proceed more than a mile or two from the town, unless attended by a mounted soldier, who is appointed by the Governor, and receives a dollar per day.

The cactus grows here wild, and of gigantic size; although in the immediate vicinity of the town little vegetation is apparent. Of the minor class, the orange, citron, and saffron shrub, with some large aloes, are the chief plants I observed. The place seems altogether poor; but from information I obtained, it would appear that trade was much better some time back, before many of the Jews left the place on account of the disturbed state of the country. In fact, the inhabitants are now in hourly expectation of the French blockading the town. There is at present a Spanish frigate at an anchorage abreast of the town; and since we dropped

anchor this morning, a French man-of-war steamer has arrived and anchored near the *Prometheus*.

The Jews here make a good trade by changing English money. They deduct three shillings in the sovereign for exchange, and at Gibraltar, two,—a serious disadvantage to English visitors.

Mules and asses seem of all animals most used as beasts of burden. The Moorish market-women have a very singular appearance, owing to their dress, which consists of a piece of thick woollen cloth, the same as a blanket, which envelopes the whole of their body, and entirely conceals their faces. From the slowness of their pace, and their figure, excepting the colours of their dress, one might imagine them part of a funeral procession. The men are generally tall and muscular, though not fleshy, and strict Mahomedans.

At six in the evening we weighed anchor, got steam up, and sailed for Gibraltar, where we anchored about nine o'clock. I was truly gratified at having an opportunity of visiting this place, which is, indeed, one of the wonders of the world. We carried despatches from the Consul at Tangiers to the Governor, Sir Robert Wilson. On the following morning, the 24th of June, I went on shore to see this impregnable rock, of which it would be presumption on my part to attempt a description, since it has been done by abler pens than

mine; but I will merely give an account of the treatment received by myself and two of the young gentlemen belonging to the *Prometheus* from some of the inhabitants when on shore, which I do principally to remove those prejudices against them which are sometimes entertained by the English. In fact, I had formed a very different opinion of the Spaniards from what I found them to deserve.

I had determined to reach the summit of that tremendous rock; and for that purpose I ascended by a zigzag path, passing several strong batteries, all commanding the town and bay. When we had gone half way to the top, we fell in with a large gipsying party (as it would have been termed in England), keeping holiday in memory of St. John, at the entrance of a large cave, in front of which a sort of platform had been formed, as it seemed, by the joint work of Nature and Art. As it completely commands the town and shipping, it was, doubtless, at some former period used as a battery. I was struck with the free, lively, and generous manner in which the whole party received us. Their number was about a hundred ladies and gentlemen, with several children. On our approach, we were cordially invited to join them, and partake of their refreshments, which they had in abundance. Their table was formed by a finely wrought grass mat, spread

in the entrance of the cave, which is about ten feet high in the centre, and about twenty feet wide. In the centre of its mouth is a basaltic column, resembling those in Fingal's Cave. From this elevated spot, we commanded a view of the town of Gibraltar, its beautiful bay filled with shipping, among which we observed the *Warspite* with the *Vesuvius* and *Prometheus* steamers. The towns on the opposite shore of the bay were all perfectly visible; and the surrounding country, with its majestic mountains, formed a splendid scene.

The liveliness and hospitality of the party we met here gave me a very favourable notion of the inhabitants of Gibraltar. If other Spaniards are like these, I think they are among the gayest and happiest people in existence. After partaking of some wine and other refreshments, we were invited to join in a dance, and asked what dance we should like to see performed, English or Spanish. The ladies performed both with admirable grace, highly set off by their simple and graceful dress and fine figures, which give them a decided superiority over any other people I have seen. Their small feet, elasticity of action, and unaffected ease of manner, are certainly deserving of admiration. Their dark hair neatly plaited in two braids hanging down the back, with a small curl near the eye on each side, pressed close to the

temple, with their dark but bright expressive eyes, ivory teeth, and fine features, reminded me of Lord Byron's descriptions. I was also struck with their remarkable abstemiousness: the women drink no wine, or any fermented liquor, except at meals, and even then seldom without water. The men are remarkably civil and obliging, and almost as abstemious as the women. Though it was a holiday I did not see one intoxicated. After several dances had been performed for our amusement, we proposed to go up to the top of the mountain, and the whole party immediately volunteered to accompany us. Everything was therefore got ready without delay; the asses were saddled, and a basket or cradle was attached to each, in which the youngest of the children were placed. As soon as all was ready, the word of command, "March!" was given by the captain of the party, the procession being headed by two men playing on guitars.

The path, though very rough and steep, was quickly ascended; and even along the brink of precipices the ladies and children passed without showing the least alarm. After a rather fatiguing journey we arrived at the summit of one of the two highest peaks, on which is a look-out house and a strong battery. On looking over the outer wall of this, the sight which presents itself is really

terrific, for the rock is here quite perpendicular from the base to its summit.

After resting for about a quarter of an hour, we re-ascended the rock for about half a mile, till we came to the path leading to the second peak, when we began our second ascent, and in about twenty minutes reached the signal-house, at the highest point of the rock. Among the artillerymen stationed there I met with one of my countrymen, M'Donald, a native of the Isle of Sky. He is a sergeant or sergeant-major of artillery, and is allowed to sell wines and other liquors. I was desirous to treat our party on arriving here: but none of the females would take anything but water, and the men could only be prevailed on to drink one glass of either porter or wine. When the younger ladies had performed a few favourite dances, we descended the rock as far as the mouth of the cave, where we again halted for about ten minutes. Dancing was here renewed; the cloth was again laid, and a very luxurious repast was set before us. The evening being now far advanced, we were obliged, with regret, to take our leave of this happy and most agreeable party.

On the following day, while we were getting in the requisite quantity of coal, I had an opportunity of visiting different parts of the town, which appears to be strictly governed. Every house is

visited by the police, before ten o'clock A.M., to see that it has been thoroughly cleaned,—a regulation which might be advantageously adopted in our own overgrown metropolis. Even the poorest of the inhabitants are remarkable for their cleanliness. Their linen is exceedingly clean.

On the 25th we hove our anchor, and I left Gibraltar with much regret. Nothing of importance occurred during our passage to the Gambia. The weather was fine, and I received such kind assistance from all the officers, particularly from Captain Hay, as I shall never forget as long as I live. Upon his learning that I had forgotten my telescope, he very kindly presented me with a very good pocket-glass.

On the 6th of July we arrived at the Gambia, and anchored abreast of the town of Bathurst, at twenty minutes past eight in the evening. On the following morning I saw with much regret the *Wilberforce* steamer lying partly dry, the tide ebbing and flowing into her. She formed a striking contrast to what she was when I left England in company with her in the ill-fated Niger expedition. About ten o'clock A.M. I went on shore, accompanied by our sailing-master and purser, and visited several European merchants and official gentlemen, as well as the Governor, for whom I had letters; all of whom treated me with

every mark of kindness, particularly Mr. Quin, who took great pains to show me everything of interest in Bathurst.

This settlement is not large; the houses are good, and well constructed for a warm climate. Behind the main town are a considerable number of conical huts, very close to each other. Upon the whole, Bathurst seems well adapted for trade, and capable of being greatly improved. As far as I could judge, it is in a thriving condition. It is much visited by Mandingos for the purpose of trade. These are a peculiar race, easily distinguished from any other, being tall and thin, very active, and very black. Their skin is apparently not so moist as that of some other African tribes; but their head is very singularly formed, tapering from the forehead upwards, to a narrow ridge along the crown. As this was the sowing season, fruits were not plentiful. Some bananas, cocoa-nuts, ground nuts, and other small fruits, were all that could be obtained.

We here received intelligence of the massacre of part of the crew of the *Courier*, William Vaughan, (which left London 29th April, 1844,) on the island of Arguin. On the 19th of May, it appeared, they got sight of land a little north of Cape Blanco, and on the 20th rounded the point or cape, and entered the bay of Arguin, when suddenly the ship got into

two fathoms water. Upon this the master instantly ordered the helm hard a-port, but before the ship could be got round she struck at three P.M. at high-water and spring-tide. Fifty tons of ballast were now thrown overboard, and at two on the following day, she being got off, the chief mate was sent to sound a-head, but was often obliged to anchor, owing to the incorrectness of the charts. He anchored with the long-boat under the island during the night, owing to the heavy sea running; but as he was rounding the point to return to the ship, he saw two natives and a white man coming towards the long-boat. The white man hailed the boat in English.

They again rounded the point to take in their countryman, upon which the two natives beat him unmercifully with bludgeons. One of the Englishmen then ran back to the boat and procured a musket, which he presented at the two natives, on which they immediately ran off. Upon reaching the poor Englishman, the mate and men belonging to the *Courier* ascertained that the barque *Margaret*, of London, had been plundered at the same place in the month of May previous, that almost all hands had either been murdered or taken prisoners, and that, besides himself, four more men belonging to the *Margaret* were still alive upon the island undergoing every hardship.

The commander of the *Courier*, upon being acquainted with this fact, made up his mind to ransom his countrymen, and for that purpose made proposals, which were agreed to; but after the natives got possession of what they asked, they made a second and a third demand, and ultimately compelled the boats' crew, by firing upon them, to get into their boats, leaving their property behind. The *Courier's* boat had got a small brass gun, which they fired on this occasion; but it recoiling to leeward, a man was shot and fell in the same direction, upsetting the boat with ten men, all of whom were either drowned or killed. The natives then got possession of the boat, and were actually coming alongside the *Courier* with her own boat to plunder the ship, when fortunately the boat came broadside on, and the master got a gun to bear and destroyed her. He then as soon as possible slipped his cable, and, with only four men, sailed for the Gambia, where I saw him.

I cannot help thinking that many masters of merchant-vessels run into great danger, and incur risk to their owners, without any chance of doing any good, merely to obtain a name for themselves. Had the master of the *Courier* sailed for the Gambia, and communicated with the authorities there, no doubt a man-of-war would have been despatched to Arguin, and the crew of the

Margaret recaptured. If Arguin should prove to be a profitable speculation in regard to the Guano trade, some permanent protection must be afforded by the Government.

It is generally believed that the Emperor of Morocco is cognisant of all the piracies committed; and if this be so, why not make him answerable, and take so much territory from him upon every outrage perpetrated by his people upon British property? If the French Government did the same, an end would soon be put to all such piracies.

On the 8th of July, at two P.M., we sailed from the Gambia for Sierra Leone, and anchored at Free Town on the 11th, in the evening. We anchored close to my old ship the *Albert*, of the late Niger expedition, now commanded by Lieut. Cockroft.

On the 12th, in the morning, I went on shore, and delivered my official letters, and met with a most cordial reception from every one. Dr. Ferguson was acting Governor at that time; he is a most excellent man. Here I was very agreeably surprised to find my old friend Dr. Oldfield comfortably settled. He was one of my most intimate friends many years before I left the First Life Guards. I found him still the same, and still possessing the same generous heart. Long may it beat tran-

quilly! I had many hospitable invitations; but accepted that of my friend Oldfield, who kindly opened his house for me during my stay here, and gave two large dinner-parties in respect to my presence. He also kept an excellent horse at my service during my stay. He keeps four of the best horses in the colony. I must be ungrateful, indeed, did I ever forget his kindness. I also experienced great kindness from the Rev. Mr. Dove, of the Wesleyan Missionary Church. The country is beautiful, and capable of great improvement; and I cannot help thinking that if it were cleared for some distance, it would be much healthier than it is.

On the 17th we sailed for Cape Coast; and, on the 21st, at daybreak, a sail was reported on our starboard bow, which from her appearance was supposed to be a slaver. All hands were in anxious expectation of a prize; every glass or telescope in the ship was put in requisition to ascertain what craft she was. She changed her course two points, which occasioned still more suspicion. Consequently, steam was ordered on (we were before only under canvass) as quickly as possible, and the fires were backed up, so that we were in a few minutes in full chase of the supposed slaver. We gained upon her very fast, although she set every stitch of canvass, and in an hour and

a half we were alongside. All her guns were run out, and ready for action, and every man at his quarters. But, to our great disappointment, she turned out to be a French ten-gun brig, in so dirty a condition as quite to disguise her, so that we never suspected she could be a ship-of-war. The whole of her stern bulwarks were covered over with bamboos, and she altogether resembled a palm-oiler. She was named the *Eglantine*.

At ten A.M. on the same day we anchored off Cape Coast, and on the morning of the 22d I went on shore, and called at the fort to deliver my official papers from Lord Stanley to the Governor. I was, however, informed by his secretary, that his Excellency Governor Hill had not yet risen. I then waited upon Mr. T. Hutton, a merchant at Cape Coast, to whom I had letters of introduction. He received me with every mark of kindness, and allotted to myself and servant an elegantly furnished house, with servants to attend on us, assuring me that I was heartily welcome to any thing in his house. I afterwards called upon Governor Hill, and presented Lord Stanley's letter, on which he wished me success in my arduous undertaking, but never once asked me where I intended to remain, or whether I had got my luggage ashore, or how I was accommodated. After visiting the fort, however, I felt very glad

that I had escaped such accommodation, or rather imprisonment. Governor Maclean, it appeared, upon his departure, took all his private furniture with him. Nothing consequently remained but the bare walls, and a few of the commonest Windsor chairs and plain tables, as the furniture of the Governor's apartments. In fact, any part of the fort at Cape Coast far more resembles a prison than many of our prisons in England.

TRAVELS IN

CHAPTER II.

Attacked by Fever—Death of my Servant—Mr. Hutton—Buildings in Progress by him—Indolence of the Natives—Cheapness of Living—The Fantees—Their Superstition—Description of their Idol or Fetish—Their Customs or Holidays—Native Music—Rum, their favourite Liquor—Proceedings on occasion of a Death—Mode of Burial—The King's Custom or Holiday—Character of the King—My Reception by his Majesty—Comparatively neglected by the British Government—Fetish Houses—Native Funerals—Want of Natural Affection—The Yam Custom—The Fantees, the worst of the African Tribes—Their Power of Imitation—Wild Animals—The Patakoo—Granite and Sandstone—The Dutch Settlement of Elmina—A fine Field for Botanists—State of Agriculture—Excessive Heat—Message to the King of Ashantee—Cattle—Artizans much wanted—Murder of an Ashantee Woman.

I HAD the good fortune to be lodged in the best quarters at Cape Coast, where I remained till the most favourable season for travelling had come on, and also till I had gone through my seasoning fever, with which I was attacked a few days after my arrival, as well as my servant, who, poor fellow! sank under it. Although the greatest attention and medical aid was afforded to him, he died on the 4th of August, 1844, at a time when

I was so ill myself that Mr. Hutton would not allow my attendants to make me acquainted with it till four days after it occurred. Of my own illness, though it was very severe, I can scarcely remember any thing, as I slept nearly the whole of the time. The late Governor, Mr. Maclean, who at the time had not left Cape Coast, was remarkably kind and attentive to me. His departure was very much regretted, as he had given great satisfaction to the merchants while he was Governor.

During my stay there, Mr. Hutton was building two very fine houses, one at Cape Coast, and the other in the wood-land tract about two miles to the north of it, on a spot commanding a beautiful prospect over a salt lake, about three quarters of a mile distant, with the sea, near Elmina, beyond it.

In this country, where manual labour is requisite, the greatest difficulty is experienced in getting the people to perform it as they ought. My attention to these undertakings for the space of two months gave me a very good opportunity of forming a fair estimate of the character and habits of the natives at Cape Coast.

Mr. Hutton had, at the time of my arrival, about one hundred hands employed, and I can conscientiously affirm that fifteen Englishmen would have done considerably more work in

any set time than these hundred Fantees. The men are, without exception, of all the Africans I have yet seen the laziest and dirtiest. They seem in every respect inferior, both in body and mind, to their neighbours, the Ashantees. They are remarkably dull of comprehension, and, unless constantly watched, will lie down and do nothing. Even if one of the party is appointed as foreman to the rest, he will be just as idle as the others. They seem to have no idea of anything like conscience.

Some time ago Mr. Hutton supplied his labourers with wheelbarrows to convey the stone from the quarry to the building they were working at; but instead of wheeling the barrowful of stones, they put it upon their heads, declaring it was harder work to wheel the barrow than to carry it. They will go the distance of a mile to the quarry, and come back, perhaps twenty in a gang, with one stone, not weighing more than nine pounds each, upon his head, so tedious is their manner of building, nor will they be put out of their own way on any account. As they can live almost for nothing, their only motive for working is to procure what they consider luxuries, such as rum, tobacco, and *aatum*, the name they give the cloth tied round their waist. They can live at the rate of a penny a-day upon yams or cassada

(manioc) and fish, which is remarkably cheap. This penny, and now and then a shilling, is earned by one of their wives, of whom they have sometimes several. The wife goes into the thickets with a child tied upon her back, and returns with a bundle of wood upon her head, which she sells in the town. All the drudgery, in fact, is done by the women, while their lazy husbands lie stretched outside of their huts smoking.

The Fantees are very superstitious, and one party or another is daily making Fetish* (performing a religious service) either for the advancement and success of some business in which they are interested, or invoking a curse upon some person who may have thwarted the effect of their fetish. For instance, if any person fall sick, the head fetish-man summons all his relations to meet on a certain day, at a certain time, to try by their fetish whether the sick man will recover; but if a surgeon attending him is successful in making a cure, they invoke a curse upon him for causing the fetish to lie. At Cape Coast their fetish sometimes consists of a bundle of rags bound together like a child's doll; at other times a little image of clay, rudely fashioned, somewhat in the human shape, is placed in some public spot, frequently

* *Fetish* is corrupted from the Portuguese *feitico*, witchcraft, conjuring.

by the roadside. These images, or fetishes, often remain in the same position and on the same spot undisturbed for a fortnight or three weeks.

The natives have a great many customs or holy days in the course of the year, during which it is unbearable to live in the town, such is the noise and uproar of the rabble. Their yells, roaring, and discord are indescribable. They have a sort of rude drum, about four feet in length, and one in diameter, called *tenti* or *kin Kasi*. This is carried on a man's head in a horizontal position, and is beaten by another man walking behind him, who hammers away like a smith on his anvil, without any regard to time. This huge drum is accompanied by horns and long wooden pipes, the sound of which resembles the bellowing of oxen. The procession parades up and down the town nearly the whole day, and keeps up an irregular fire of musketry. On all these occasions an immense quantity of rum (which is only threepence per pint) is drunk. If any person of note die, the relatives and neighbours assemble in front of his house, and continue drinking and smoking, yelling and firing off guns nearly the whole of the day; and one of the family invariably sacrifices a dog, to procure a safe passage to Heaven for the deceased. If none of the deceased's relations happen

to have a dog in their possession, they sally out in a party and kill the first dog they meet.

They are very superstitious also respecting burial, and frequently bury the gold rings and trinkets worn by the deceased along with his body, so that the graves are frequently opened again for the sake of the property contained in them. An instance of this occurred while I was there. A Mrs. Brown, the widowed mother of a mulatto so named, who had been employed as interpreter on board the *Albert* steamer in the late Niger expedition, died in consequence of a blow from a younger son. The elder brother, having been much straitened in his circumstances through misconduct, ordered his mother to be interred in the same grave as one of her daughters, who had been buried with all her trinkets upon her. Brown, as an excuse, declared that it was customary to bury the parent below, and the sons and daughters above. Thus the sister was disinterred and stripped of her ornaments, which he put, as he no doubt thought, to a better use than leaving them for the worms.

The King's custom, or solemnity in honour of the King of Cape Coast, is kept annually for fourteen days, in which interval none of his subjects are allowed to fire off a gun, or beat a *kin kasi*, (drum), nor are any dogs, sheep, or goats allowed

to be seen in the streets, or in any public place, on pain of death. This commemoration is tolerably observed, but though King Agray's black flag is kept flying during the whole period, I am convinced that it is more for the gratification of his people, than from any wish of his own that such a ridiculous observance is continued; for he is a very intelligent venerable old man, highly civilized and polite in his manners, and very well disposed towards the English. His character is very much admired by all the merchants established there, as well as by his own subjects. From what I could learn, he is ever ready to patronize any effort on the part of the English to civilize and improve his people. In person he is a tall, thin, muscular, old man, though his years number upwards of threescore and ten.

A few days previously one of his messengers called upon me in great haste, to inform me that his Majesty was very anxious to see me in the dress of the First Life Guards that day. It happened that a short time before, the troops from Cape Coast having been ordered out for exercise, I was requested to accompany them in uniform, and in less than ten minutes the King was acquainted with the fact. Like the other kings in this country, he has spies to carry to him all news of however little importance.

His Majesty received me with all the politeness of an English courtier. After being seated, he asked me many important questions—when, at his request, I performed the cavalry sword-exercise in his presence, he noticed the differences arising from the late alterations in that exercise, supposing that I had made some mistakes.* He talked a good deal about the King of Ashantee, and reprobated much their horrid practice of sacrificing human beings. He seemed to have obtained a very correct idea of railroads, and to be strongly impressed with a sense of the advantages and disadvantages derived from them by the English nation. He can read and write well, and is, as I before observed, a clever, intelligent old man. The King's house is furnished in the European style, plain though pretty good.

It is to be lamented that the English Government should have neglected so good a man as Agray, while much is lavished on such a villain as the King of Ashantee, who in fact is only led by it to suppose that the British Government fears him.

On my road yesterday for several miles through the wood, in search of birds and plants, of which there is abundance, I passed several fetish houses or temples, in the form of a long grotto, formed

* His Majesty had served several years on board a British man-of-war, previously to attaining his sovereignty.

by a vast number of running and creeping plants, at the farther extremity of which is sometimes found a large mass of stone or granite rock, which they say is related to some other fetish not far distant; and they even assert that, early in the mornings, this very stone may be seen in a human shape, going to visit his wife (a similar block of stone). They are also superstitious about our copper money; they call an Irish halfpenny a devil's coin, on account of the harp upon it, which they call the devil; and they will not on any account take it in payment of anything.

Their funerals much resemble the Irish wake. As soon as the party is dead, the body is washed, and dressed in all its best clothes, which are very few. A party of the most intimate friends of the deceased is then invited. A goat, sheep, or dog is sacrificed, human sacrifices being now prohibited by the British authorities as well as by King Agray. After drinking a good deal of rum, the company begins to cry or howl hideously, and wishing a good journey and plenty of servants in the other world to the deceased (who is always seated in the circle as one of the party, being fixed in a rude sort of arm chair), the corpse is lowered into the grave, which is always under the floor in the centre of their dwelling. They also pretend to bury with him a quantity of rum as well as all his

trinkets. The rum, however, is generally well diluted with water.

Though they seem to have no parental or filial affection, they have a strong attachment to the house in which they were born, and can rarely be persuaded to leave it. Were they not prevented by our laws, parents would very readily sell you any of their children, or even husbands their wives. A woman, who is considered as very respectable, and keeps a stall in the market, was repeatedly offered to me for sale by her husband, and was herself very anxious for such a change, so as actually to take possession of my bed one night when I was absent. I ordered my servant to turn her out, and also sent her affectionate husband an intimation that if he hawked his wife to me any more, I should certainly punish him; this ended the affair.

The yam custom, or holiday, is another annual ceremony, kept up to prevent people from using yams before they are ripe, as they are then deemed unwholesome; and also to compel the people to use all the old ones, in order to guard against the consequences of failure in the yam crop of the following year. On this occasion all differences are settled and crimes punished; but no sacrifices are offered up here, as at Ashantee. The propensity for thieving is found in all the natives,

high and low ; they are also, generally, void of all gratitude, and deem it part of their duty to rob white men whenever they can. In the market they invariably ask you four times as much as they will take. If your servant is unwilling to connive at their swindling tricks, they open a full battery of abuse upon him ; but servants in this country seldom put them to that test.

Of all the African tribes I have met with, I consider the Fantees the worst. It is remarkable that one-eighth of the population is either actually crippled or suffering from a loathsome disease called *craw-craw*, which bears some resemblance to the mange in dogs or horses. In appearance and personal strength they are much inferior to most other Africans ; probably from their great indolence and want of exercise. The wives are treated with great harshness by their husbands, in case they offend them.

They have no ingenuity, but a considerable power of imitation. Some of our British manufactured articles in wood or gold they can imitate very fairly, but when closely examined, their work will always be found to be defective. They seem never to improve by their own ingenuity, but always remain stationary in any art or trade which they have learnt. They seem to have no idea of a straight line, and cannot build a wall

straight, or make a hedge in a direct line; nor in the whole neighbourhood of Cape Coast is there a footpath in a straight line for the distance of twenty yards, although the ground is quite level. They certainly possess many strange ideas.

There are in the neighbourhood of Cape Coast some strange animals, among which is the Patakoo, a very large species of wolf. These are so ravenous as frequently to come down into the town and carry away pigs, sheep, and goats. They pay nightly visits to the beach, and seize on dead bodies which have been buried in the sand. As their slaves have no relations in the town or neighbourhood, as soon as they die their corpses are tied up in a coarse grass mat and thrown into a hole in the sand, without any ceremony; but on the same or following night, they are snatched up by the Patakoos, for whom they make a glorious feast. This beast has great strength, its size considered. When Governor Hill's horse died, the officers of the First West India Regiment, stationed at Cape Coast, determined to leave part of its carcase on the beach, in order to attract the Patakoos, and it could not have lain there more than an hour before it was removed by a single Patakoo, though it was two men's work to carry it.

There is plenty of excellent granite and sandstone at Cape Coast; yet nearly all the houses are built of

clay, as the people are too lazy to fetch the stone. Elmina, which is only eight miles distant, is a much superior settlement, and has likewise plenty of excellent sandstone, of which a great number of its houses are built. This place belongs to the Dutch, and carries on much trade, both with the interior and along the coast. It has a fine lake, connected with the sea by a narrow channel, which might with very little trouble be converted into a convenient harbour, which would be important, as the swell along the Gold Coast is always very heavy, and great difficulty is experienced in shipping and unshipping goods. I visited several of the most influential merchants at Elmina, and found them, as well as the governor, very hospitable. The abundance of new plants in this country would give plenty of employment to a botanist. A small shrub of the laurel tribe, bearing a white delicate flower, shaped like the blossom of the pea, grows here very plentifully, as also beautiful jasmines and honeysuckles, and several sorts of sensitive plants. Some very fine grasses, also in this neighbourhood struck me, but I did not observe many small annuals.

Agriculture has made little progress here, probably owing to the want of horses, which cannot live more than a few weeks, and from the indolence of the natives. Stock sufficient for

the consumption of the garrisons along the coast might be raised with a little care and exertion. The number of troops along the whole of the west coast is at present very small. Were their numbers doubled, there would not be too many, and they might be employed alternately in cultivating the farms and mounting guard in the forts. Yams, manioc, Indian corn, rice, and all sorts of vegetables, for the garrison and ships of war cruising on the coast, might in this way be easily obtained, and much expense avoided. This would also be useful as a pattern to the natives. The troops are paying at present one shilling per pound for meat, which could easily be raised at one-fourth, and the cattle might be employed on the farm instead of horses. An establishment of this sort would be very beneficial here, and I have no doubt would answer the purpose well. Unfortunately at present there seems to be no European at Cape Coast who either knows or interests himself in anything relating to agriculture. With the exception of Mr. Hutton, not a single English merchant at Cape Coast has even a garden, although the progress of vegetation is incredibly rapid. Some seeds of the vegetable marrow and water melon, given to me by Dr. Lindley of the Horticultural Society in London, which were sown on my arrival at Cape Coast, had grown to

the extent of twenty-four feet in two months, and the fruit of the water melon was as large as a man's head.

The heat of the month of November is excessive. On the 8th, the quicksilver in the thermometer, in my bedroom, which is considered to be cool, stood at 88°; and in the sun it rose to 115°; yet, thank God! I was so well accustomed to it, that I felt very little inconvenience, though generally out the whole day, and exposed to the sun. I was then daily expecting a messenger from Ashantee, for one of the soldiers from the fort had been despatched by the governor, to ask whether the King would allow me to pass beyond his kingdom towards the Kong Mountains. During the interval I was engaged in laying out the ground for Mr. Hutton's model farm.

The breed of cattle here is very handsome though small, but it might be greatly improved, and this would repay the expense very well, as the price of meat is so extremely high. Gold dust, unfortunately, seems to be the only thing thought of on the coast.

Schools of industry and agriculture are wanted on this coast more than any thing else. As land can be got for nothing anywhere on the coast, — land capable of growing any thing, — a few hundred pounds expended on a farm

of three hundred acres would be very profitably laid out. There are plenty of men who can read and write, begging for employment; and ten times their number, from the bush, such as might be deemed capable of learning, might be apprenticed to different kinds of trades for four or five years.

It is worthy of remark, that on the whole coast, from Cape Palmas to Accra, there is not a single shoemaker, although no trade seems to be so much wanted. Even the natives in the interior complain much of the want of shoes. Nor is there a tailor, a cabinet-maker, a wheelwright, or a blacksmith who can weld a piece of iron with any neatness in the whole settlement. Such articles, if manufactured on the coast, would draw trade from the interior, and excite the natives to industry; and thus British manufactures would be soon in great demand in the interior also. This would greatly reduce the Slave trade, as the minds of the people would be directed to agriculture and manufactures, particularly as it is well known that even in the Ashantee country the population is not on the increase. The Ashantees have indeed, for the last two months, been at war with the tribes to the north of them, bordering on the Kong Mountains, and have lost a great number of men, as their enemies, who have no fire-arms, no doubt did also.

The merchants of Cape Coast, Annamaboe, and Accrá, experience great loss and inconvenience, in consequence of the trade being stopped between Ashantee and the coast. This was occasioned by the murder of an Ashantee woman by a Fantee, on her return from a trading journey to the coast. She had occasion to stop a little behind her companions, and was then robbed and murdered by this Fantee who overtook her. Her companions missing her, went back, and found her with her head nearly severed from her body. This took place in the Fantee country, between Cape Coast and Ashantee. The murderer, however, was seized and brought part of the way back to Cape Coast by a soldier from thence, on his way with the letter to the King of Ashantee, from Governor Hill, which I mentioned above.

Mr. Chapman, who had resided as missionary at Coomassie, the capital of Ashantee, for the last twelve months, arrived at Annamaboe on the 26th of November, 1844, with the intelligence that all the King required was that the murderer should be punished according to the English law. The King at that time expressed a great desire to see me in Ashantee, and promised me complete protection in his country; but said nothing about allowing me to go further.

CHAPTER III.

Annamaboe—State of the Fort—Indolence of the Natives, and Difficulty in procuring Labourers—Domestic Slavery—Missionary Schools—Want of Education in the Useful Arts—Hints on this Subject—Vegetables and Fruits—Town of Annamaboe—Soil—Natives—Reception of me by the King, and Conversation with him—Mr. Brewé—Mr. Parker—Excessive Heat—Little Cromantine, its impregnable Situation—The Fort—Cromantine—The Market-place—Extraordinary Tradition—Wonderful Dwarf—An Adventure—Accra—Wesleyan Missionaries—Natives—their Habitations—Wives and Slaves—Situation of the Town, and Soil.

ON Monday, 23d of November, 1814, Mr. T. Hutton and I started from Cape Coast for Annamaboe, a town of considerable trade on the coast, about thirteen miles from Cape Coast Castle, from which its magnetic bearing is about due east. It has also a very good fort, which, however, is gradually going to decay. Its ramparts are well supplied with artillery, and capable of making a good defence against an attack from the sea, if properly garrisoned, and it is quite impregnable by the natives from the land, or north side. It was at this place that the Ashantees made so determined an attack, and an attempt to blow up the gate of the fort. They, however, failed in all

their attempts during the late war of 1817. There are at present only two or three private soldiers and a sergeant of militia in charge of the garrison. Some of the apartments in the garrison are in a pretty good state of repair, and might be very profitably used in more ways than one, if from one hundred and fifty to two hundred militia-men were stationed here, and employed by turns in managing a farm in the immediate neighbourhood: the soil is capable of producing every thing necessary for the support of the garrison. In three or four years, on such a plan, this garrison would pay its own expenses.

The native kings or chiefs, and caboceers, are never to be depended upon; and even the humblest of the natives, when they imagine they have any power, although naturally great cowards, will bully and be very insolent. The natives are so lazy that at times the merchants cannot, without great difficulty, get men to load or unload their ships. This is a very serious grievance, and often exposes our merchants to great difficulties as well as loss. Were our merchants allowed to hold as many slaves as are requisite for the performance of domestic duties, and the carrying on of their business, it would act as a check to the exportation of slaves.

I have minutely observed and inquired into the

state and condition of domestic slavery amongst the native caboccers, and I solemnly declare that their condition is much superior to that of our English peasantry. One English labourer, on an average, does more work than any twelve Africans; and the provision of the latter being so cheap (one penny per day is sufficient for their support), they have always plenty to eat. I am writing from actual observation, having had for three months a number of hired men under my charge.

Another evil arising from the same cause, is, that if a man is urged to do anything like a tenth part of a day's work, he will go away, and steal sufficient to maintain him for some time; consequently, the towns on the coast abound with thieves and vagabonds, who will not work. Had domestic slavery (or rather I may call it service) been tolerated, our merchants would have been encouraged to enter upon other speculations, such as agriculture, and even trades; since many of our merchants, who constantly employ five or six native and European carpenters, would put their slaves to learn a trade, whereas they have now no motive for doing so. Besides, the holders of domestic slaves would use all their influence in abolishing the removal of slaves into another country. In Elmina the Dutch settlers still hold their domestic slaves, and they are in a thriving

condition. In its immediate neighbourhood I was surprised to find several fine gardens and plantations, belonging to different merchants established there. Moreover, the surrounding country is well cleared of wood for a considerable distance, which renders that settlement much more healthy than Cape Coast, or any of our English stations. Although no man detests the Slave Trade more than myself, I cannot help feeling convinced that much evil to the natives as well as to the merchants has arisen from the abolition of domestic slavery in our African settlements.

Another evil I also believe to be this. In all our Missionary Schools, reading and writing, with a slight knowledge of arithmetic, is all that is taught. By this, undoubtedly, much good is done; but much more would be done, if these schools were also schools of industry. When a boy has left school in this country, you never see him reading a book, or even looking at a newspaper. All that these young men aspire to, is to get something in the fashion of European clothing, and to seek employment as clerks. I have already seen great numbers, who have been dismissed from school, and can write a little. They then consider themselves gentlemen, and their ideas are above anything under a clerk's place. Now, it is well known, that among the few merchants established

on the coast, employment as clerks cannot be afforded to as many as are desirous of such a situation.

I will, therefore, endeavour to point out a remedy for this evil, which would, I think, not only benefit this class of individuals, but the country at large, as well as our manufacturers in England:—I mean, the establishment of schools of industry on a scale similar to that which I have recommended for the garrison at Annamaboe. Let a suitable piece of land be selected, which any one may have for nothing; build upon it dwelling-houses and offices, as well as workshops, which could soon be done in this country, if the people could be induced to work. Men willing to become apprentices to different trades should be selected, and bound to bricklayers, carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, weavers, wheelwrights, and cabinet-makers, for three or five years, as might be deemed most proper. These men might assist in building their dwellings and shops, before they began to learn their trades, which some of them would do by employment in this very work. Sufficient ground should also be enclosed for raising such food as is necessary for the support of these labourers.

Every article of subsistence is abundantly produced in this country, and many luxuries,

such as sugar and coffee. Vegetables, and great quantities of fruit, grow spontaneously. Civilization might thus be begun, but it could hardly be permanently advanced without a recourse to arms. The Kings of Apollonia and Ashantee possess too much arbitrary power to be withdrawn from their cruel and barbarous habits by any other means than the sword; and it is said, that very many other chiefs and kings are in the daily habit of making human sacrifices.

Although Annamaboe has been already often described, a few remarks upon it will not perhaps be unacceptable. Behind the fort, or on its north side, is a piece of ground about two hundred yards square, round which are built some very good houses, with their stores, belonging to English and native merchants. These houses and the mission-house are the only buildings worthy of notice, except the King's house. This is new, and copied from those of the merchants; it is not, however, yet finished, and very probably never will be, in consequence of the extreme indolence of the people. The town may, perhaps, contain about three thousand inhabitants, and consists (with the exception of the houses already mentioned) of dwellings irregularly huddled together, generally built round a square of about seven yards each way, with only one outer entrance, each

house opening into the square, and forming its sides. Some of the principal houses of this description have benches running along the outside wall inside of the square. These benches are made of fine clay, in the form of sofas, and are handsomely coloured with clay of a different colour. It is here that they hold their palavers, all being seated around; the head man, or caboccer, is generally placed on a seat raised above the rest.

Although the soil in the neighbourhood of Annamaboe is excellent, yet it is very little cultivated; the natives chiefly depend upon the people in the woods for their corn and yams, vegetables and fruit, which are got in exchange for fish, a very plentiful article on the coast at certain seasons of the year.

The only thing in the neighbourhood of Annamaboe worth mentioning as a sign of either improvement or enterprise, is a good road for about ten or twelve miles into the interior, made for the purpose of conveying timber to the coast. This great undertaking was executed entirely at the expense of one person, a very intelligent and highly respectable native merchant, named Barns; but since the abolition of domestic slavery, he, unfortunately, cannot obtain labourers to carry on the timber-trade; though he has procured from England timber-carriages and every thing requisite

—all is sacrificed. In fact, a complete check is now put upon every effort of enterprise by the abolition of domestic slavery. These slaves were much better provided for than our labourers in England, for they had always plenty of food and clothing, and were never exposed in bad weather, nor was one quarter of the labour ever required from them that would be expected in England.

The natives of Annamaboe are in character much the same as those at Cape Coast, and many of them are thieves and vagabonds. During my short stay there my servant's country cloth was stolen off him in the night. When inquiry was made for it every one denied all knowledge of the theft; however, on a closer search, the cloth was found rolled up tightly under the head of one of the servants of the house where I lodged. I had him well flogged; but nothing will cure these people of thieving, except a tread-mill for they fear nothing so much as labour.

During my stay at Annamaboe, the King sent me a pressing invitation to pay him a visit, and in order to appear before his Majesty in a suitable manner, I was advised by the merchants to send to Cape Coast for my regimentals. On the following day I paid him a visit in my uniform, with which he seemed much delighted. Having previously learnt that I belonged to Her Majesty's Life

Guards, he asked me a great many questions respecting the Queen of England—how she was when I left England? and if Prince Albert was quite well? how many children she had? how long she had been married? and what were their titles? He laughed heartily when I informed him that Her Majesty had five children in so short a time, and asked me how I accounted for the English ladies being so prolific? Upon which I told him that the reason was, that in England one man had only one wife: he could not be persuaded, however, that one wife was sufficient for one man.

I experienced great kindness during my stay at Annamaboe from the merchants of that place, both English and native; and was indebted, during the whole of my visit there, to the hospitality of Mr. Brewé, a very respectable and enterprising merchant.

Among the native merchants I may justly point out Mr. Parker, who, though educated in Africa, would appear with advantage even in Europe. His memory is astonishing; he has read a great deal, and has a very good library of the best English writers. With regard to reading, indeed, he is an exception to the rest of his countrymen, owing, I believe, principally to their erroneous system of education.

November 30th.—I took my departure from Annamaboe, to visit the krooms* along the coast. Three quarters of a mile from Annamaboe, we reached a small village of about four hundred inhabitants, named Agah, and bearing E. 2° N. from Annamaboe. My companion, Mr. Brewe, being well acquainted with the King, or chief, I was introduced to him, and he expressed his gratification at seeing me in his kroom, and desired us to enter his house, and partake of some palm wine, or peto.† But having a long and difficult journey to perform in the scorching sun, we excused ourselves, and proceeded on our journey to the next kroom, which is three miles and a quarter from Annamaboe. Our road was along the beach, on dry sand, ankle deep, and in the sun, with a heat of 118° Fahrenheit, which rendered it very fatiguing for people on foot. However, in an hour and a quarter we reached the kroom called Little Cromantine, formerly a Dutch settlement of considerable trade, bearing E. 2° N. from Annamaboe. It has a strong fort, although now abandoned and going to decay; consequently its trade has also gone to Annamaboe. The fort is in one of the best positions on the whole of the African coast. It is built on a perpendicular rock one hundred feet high, washed at

* Villages.

† A beer made from Indian corn.

its base by the sea. It is so steep as to be accessible by land only by means of a zigzag path, and yet its garrison surrendered without resistance to the Ashantees, when they might have defended themselves against any number of assailants. Its courtyard is entirely overgrown with small shrubs; but there still remain on the batteries twenty-four good twenty-four pounders.

This fort might be easily put into complete repair. The village contains not more than five or six hundred inhabitants, who live chiefly by catching fish, which they carry to Annamaboe. It is a wretched kroom. The houses are very indifferently built, without any regularity; and in passing from house to house, you must climb over one rugged rock after another, as is sometimes the case on the sea-beach in England.

After surveying the fort and village, we commenced our march towards Cromantine, from which the last-named kroom derives its name. It is two miles and a half distant, bearing by compass E. 1° N. The road being very bad, we did not reach it until about ten o'clock. The entrance to the town is very steep, as it is elevated one hundred feet above Little Cromantine. Its situation is very grand and romantic. On suddenly emerging from a very narrow path, about the width of a sheep-track, and six feet

deep, the town presents itself in full view on the right front, and immediately on the right is a steep ravine, thickly planted with the beautiful plantain and banana trees, the cool aspect of which is refreshing to one half melted under a tropical sun; for, unluckily, my means would not allow me to be carried in a hammock, as my friend was. Thank God, however, my health was good, and I bore the journey well. The town is much more regularly built, with a more level foundation than Little Cromantine. We halted in the market-place, in the centre of the town, where we were refreshed with some ale furnished by my friend Mr. S. Brewé. During this time the natives assembled around us in great numbers, gazing upon us with astonishment. Mr. Brewé's musical box pleased them very much.

In the centre of the market-place is a very dirty, stagnant pool of water, the exhalation from which was very unpleasant; and though a drain about twenty yards long and three feet deep would have completely removed it, the inhabitants are too lazy to make it. The greater part of the Fantee people are the most ungenerous, ungrateful, and unneighbourly people in the world; so much so, that when their neighbour's house is on fire, they will not assist in extinguishing it, unless hired to do so. Although they are very

superstitious respecting their fetish or religious rites, they have no prescribed form or system of performing them.

In Cromantine there exists a tradition, or rather a tale, to deceive strangers, that they have still in their possession a male child, who has existed ever since the beginning of the world. This child, they declare, neither eats, drinks, nor partakes of any nourishment, yet still continues in a state of childhood. When I laughed at this absurd tale, it somewhat offended my friend Mr. Brewe, who declared that he himself and his father had actually seen this infant. I therefore expressed a wish to see this extraordinary child; and during the half hour which was required to prepare him for the visit, we were admitted into their fetish-house, or temple, in the corner of which was seated in a chair a little clay figure of the god whom they invoke or threaten, according to circumstances. In the same house, leaning against the wall, was the hollow trunk of a cocoa-nut tree, chalked over with white spots. This, they told us, was sent down to them from heaven, and was preserved here as a proof that their fetish lives for them. When I reproved their folly in believing such tales, they seemed quite astonished and incensed, especially the old fetish-woman, a priestess, who at times extorts great sums for the

preparation of certain charms, supposed to be very potent. When a man is sick, his relations send for the fetish-man, who, if the party is found to be very anxious respecting the sick man, generally makes a heavy charge, in addition to a gallon of rum to drink success to the fetish; and he very frequently orders a few bottles of rum to be buried up to the neck in the ground in different places, which the god is supposed to take as a fee for his favours to the sick man. If he should die, the fetish-man assures his relatives that the favour of the god was not to be gained by so small a quantity of rum. Such is the abject superstition prevalent on this coast.

At length I became impatient to see this wonderful dwarf, or child of other days, but was still desired to wait a little longer. However, as we were anxious to proceed on our journey, we set off. Fortunately, our road onwards passed close to the residence of this wonderful child, so that we halted, in the hope of having a peep at him. Being again delayed, I lost all patience, and resolved to enter his dwelling. My African friends and the multitude assembled from all parts of the town, warned me of the destruction that would certainly overtake me, if I ventured to go in without leave. But I showed them my doubled barrelled gun as my fetish, and forced my way

through the crowd. On entering through a very narrow door or gateway, into a circle of about twenty yards diameter, fenced round by a close paling, and covered outside with long grass, about nine feet high, (so that nothing within could be seen,) the first and only thing I saw was an old woman, whom, but for her size and sex, I should have taken for the mysterious being, resident there from the time of the Creation. She certainly was the most disgusting and loathsome being I ever beheld. She had no covering on her person (like all the other natives of this place), with the exception of a small piece of dirty cloth round her loins. Her skin was deeply wrinkled and extremely dirty, with scarcely any flesh on her bones. Her breasts hung half way down her body, and she had all the appearance of extreme old age. This ancient woman was the supposed nurse of the everlasting child. On my entering the yard, this old fetish-woman (for such was her high style and title) stepped before me, making the most hideous gestures ever witnessed, and endeavouring to drive me out, that I might be prevented from entering into the god's house; but in spite of all her movements I pushed her aside, and forced my way into the house. Its outward appearance was that of a cone, or extinguisher, standing in the centre of the enclosure.

It was formed by long poles placed triangularly, and thatched with long grass. Inside of it I found a clay bench, in the form of a chair. Its tenant was absent, and the old woman pretended that she had, by her magic, caused him to disappear.

On my return, I found my friends anxiously waiting for me, dreading lest something awful might have happened to me; and the townspeople seemed quite in a fury. They did not, however, dare to attack me, for they are great cowards when the least determination or spirit of resistance is shown. They are so superstitious, that not one individual would venture over the threshold of the holy house, without the permission of the old nurse. When I explained to the multitude the nature of the trick practised by the old woman, they were greatly incensed. There can be no doubt that some neighbour's child is borrowed whenever strangers wish to see this wonderful infant; and when dressed up and disguised by various colours of clay, it is exhibited as the divine and wonderful child. The natives are so credulous, that a fetish-man or woman has no difficulty in making them believe any thing, however extravagant.

After the delay occasioned by my visit, we went on to our next stage, a small town near the beach, called in the native language, *Occro*, which

signifies salt-pond. It contains about two thousand inhabitants, and derives its name from the lake on which different parts of it stand. Its appearance is very picturesque, as it is shaded by many large cotton and adoomah, as well as cocoa-nut trees, which grow in abundance on this part of the coast.

Here the Wesleyan missionaries have an establishment, which we visited. We remained there for some hours during the heat of the day, which was excessive, making the loose sand very troublesome. On our arrival, my friends (though they had been carried through the whole distance) were glad to lie down to rest; but being myself anxious to see and learn as much as possible, I went over the greater part of the town to observe the manners and habits of the people, which differ considerably from those of Cape Coast or Annamaboe, although not at a great distance from them. The natives of this place are more generous in their manner, and in many of their features differ entirely from those of the Fantees, bearing much resemblance in features and form of the head to the Arabs and Fellátahs. Their limbs also are more elastic, and their eyes quicker than those of the Fantees, who are the heaviest and most morose of all the Africans whom I have seen.

The houses here are much cleaner and better

constructed than at Cape Coast or Annamaboe. They are generally built round a square yard, with one main entrance into it. This is mostly about four yards by twelve, the houses forming its sides, with entrances to the different apartments from the court or yard outside of these rooms. Along the walls are clay benches, in the form of sofas, which are shaded from the sun by projecting roofs. In the morning, the master of the house sits here with his attendants, and drinks palm-wine; but the women are his principal drudges or slaves, as is the case in almost all other parts of Africa. The master of the house has generally from six to ten, or even twenty wives, according to his means, and a proportionate number of slaves. The slaves are not usually treated worse than his wives. Marriages are here made by purchase, as in other parts of this coast. When a man sees a girl to whom he takes a fancy, he goes to her father, and bargains for her as he would for a sheep or goat, without any consideration of the disparity of age, nor are the girl's inclinations ever for a moment thought of. Even the most influential of the native merchants, who have had a liberal education, do the same thing, and maintain a vast number of wives at an enormous expense.

On inquiry, I found that many Arabs and Moors, as well as Fellátahs, had found their way

to this place, either as slaves or fugitives, from their own country, and thus the difference of feature before noticed may be accounted for. Fishing is the chief occupation of the inhabitants, who dry the fish which they catch in great abundance, and carry them to Annamaboe and into the interior. Palm-oil is also made here, as well as farther inland.

The lake from which the town derives its name is very salt, although unconnected with the sea. A high bank of sand, about a hundred yards broad, separates this lake from the sea; consequently the salt water must filter through the sand into the lake, which, at high water, is much lower than the sea. From the nature of the soil and bed of the lake, there is very little doubt but that it was once an inlet of the sea, now separated from it by sand and shells washed up by the tremendous swell all along this coast;—hence the lagoons, or salt lakes, found in many places, and which stretch out to a great extent. The water is very bad, and can only be obtained by digging, or rather scratching holes in the sand, and it is always brackish. This town bears E. 1° N. from Annamaboe, and is distant about nine miles from Cromantine. We experienced great kindness at this place from the Missionary teacher, a native of Cape Coast, placed here by Mr. Freeman.

CHAPTER IV.

Strange Articles of Food—Native Cookery—The River Amissa—Reception by the Caboocer of Amissa—Soil, Fruits, &c.—An Adventure—Visit from a Hyena—The River Anaqua—Arsafah—Soil, Fruits, &c.—Beautiful Birds—Moors and Arabs here—Cattle—Return to Cape Coast—Hospitable Reception there—Invitation from the King of Ashantee—My Reply—Visit the Neighbourhood of Cape Coast—Coffee Plantations—Indolence of the Natives—The Town of Napoleon—Eyau Awkwano—Fruits Growing Spontaneously—Bad Roads—Singular Mode of Carrying Timber—Cotton Trees—The Dwarf Cotton Shrub—Scene of a Sanguinary Battle—Djewkwa—Native Houses—An Intoxicated Caboocer—The Caboocer's Presents—Account of him—Return to Cape Coast—Sail for Whydah—Winnebah Method of Curing Fish—Natives—Stock—Neighbouring Country—The Devil's Hill—Soil—Yanwin (sapphire)—The River Jensa—Beautiful Birds—The Kingfisher.

AT 4 A.M. we resumed our journey to the River Amissa, distant three miles. Our road passed over loose sand, and was very fatiguing to the traveller. After walking about two miles, we came to a small lake, where we found two fishermen busily engaged in cutting up a very large shark, which they said they were dividing into so many cowries' worth, or, as we should say, two pennyworths. Here "all is fish that comes to net." They eat anything; alligators, alliga-

tors' eggs, dogs, monkeys, cats,—in fact, there are few things they will not devour as a meal. Their method of cooking is certainly very good. Their soups and stews are wholesome; and their palm-soup is delicious, either made with fish or fowl; it is seasoned with palm-oil and pepper. Kankie, a sort of bread made from the Indian corn, coarsely ground, is the most common food, as wheaten bread is in Europe. Of vegetables they have great varieties: yams, cassada, or manioc root, sweet potatoes, and plantains, as well as many other herbs used for soups. We saw at this place the remains of a very large whale, which had been driven on shore some time before.

After passing along the beach, still on the loose sand, about one mile, we reached the river Amissa, which might more correctly be called a lake. The whole of the party except myself were carried across by the same men who had carried them the previous part of the journey; but I, having no carriers, was ferried across by one of the chief's or caboccer's canoes, which happened to be on the lake. After crossing it, we immediately proceeded to the kroom, or village, named, from the lake or river, Amissa. Here the old caboccer received us very kindly, and soon cleared out a house for our accommodation. We then walked round the village, which is pleasantly situated on

a good soil, differing from any I had seen on the coast farther westward. It is black, loamy, and very rich and fertile, bearing many large trees of different kinds, such as cocoas, bananas, and plantains, in great abundance. Pine-apples come up spontaneously.

After walking round the kroom, we went to the river to bathe, and found that it had risen considerably since we crossed it, as the sea, when near high water, flows into it. It has here, however, nearly banked itself off. The water of this lake is very salt, although it is constantly fed by a fresh-water stream from the N.W. This river forms a lagoon at a short distance from the sea, eastwards. On returning to our lodgings, which had nothing but bare walls, we made a hearty supper, sitting or lying on the ground or floor, and were afterwards joined by the good old caboceer over a glass of grog, which he very readily accepted, accompanied by some of his captains. Thus we amused ourselves till twelve o'clock, when one of our party having got a little too much, became rather quarrelsome, and by some accident upset the candle, so that we were left in total darkness, for as the hut had no windows, we were not benefited by the moonlight. The old caboceer seemed much alarmed, and clasped me tightly round the waist with both his arms for protection. A light

was, however, soon procured by help of a lucifer-match, and lo! all the old chief's captains had deserted him, supposing the light had been purposely extinguished for some hostile design. The old man, however, was soon convinced of the contrary, and I escorted him home to his house, which differed from those already described only by having the fire-place inside instead of outside of it. When I returned all the party lay down to rest till the morning. I had borrowed a grass mat from the caboccer, and the others lay in their baskets. Musquitoes, however, were so numerous that we could get no rest; at about half-past two A.M. my friend Mr. Brewe and his wife were entirely driven out, and made an attempt to sleep in the street, but found their tormentors still more numerous there; whereupon, they resolved upon beating a retreat back to Annamaboe. However, as I had already walked twelve miles in a scorching sun and over a miserable road, I felt no inclination to accompany them, particularly as we had not yet seen any thing of the neighbouring country. Besides which, we had not finished our intended journey.

My remonstrances, however, were in vain. Mr. Brewe had determined to return, and awoke my other friend, who was comfortably reposing under the protecting influence of Bacchus. He had felt

nothing of the musquitoes, and very much wished to remain till morning; but Mr. Brewe was not to be dissuaded, and accordingly ordered his servants and baggage to get into marching order. I determined, notwithstanding, to remain alone. Mr. Brewe showed great anxiety for my safety, and very kindly left the provision-boxes for my use during the next two days, which was very desirable, for our money is of no value in this country, cowries being the only currency known.

After the departure of my friends, I lay down outside of the hut, and was just falling asleep, when I felt something touch my cap. I was not alarmed, however, supposing it to be either a dog or a pig, smelling at my head; but on moving my head, and making a noise to drive away my unwelcome visitor, the animal made more noise in his retreat than it seemed possible for a dog to make, and moved much faster than a pig. This circumstance induced me to get up, when, to my astonishment, the same animal having been obliged to re-pass me, as it had been frustrated in its first attempt to escape by getting bewildered amongst the houses, it turned out to be a large hyena, or, as the natives call it, a patakoo. These beasts are so ravenous and so numerous, that they frequently carry off cattle, pigs, poultry, and even dig or scratch up dead bodies.

In the morning, when the old caboceer visited me, I informed him of what had happened, and he congratulated me upon my escape, as he assured me that those beasts frequently carry off a bullock or a hog.

After breakfast the caboceer called again upon me, inviting me to go to his house to be introduced to his family, and to drink with him. He pressed me very much to remain with him a few days, but I begged him to excuse me, promising to come another time and remain there a short time. The village bears nearly the same direction by the compass as the other two places already mentioned.

December 1st.—At 10 A.M. I set off on my journey to the river Anaqua, only two miles distant. It is now the dry season and is very small; it runs into the lagoon, which I was obliged to cross in my way to the small village or kroom named Arsafah. This kroom is situated between the lagoon and the sea, but close to the latter. Its natives are maintained chiefly by fishing. But at a little distance in the interior much corn is produced, and it is often brought to this place for shipment, sometimes at the rate of sixpence per bushel.

The soil is much more fertile here than at Cape Coast. Cocoa-nuts grow in great abundance, although near the sea no trees of any considerable

size are to be found. The ground is mostly covered with shrubs and small trees, about ten or twelve feet high. At this place I saw some very handsome birds, of beautiful plumage, such as the splendid crown-bird. They are very wild; few of them, indeed, are stationary in any part of this coast. They migrate every three months, and some continue here only a few days, not remaining to breed, perhaps as being too near the sea. The fish taken in this lagoon have a much better flavour than those caught in the sea.

The inhabitants of this place are much like those of Accra; much better made than the natives of Cape Coast, the form of their head being much finer. I found, upon inquiry among some of the old people, that they had come from a great distance in the interior, and belonged to various tribes, which I could distinguish from the marks upon their faces. Some Moors and Arabs have even found their way to this part of the west coast. They are, as at all other places which I have yet visited in this country, very indolent; and here they are very fond of gaming and drinking, especially rum, or palm-wine. Sheep, goats, and pigs, as well as poultry, are plentiful, but small and lean, compared with those of colder climates. The sheep in West and Central Africa are clothed with hair instead of wool, like the goats in Europe.

After dinner I set out on my return to Annamaboe, along the beach, which was much more fatiguing than my journey from the Amissa through the woods. In the evening I reached Acera, where I passed the night at the mission-house, being very kindly entertained by the native teacher before mentioned, who resides there.

December 2d.—At 10 A.M. I started again by the same route as before for Annamaboe, which I reached at 5 P.M. There I remained a few days longer with my friend Mr. Brewe; and when I had determined to return to Cape Coast, my friend Mr. Cobble kindly furnished me with a canoe, and thus I reached Cape Coast safely after a fortnight's absence.

There I received, as before, from Mr. Hutton and all the merchants of the place, as well as from the officers of the garrison, the greatest attention and kindness. In fact, they often pressed me to become an honorary member of their mess, and I trust they will excuse the liberty I take in mentioning their names, for it is the only mark of gratitude I can give for such kindness and generosity. The officers then in garrison belonged to Her Majesty's First West India regiment, and were,—Lieutenant Pogson, commanding the fort; Lieutenant Anton; Mr. Ross, commissary; and Dr. M'Hardy, surgeon.

I here waited for the King of Ashantee's reply to a letter sent to him by Governor Hill, as I mentioned above. The reply was despatched in due time, and was to this effect: that the King would be happy to see me in Coomassie, and would give me an escort as far as the Kong Mountains. Having, however, soon afterwards heard of the murder of one of his subjects, he sent off an express to overtake the Governor's messenger, with orders for his return to Coomassie. When he again reached that place the King's letter was withdrawn, and another substituted for it, informing the Governor that though the King would be glad to see me in Coomassie, he could not allow me to go farther, on account of the murder which had been committed. One of his own messengers also was sent down, with a large retinue of attendants, bringing a message to the same effect. Upon consulting the Governor, he therefore agreed with me that it would be useless to go to Coomassie, when I was aware that I could not penetrate farther. Quako, the King's messenger, was sent for, and desired by the Governor to tell his master the King, that I should not trouble him, since I should not be allowed to proceed beyond the limits of his dominions.

With this message his Majesty was probably much mortified. I must here add that I

was much indebted for the interest Governor Hill took in my proposed journey, and to his kind treatment of me while I remained at Cape Coast.

After spending a very pleasant Christmas with my generous and hospitable friend Mr. Hutton, and passing also the New Year's day in true English style, as far as could be done in this country, (the health of her Majesty and the royal family, with success to the army and navy, and other loyal toasts, having been drunk with much spirit,) I set out, on the 2d January, 1845, accompanied by Mr. Hutton, Mr. Smith, and the Ashantee princes (who happened to be at Cape Coast to receive their pension from the British Government), on a journey to a town of some note twenty miles distant from the Cape, lying in a nearly north-west direction. Our road passed through a coffee plantation, formerly belonging to the late Mr. Swansea, but now in the possession of the Missionaries established at Cape Coast. It was in a much neglected condition, owing to the difficulty in prevailing on the native labourers to attend to their work.

A native foreman is too commonly the idlest in the gang, and too ready to encourage those under him to set their employers at defiance. This remark will perhaps be thought by some philanthropic persons very uncharitable; but whoever has had any experience of the character of this people will corroborate my statements. The situ-

ation of this plantation is pretty well chosen, as it is close to a river, and has a dwelling-house pleasantly situated on a hill of considerable elevation. In the garden are some very fine orange, lime, and bread-fruit trees, with other smaller plants, and pine-apples in great abundance. In the plantation the coffee-trees are very healthy, but nearly choked up with weeds and grass, which is of very rapid growth in this country. The pine-apples are of large size. The greater part of this plantation, however, has been ill chosen.

On the other side of the stream the soil is an excellent black loam, and would doubtless pay well if properly cultivated. This place is called Napoleon, wherefore I am at a loss to account. After crossing the stream at the ford, about ten yards wide, but only one foot deep in the dry season, and proceeding, still in a north-western direction, three miles farther, we came to a very neat little kroom, having about two hundred inhabitants, called Eyau Awkwano. It is distant eight miles from Cape Coast, and is governed by a very handsome black caboceer, who, though very good-natured, is, like all other of these chiefs, very fond of large presents, and very unwilling to make any in return. Here we halted for breakfast, having the necessary provisions, solid and liquid, with us.

After resting two hours, we set out again, pass-

ing over a very rugged and narrow path, continually interrupted by stumps of trees, left when the ground was cleared for cultivation, as the brush-wood is then only burnt and not rooted up. Such a road was not very pleasant for our feet, but after marching three miles from the last-named kroom, we reached a much larger one, containing about one thousand inhabitants, nearly the whole of whom turned out to have a peep at our cavalcade. These two krooms are pleasantly situated, and have a soil of the best quality. The natives are maintained chiefly by the produce of their lands, such as corn, yams, manioc, or cassada, bananas, and plantains. Oranges and limes grow spontaneously, as well as pine-apples, which are gathered and sold at Cape Coast in exchange for English cloth, guns, rum, or the fish caught and dried there.

Beyond the last village the road becomes still rougher, but is over-arched by large and beautiful trees, various and singular in appearance, and adorned by many kinds of creepers. All the large planks and beams brought to Cape Coast are carried from this neighbourhood on the heads of slaves, relays of whom are stationed at intervals, each carrying one large beam or two planks on his head ten or twelve miles. This is certainly hard work, particularly for girls.

These slaves are only so employed for one month during the whole year, and perhaps have the remaining eleven months for their own occupations. Domestic slaves are by no means ill treated. They always have plenty of food, and clothing is not necessary, nor is it worn, with the exception of a small piece of cotton cloth tied round the waist. They are always treated as part of the family. Such a thing as actual want is unknown.

The beams and planks are, for the most part, of the adoomah, a very large and handsome tree, and excellent timber. It is all sawed by hand and pit-saws. Saw-mills would be of advantage here. Cotton trees of immense size grow in the neighbourhood, some forty-eight and fifty feet in girth. They are only used for canoes, sometimes three and even four large canoes being hollowed out of one tree. Their wood, however, is too soft for any other purpose. The name of cotton-tree causes many people to suppose that it produces the cotton commonly used in manufactures; such is not the case; the cotton produced by this tree is contained in oblong pods, about ten or twelve inches long, and round at each end, like an egg. This pod contains a substance like silk, and is used only for stuffing pillows or cushions. The pods hang down for some length, as if suspended from the end of a piece of twine, a foot and a half long. The dwarf

cotton shrub, which produces the material used in our manufacture, also grows spontaneously in this neighbourhood. This shrub seldom exceeds five or six feet, and has several spreading stems. Its flower is beautiful, either red or yellow, and is succeeded by a round and flattish pod, about one inch diameter, which, when ripe, bursts, and its seeds are surrounded by cotton, which, when gathered, is cleared of them. They are black, and in shape much like the stone of our hips and haws.

After passing over the top of a gently sloping hill, between two beautiful and well-cultivated valleys (the spot where the Ashantees fought and were defeated in one of their most determined battles,) ornamented by beautiful trees, much like the tulip-tree in full blossom, we reached a small kroom called America, probably so named by the European settlers. Here we again halted and took a draught of water. Around this little kroom the land is cultivated, and there are several very lofty trees, very straight and spiral in form, so that it is evident how good the soil must be. This place is eighteen miles from Cape Coast. After resting half an hour, we set out on our last stage, rather fagged from the roughness of the road, and in half an hour reached Djewkwa, a pleasant little town, with houses tolerably well built of mud and very roomy. They are constructed also with a degree of regularity seldom seen in African towns. Not

having sent any messenger forwards to announce our approach, as is usual in Africa, the caboccer was unprepared to receive us, and we were, therefore, told to wait a little, a house having been shown to us in which we might stay till he could see us. We waited until we lost all patience, and were obliged to lie down under a large tree in the market-place. Very large ants tormented us cruelly, both by their teeth and stings.

At length the caboccer announced his readiness to receive us, and we had to repair to another part of the town where he dwelt. His house is the best in the town, and in front of it we found him seated in his chair of state, a rudely constructed wooden chair covered with brass nails, under a large spreading tree ; chairs and stools were placed for all our party. The great man, however, was so drunk as to be wholly unfit to go through the ceremony of formally receiving us, and we were obliged to content ourselves by receiving an apology, as he candidly confessed his drunkenness and inability to receive us according to the custom of the country. He then retired, and left us under the care of his son, who was very willing to make himself agreeable by quaffing various tumblers of wine and ale, which we had brought, as well as several glasses of brandy and gin. He, consequently, soon showed symptoms of intoxication as well as his father, and continued the

palaver till eleven o'clock, when we were allowed to retire to our lodgings for the night, where we were each provided with a mat, the only article of furniture considered by this people as necessary.

In the planting season, it appears, the farmers quit their houses in the town, and go to some distance, to be near the fields; other empty houses belong to people who go into the interior to seek for gold, and who are absent for some months.

Being well tired with my journey, I slept soundly, and rose on the following morning much refreshed. After breakfast we announced to the caboceer our intention of returning immediately to Cape Coast. The old man was quite disappointed on finding that we did not intend to stop for a day or two; but being again drunk, and unable to come and bid us good-bye, he deputed his principal captain to perform that office; at the same time making us a present of gold-dust to the value of nine pounds sterling, with three fat sheep, all of which, except one of the sheep, we declined accepting, as we well knew much more would be expected from us in return.

It may be proper to give some account of this chief before I pass on to another subject. He was one of the King of Ashantee's head captains, who in some way offended his master, and would have lost his head, had he not, with some others, fled to Cape Coast, and put himself under the protection

of the English Government. His companions were either captured by the Ashantees in the town of Cape Coast, or given up by the English, and beheaded; but Kudjo Chibbo having been received into the fort, was saved from the death which awaited him, and afterwards appointed by the Governor caboccer of Djewkwa, and his son was sent to school at Cape Coast for some years. He can, however, now scarcely speak a word of English. His father gets drunk the first thing in the morning, and remains so during the remainder of the day.

January 3d.—At half-past nine o'clock we set out on our return, and reached Cape Coast, after sundry halts, at six o'clock in the evening.

January 30th.—An opportunity of visiting all the principal settlements along the coast as far as Whydah having occurred, I went after a few hours' notice on board the *Medora*, a vessel belonging to Mr. T. Hutton, he being himself embarked also; and on the 1st of February we reached Winnebah. Going on shore we proceeded directly to the Mission-house, where we fortunately met the two missionaries, Mr. Brooking and Mr. Chapman, who had lately returned from Coomassie. They were now on their way from Accra, and treated us with great kindness. At their departure on the following morning they left orders that I should receive every accommodation during my stay at Winnebah.

This place is well situated both for trade and agriculture. The town is built close to the sea, very near the mouth of a large river running from the interior and emptying itself into the Atlantic. The buildings are very irregular, and have mud walls, though very fine freestone might be got in great abundance close at hand. There is only one stone house in the place. Its chief article of trade is palm-oil, which is brought from some distance in the interior. The inhabitants make a pretty comfortable living by fishing, as the fish is plentiful in the sea here, the average number caught by each fisherman being five thousand. This, however, is only the case at certain seasons. The fish are dried and sent into the interior, where gold dust is given in exchange. Their method of drying fish is very simple. If the fish exceeds the size of a small herring, it is split up the back, and the whole are spread in rows in the sun, and after having been turned twice during the day, on the second day are completely cured, without the addition of salt. A great many sharks are also dried, and when large cut into several pieces. At Winnebah they do not smoke the fish, as is done in many places.

Nowhere on this coast did I find so great a diversity of character and manner as in this place. Natives from two-thirds of all Africa are to be seen here. Any person acquainted with the fea-

tures of the different African tribes might easily distinguish them. No doubt they have been brought from various parts of the interior as slaves. The men are generally tall and athletic; the women much handsomer than those at Cape Coast. They seem good-tempered, lively, and fond of dress, as all their countrymen are.

Pigs, oxen, sheep, goats, fowls, ducks, and turkeys, are fine and plentiful for the space of ten miles square.

Immediately behind the town, the country is a beautiful level, studded here and there with clumps of trees, and the soil is rich and black. Ten miles off is a chain of mountains. The western point terminates in what is called the Devil's Hill, about four hundred feet high, bearing from the town of Winnebah N.W. by W. The whole surrounding country looks beautiful, and much resembles a fine large park in England. The lower or western part of this plain is flooded in the rainy season.

On examining the vegetation and soil in the bed of this occasional lake, I found the borders covered with a small plant, called by the natives yanwin, which grows near all salt lakes on this coast. This plant is used by them as a medicine. It is also common in both England and Scotland among the rocks on the sea-coast, and much prized as a salad or pickle: in England it is named samphire. The growth of this plant

here shows that in the rainy season, when the river is much swollen, the sea rises considerably higher, and makes the water of the river and this lake salt, as I have never found this plant itself very salt to the taste near fresh water.

The river Jensu, which falls into the Atlantic about three quarters of a mile to the east of Winnebah, is said by the natives to be navigable upwards of two hundred miles; but I only ascended it about six or seven miles. It is very shallow at its mouth during the ebb of the tide, owing to the bar invariably formed at the mouth of all rivers on this part of the African coast by the tremendous surf which always prevails. About half a mile above its mouth the river deepens; its banks are abrupt, and about five feet above the surface of the water. In the dry season the current is very sluggish, not exceeding a mile and a half an hour. For two miles from the sea trees and large shrubs adorn both banks, full of various birds of beautiful plumage. Amongst these I could distinguish two species of kingfishers, one as large as a thrush, and the other not larger than a tom-tit; the smaller much darker in colour than the other. Alligators are very large and numerous; and I observed the sea flowed at a considerable height up the river as far as I ascended.

CHAPTER V.

Native Laws—Roguary of the Natives; White Men fair Game—Superstition—Fetish-houses—Colour, Habits, &c. of the Natives—Prevalence of Drunkenness—Disgusting Neglect—Fashion in Shaving—Tally System—Population—Accra—Mr. Bannerman and his Hospitality—Danish Accra, partly Demolished—Occasion of this—Attempt to assassinate the Governor—English Accra, its Trade much reduced by Competition with Americans—Curreney—Merchants' Houses—Fruits and Flowers—The Coromantine Apple—Natives most expert Thieves—Population—Circumcision—Mode of Carrying Children—Sleep in the Open Air—Manufactures—Fish—Difficult Landing—Salt Lake—Soil—Gaming and Drinking—Population of English Accra—Stock—Cruel Treatment of Horses—Want of Natural Affection—Sail for Ahguay—Boarded by an English Brig—Mr. Hutton's Factory at Ahguay—A Drunken Caboceer—His Dress and Attendants—A Principal Fetish-woman, her Dress—Dance performed by Her—Natives of Ahguay—Slave-merchants—Cotton and Indigo—Markets—Treatment of Slaves—Characteristics of Africans—Fish—Method of Dressing the Crab—Alligators—Alligator-hunt—Plants and Fruits—The Velvet-Tamarind—Popoe—Mr. Lawson, a Native Merchant—Introduction to his Wives—Merchants, their Mode of Living—Slave-Trade—Population—Manufactures—Gaming and Drinking—Kankie—M. De Suza's Slave Establishment—His House—His Domestic Slaves—Noisy Reception by the Caboceer—Treatment of Slaves.

THE native laws are not severe. Theft is punished by fine, imprisonment, or flogging, according to the magnitude of the offence. Adultery is punished by compelling the adulterer to pay the original price for which the adulteress was pur-

chased by her husband, and the culprit then takes the woman to himself. But female virtue is held in so little esteem, that opportunities of infidelity are often afforded by husbands to some of his less favourite wives for the purpose of extorting money and getting rid of her. The common price of a wife here and at Cape Coast is sixteen dollars. A wife is very seldom purchased when more than twenty years old; but generally when five or six years younger, so that very old men have frequently ten or a dozen wives much younger than their own daughters. Not even the appearance of affection exists between husband and wife, or between parents and children. So little do they care for their offspring, that many offered to sell me any of their sons or daughters as slaves. They are, to speak the truth, in point of parental affection inferior to brutes.

The caboceer is judge and chief magistrate at Winnebah, his captains forming his council or jury; but a white man who has been robbed seldom obtains any redress, since the natives consider him as fair game, and the caboceer, doubtless, receives part of the plunder. Whenever, therefore, I detected the offenders, I gave the thieves a good sound flogging myself. There are here, as all along the coast, fetish-houses in many different parts of the town; and the image worshipped by them is a rude figure made of clay, in

a sitting posture, and as nearly like a human being as the artist can make it. On certain days they prostrate themselves and kiss the ground, when they come near any of their sacred places. Nothing offends them more than showing contempt for their fetish. This is resented more especially by their fetish-men, or priests; there are also many fetish-women on this part of the coast.

The natives vary much in colour, owing to the mixture of the different tribes; those of the purest race have what is called a good black hue, woolly hair, high forehead, with the upper part narrow and round. The average height of the men is five feet nine inches; of the women, about five feet six inches: they are well made. They usually wear only a cloth round their loins, but the younger of both sexes generally go entirely naked. They most commonly wash themselves once in twenty-four hours, but lie on the ground huddled together like pigs. Their food is chiefly yams, plantains, kankie, fish, and palm-oil. The caboccer and his captains generally get drunk with palm-wine, peto, and rum, twice in the twenty-four hours.

Much neglect seems to prevail at the time of the birth of male children, respecting the separation of the umbilical cord. Many boys, and even men, may be seen with protruding navels as large as a duck's egg, sometimes turned down at the end. They have

many different fashions in shaving their heads: some leave only a small tuft on the crown; others, a tuft on one side just above the ear; others, narrow strips from the middle of the forehead to the top of the head; others, again, from ear to ear, thus dividing the head into four parts. Some shave their heads only from the forehead to the suture, which is very observable in the skulls kept in their fetish-houses. Of letters or cyphers they are wholly ignorant. Their tally is kept in grains of Indian corn, so many being put in one small bag as an account against the debtor, and in another as the number due to the creditor. Surnames are not in use in any part of the Western Coast,* except among the few who have been edu-

* The natives name their children after the day of the week, and if more than one child is born on the same day of the week, they are called *First*, *Second*, and so on according to their seniority.

Sunday . . .	Quesera.	Thursday . .	Yowda.
Monday . . .	Adjuda.	Friday . . .	Feera.
Tuesday . . .	Benada.	Saturday . .	Memenda.
Wednesday . .	Ewkra.		

Persons born on each day of the week:—

	Men.	Women.
Sunday	Quashie	Aquesua.
Monday	Kudjo	Adjewa.
Tuesday	Kobra	Aabinaba.
Wednesday . . .	Quako	Akooa.
Thursday	Quaow	Yaba.
Friday	Kaffee	Efwa.
Saturday	Quamina	Anma.

cated, whose number is very small, considering the time that missionaries and schools have been established among them. The town of Winnebah contains about four thousand inhabitants.

February 5th, 1845.—We set sail from Winnebah and landed at Accra. On the morning of the 6th I went on shore and visited Mr. Bannerman, whose hospitality and kindness are well known to Europeans. After breakfasting with him, I went to see some more of my friends in this place; and with Mr. Gedge, a British merchant established here, I remained during my stay. He drove me over the Danish Accra, where we visited the Governor, a very kind and gentlemanly man.

Two days previous to my arrival at Accra, he had been under the necessity of destroying part of the town, as the inhabitants of the demolished houses had received and harboured a party of miscreants who had come down from the Woodlands with the intention of murdering him. The party, amounting to fifty armed men, had stationed themselves on the beach to waylay his Excellency when he landed from a Danish vessel anchored in the roads, on board of which he had gone to visit the commander; but before the boat came within gunshot of the beach, a signal from the fort warned them to keep off. His Excellency, thereupon, returned to the ship, and brought a few

marines in another boat, who soon put these would-be assassins to flight. When he had ascertained where they had been secreted, his Excellency ordered that part of the town to be cannonaded. I visited the ruins, and it was certainly a wretched spectacle to see so many houses in ashes, and their inhabitants encamped on the outskirts of the town, with such articles of furniture as they were able to save from destruction. Fortunately, this being the dry season, they were not so much exposed as otherwise they might have been.

These people feel the destruction of their abodes the more as their dwellings are their family sepulchres; every member of the family being invariably buried under the floor. What rendered their case still more wretched, was, knowing that they would not be allowed to rebuild their houses, as the Governor intends to build barracks upon the site of the ruins.

It may be well to give some information respecting the origin of this untoward event. The chief of the Aquapim country had a rival in his own brother, who established his claim upon the grounds, that, although not the lawful heir, he had been chosen, as was the custom, by the people; the decision of the matter was therefore referred to the arbitration of the Governor of the Danish fort at Accra. The rival chiefs, as is usual in such

cases, repaired to Accra, and waited in the market-place until their arrival was announced to the Governor. During this interval, one of the parties commenced their palaver; but the lawful chief declared his determination not to enter into any palaver, except in the Governor's presence. High words ensued, and the usurping party withdrew to the houses where they had deposited their arms, with which they immediately returned; and, without ceremony, fired upon their opponents, killing and wounding several of them, as well as several individuals no way concerned in the affair. This enraged not only the opposing party, but also the people of Danish Accra, who instantly attacked and pursued their assailants, who immediately fled. They were, however, speedily overtaken, and compelled to fight, and several, on both sides, were killed. Six of the chiefs of the usurping party were beheaded, with their chief Owoosoo, and their heads were carried back to Accra, and placed close by the gate of the fort. When the Danish Governor was informed of this, he ordered the heads to be buried, and, as soon as he conveniently could, went himself to the Aquapim country, in order to settle, if possible, their palaver. However, this could not be done with satisfaction to both parties, consequently the usurping party (whose chief was killed) determined to kill the

Danish Governor. This, as we have mentioned, was happily prevented. The name of the rival chiefs were Ahdoom and Owoosoo.

English Accra is well situated on the sea-coast, in $5^{\circ} 31' 9''$ N. latitude, and $11' 5''$ W. longitude—Dutch Accra joining it. This place carries on a considerable trade in gold, palm-oil, and ivory; but the English trade is now much reduced, on account of the number of American vessels which visit the whole coast, with goods of a very inferior description, and, of course, at a very low price. Moreover, the American captains generally, for a trifle of extra pay, act as supercargoes, hawking their goods in all seaport towns, as our pedlars do in England; and as the natives cannot distinguish a good from an inferior article, the fair trader, or resident merchant (whose expenses are very great), is much injured. Dollars and cowries are the proper currency; but oil and ivory, as well as gold, are generally exchanged for goods suitable for the country, such as cotton, cloths, gun, gunpowder, and flints.

There are several old-established merchants in Accra, both native and English. Of the former, several have been educated in England, and are very respectable men, who have done much for the improvement and appearance of Accra. Their houses, as far as is consistent with the climate, where the

thermometer ranges from 82° to 87° in the shade, are built on the English plan, with large gardens and pleasure-grounds, laid out at an enormous expense, though not very productive, as the soil in the immediate neighbourhood is chiefly sand or gravel, and very dry and barren.

Cactus of different kinds, and the prickly pear, grow here in great abundance; the cashew nut, which produces much fruit, is also common, as well as oranges, limes, bananas, plantains, and pine-apples, with another very delicious fruit, not very common on this coast, called the Coromantine, or Cromantine apple, from the Dutch settlement bearing that name near Annamaboe. Its native name, however, is Arombobjway. It is about the size of a hen's egg, and has nearly the shape of a pear. Its colour, when ripe, is a dark yellow; its skin smooth, with an oblong grain. Its sweetness is mixed with a slight acidity. The natives prize it highly as a preventive against sea-sickness. Its seeds are four in number, oblong, and about three quarters of an inch in length, very thin towards the edge, gradually thickening towards the centre to three-eighths of an inch. In colour it is similar to the horse-chestnut; the inner part is of a pale yellow, and easily separated in the middle.

The natives of Accra are allowed, by all other

people from Cape Coast to Benin, to be the greatest and most expert thieves along the whole coast ; but my experience does not enable me to perceive any great difference in this respect, for I have found them all a great deal more dexterous than was convenient, white men being always considered as lawful prey in all cases. Even in the market they will always ask four times the proper price from an European. The population is much mixed here as well as at Winnebah ; but there are considerably more mulattoes in proportion to the respective population of the two places. This, no doubt, arises from their having had more intercourse with Europeans. Circumcision is practised by a considerable number. This custom was introduced by some of the slaves brought from the interior ; as I observed the same practice in several towns on the banks of the Niger when there in 1841. In Accra this operation is performed upon the children generally at the age of ten or eleven years, after which a square grass mat, about the thickness of coarse canvass, is worn by the boy till the wound is healed, by which those who have undergone the operation are easily distinguished from others.

Many of the natives, both male and female, go entirely naked, till they are twelve or thirteen years old ; and all, when grown up, except a very

few, have the upper part of their bodies entirely naked, as well as their legs and feet. The women invariably carry their child upon their back while in the performance of their domestic duties, and even on their long journeys into the bush to buy provision, either for their families or for sale in the market. All laborious duties fall on the wives; fishing, planting corn or manioc, is the only work performed by the husband. The child, as before stated, is carried on its mother's back or hips, resting upon a kankie—a sort of pad in the shape of a half moon, fixed tightly round the loins, and protruding at least six inches. The child is seated on this sort of pad or saddle, with a strip of country cloth round the upper part of its body, as well as its mother, to keep it in its proper place. When the child requires the mother's breast, you will often see it reaching its head round to the front, and catching hold of the breast with both hands, to support itself while sucking, the mother continuing her pace unaltered, with perhaps a hundred-weight of yams and fruit on her head, during a journey of twelve or fifteen miles. The women's breasts are generally much larger and looser than those of an European, and frequently hang down as low as the waist, which is very convenient for the infant when seated in its saddle.

During the dry season the natives very seldom sleep in their houses in any part of the west coast of Africa, but lie on a thin grass mat outside of their houses, without any covering. Country cloths are manufactured at Accra, but not extensively. Drip or filter stones are made from an excellent stone found here, superior to any other for that purpose. The same stone is also used for building. Fish is very abundant generally, amongst which is one of a very peculiar flavour, much esteemed, and not found on any other part of the coast, called by the natives *pogie*. The fish is generally dried in the same fashion as at Winnebah. Quantities of these fish are sent into the interior, even to Ashantee.

The landing is difficult at certain seasons, owing to a great many ridges of rocks. In the rear of the town is a salt lake of considerable magnitude, frequently broken in upon by the sea, which washes away the sand-bank, separating the one from the other. Three or four miles behind the town is fine land for cultivation, but between that distance and the town the soil is sandy, mixed with shells and other marine substances, leaving no doubt that the sea, at a former period, covered the surface. Gaming and drinking are prevalent here to a great extent. Cards, and a game called *Adjito*, are the prin-

cipal games. Draughts are also played in Dutch Accra.

English Accra, according to my estimation, contains about seven thousand inhabitants. Stock of different kinds is abundant; and if any attention were paid to it, it might be wonderfully improved, but the Africans pay no attention either to domestic or wild animals; even the dog or horse, the two most sagacious of all the animal creation, excite in them no interest whatever. If not driven to it, they will suffer a horse to stand for days, tied up without food or water. In fact, in no case do they exhibit any feeling either of regard or affection, to merit even a comparison with any of the lower animals, being also selfish in the extreme, in every point where no traces of education are found.

February 11th.—I sailed from Accra, for Ahguay, accompanied by Mr. Hutton, on board the *St. Helier* of Jersey, Master, Deslands. This vessel being consigned to Mr. Hutton, with goods for his factories on the leeward coast, gave me a good opportunity of visiting each place where his factories are established, as well as many of the principal towns and markets in the neighbourhood.

On the 12th, at ten A.M., we were boarded by the *Cygnets*, brig-of-war, the same vessel in which I was ordered a passage from England, previous to my being transferred to the *Prometheus* steamer.

Only a short time previous, she had run a large Spanish slaver on shore, much larger than herself, and well armed. She was then on the look-out for a felucca, which was afterwards taken by the *Hydra* steamer. On the 13th, we were boarded by the *Star*, Captain Dunlop, off Popoe, a town of slave-trading notoriety.

On the same evening we anchored off Alguay, another of the greatest slave-marts on the coast of Africa; and on the following morning went on shore in one of Mr. Hutton's canoes, which we brought from Cape Coast, as well as a crew of canoemen, as there is great difficulty at times when shipping slaves in obtaining them, for they are generally themselves slaves, and their masters invariably slave-dealers, Spaniards and Portuguese. In fact, all the natives here who can afford it are all concerned in this traffic.

After landing, we proceeded to Mr. Hutton's factory, on the south side of the town, facing the sea, distant half a mile, over a bed of loose dry sand, and always very hot. The sea-breeze, however, renders it less distressing. Upon nearing the factory, we were met by the caboocer, a tall fat man, with bloodshot eyes. He appeared to be a complete specimen of the drunken sot, which I found to be truly the case. He wore a country cloth round his loins, and a light

blue hat, too small for him. On his wrists he had heavy iron bracelets, rudely manufactured. On this occasion he was attended by his principal captains, or headmen, but what in any civilized country would be called a disgusting rabble. About twenty or thirty had old Danish muskets, with which they kept up an irregular fire when the guns were inclined to go off, which was seldom the case more than once out of four times. A great many, however, never broke silence, running round their chief like so many loose hounds, and performing the most ludicrous and disgusting gestures, to show, as they imagined, their great superiority to strangers.

This remarkable cavalcade was accompanied by the principal of the fetish-women. Her dress or surplice was of the most grotesque description. On her head was a fore-and-aft hat, in the form of a naval cocked hat, made of grass or rushes, manufactured like our rush baskets in England; a number of greegrees, or charms, were suspended round her neck. Her lower garment, or official costume, was a thick coat of thatch of the long grass, one end plaited into a band about four feet long. This band is tied round the body, the loose ends of the grass hanging downwards in the form of the Highlander's kilt, but not quite so good looking. The fetish-woman also wears on these state

occasions a sheep or goat's skull on her forehead, outside her rush cap. She also carries two rude wooden batons, one in each hand. She dances to the music of her two batons, beating on each other, her motion being about as graceful as a haycock shaken on the top of a haymaker's pitchfork. Her body is white-washed with a very fine lime, manufactured from the oyster-shell, which is here in great abundance.

Nothing of particular interest struck me in Ah-guay, the slave-trade being the principal traffic. Palm-oil and a little ivory are purchased by Mr. Hutton, the only European factor in the place. The character of the natives is depraved in the extreme. As in all other slave-dealing settlements, they are aided by each other in every sort of villany, murder not excepted. The example set them by the Spaniards and Portuguese is certainly bad. These are very numerous here. Besides those actually slave-merchants, a great number of slave crews are landed here, amongst whom very frequently deadly encounters take place with the knife or pistol.

Cotton is cultivated by the natives, spun, and woven into cloth. In spinning, the distaff is the only system or method known. They use a considerable quantity of lime on their fingers when spinning, to prevent the perspiration staining

the thread. Indigo also grows here, as well as in all the neighbourhood, and is manufactured rudely by the natives. The leaves are pounded or beaten on a stone, until they become one mass. They are afterwards made up into round balls, about the size of a cricket-ball. They are then exposed in the market for sale.

There are two small markets daily in Ahguay, which are tolerably well supplied with articles of consumption. Brazilian tobacco is sold in the market,—no doubt taken in exchange for slaves; yams, manioc root, plantain and banana, pine-apples, cashew nuts, ginger and pepper; ground nuts and cotton are also sold in the market, as also country pots of very fair workmanship, grass bags, and mats of various kinds and of mixed colours, some displaying considerable taste and skill. The bush-rat is also dried, and sold in the market. The slaves are let out, like horses, to work; those selected for exportation work in irons. The irons are worn round the neck, the length of chain between each slave being about a yard and a half; but I have never seen any of them perform half what in England would be considered a day's work for a boy of fourteen years of age. The habits of all being naturally indolent, they never expect half a day's work from their slaves.

The condition of the domestic is very different to what the people in England are led to suppose, except those who are exported. They are considered as part of the family, and are very seldom worked beyond what is necessary for exercise. They are constantly, as I have already said, supplied with plenty of food, which is always in great abundance; and if they are sick they are sure of being provided for. The owner will always take care of his slaves for his own sake. As I have before stated, nothing approaching affection, or that regard perceptible in the civilized world, can be traced in the character of the uncivilized African; neither can I convince myself that education even will establish in the breast of an African those fine feelings to be found in the European. The fox exhibits a treacherous cunning, but can never be trained to that sagacity and attachment possessed by the spaniel or Newfoundland dog. I may be considered severe in my remarks, but the real character of the African has often been sadly mistaken, for want of actual knowledge.

The African can never be properly appreciated where he has a chance of obtaining anything by feigning any passion towards you, which may be deemed most likely to obtain what he desires. But go amongst them poor enough, as I was, only to pay for what you purchase, with-

out anything to give away, then you will never be troubled with any of their importunities or pretended friendship.

The reception experienced by Mr. Hutton and myself from the caboccers was purely with a view to obtain presents, as in the two following days we were surrounded by them, begging rum and other articles.

At Ahguay fish are caught in great abundance, as are also crabs, both land and water. They are converted into a very delicious dish by the natives. The crab is dismembered, and his claws cracked or broken; all the fish is taken out, as also that in the main body. The substance is then finely minced together, seasoned with new palm-oil or suet, and well seasoned with pepper.* This operation is performed after the crab is parboiled. The whole of the preparation is then packed closely into the shell of the body of the crab, and put into an oven and baked. It is brought to the table in the shell. This would, in my opinion, become a choice dish in England. Immediately behind this town is the fine Lagoon river, which is navigated by great numbers of canoes from a considerable distance. The greater part of the fish used in this country is caught in

* This dish is called *katoh-kim*. In the Fantee country, *kotah*, signifies crab, and *kim*, pudding.

this lagoon, which abounds with a variety of fish, and great numbers of alligators, which are often very dangerous to persons bathing in the river. A short time ago a large party were bathing, amongst whom was only one man. An alligator seized him, and of course killed him. In consequence of this, the natives turned, accompanied by their fetish-men, and determined to hunt alligators until they found the same one who had killed their companion. After killing ten or eleven alligators, it was declared by the fetish-man that they had at last caught the offender; for he informed the party that his fetish had assured him of it. No doubt the fetish-man was now tired of the sport.

The river here is about seventy yards wide, in the dry season, and three and a half feet deep. The current is about one mile per hour: source from West to East. From the northern bank the land is very level, and the soil rich black loam and sand. It is partially cultivated for the growth of yams, cassada or manioc, cotton, and indigo. I observed some very singular heath at this place, about two miles from the river; as also fern, which I could not distinguish from a species I have observed in Great Britain and in Scotland, called the lady or female fern. The velvet tamarind also grows here in great abundance. It is a

small fruit, about half an inch in diameter, nearly round; it grows with a pod closely resembling fine black cotton velvet. The pod is about the thickness of a penny-piece of copper, in its centre, and has a sweet acid taste, much prized by the natives. Although small in comparison with the common tamarind of this country, it is much more delicate and delicious. The tree, at a little distance from the sea, grows about twenty-five feet high, spreading in a regular conical form, and forming an agreeable shade from the burning rays of the sun. Its leaves are small, like the English plum-tree; its fruit distributed very regularly. Many other delicious fruits are found here, growing on shrubs of the laurel tribe. Some of the fruit are oblong, others round, and about the size of a sloe, the colour of all is yellow when ripe. Some also grow in pods about the size and shape of a large capsicum, containing a large quantity of seeds. This neighbourhood would, in my opinion, prove an excellent field for a botanist.

On the morning of the 15th, Mr. Hutton, myself, and a few more of the people (natives), set out in a canoe to visit Popoe, and call upon Mr. Lawson and his family. Popoe is about eight miles to the westward of Ahguay, and is situate, like the latter place, close to the sea, having the lagoon behind, or to the north of the town. My

friend, Mr. Hutton, had forwarded a communication of his intention to visit Popoe. Mr. Lawson, as well as most of his family, were born at Accra, and are consequently Fantees. He is a little old man, much under the middle size, a jet black, with round shoulders, or bordering more upon the buffalo or hump-back. He very graciously condescended to introduce us to two of his favourite wives, of extraordinary dimensions, for circumference of body is here considered a principal mark of beauty. They were seated facing us, on the opposite side of the room, the old man seating himself by our side. With one of his best grins, he pointed out the two huge flesh mountains as his wives, upon which they seemed much gratified. Each damsel had on her wrist a pair of large solid silver bracelets, weighing about half a pound each, very plain, and similar to those worn by the convicts in the dock-yards in England. The ladies seemed about twenty-four years of age; while their old matrimonial partner, very much resembling a monkey, was about seventy.

Mr. Lawson's two sons are living in the next house to their father, and carry on a trade in all sorts of goods of British manufacture, which are exchanged for palm-oil and ivory. Their houses are good, and in every way arranged to imitate our English style. They also enjoy every luxury

which can be procured from European nations, as well as those of their own country. They are very kind and hospitable in their own houses to those with whom they are acquainted, but they are very deceitful and treacherous in their character. If an English man-of-war or merchantman is in the offing or in the roads, the old man acknowledges the British flag, but the moment the flag of another nation is displayed, he, like the Vicar of Bray, acknowledges that also.

The old man professes great attachment for the English, and even pretends to give our naval officers information respecting the slave-trade, *but it is needless to say that it is always false*, as he is one of the most notorious slave-dealers on the coast himself; although I believe that it is not generally known in England he is at all concerned in that traffic. This statement, however, may be relied upon, as I am writing from ocular demonstration, as well as from authentic information, to a much greater extent than even fell under my own observation. I have also obtained information which may very probably lead to implicate one in this abominable traffic who is little suspected, and whose duty, according to British law, it is to suppress this trade. But I shall, after obtaining more information with regard to the conduct of this individual, write fully upon this subject.

Mr. Lawson, owing to his great trade and wealth acquired by the slave-trade, is acknowledged by the inhabitants as the leading man in Popoe, although they have a caboceer, or *dootay*, who is acknowledged as hereditary chief magistrate or ruler; for when Mr. Lawson interferes, the opinion or order of the caboceer is disregarded.

Popoe contains about five thousand inhabitants, amongst whom are many Spaniards and Portuguese, whose numbers are considerably increased of late, owing to the crews of several captured slave-ships being landed at Whydah. Cotton is cultivated, and manufactured here to a considerable extent. Earthen pots and jugs are also manufactured. Drinking and gaming is becoming more prevalent among the natives. Their chief drink is rum, and peto, which, if properly managed, would make good beer. I made ale from the Indian corn a few days ago, which I expect to prove tolerably good. The games they practise are cards, draughts (no doubt introduced by Europeans), and the game of adjito, before-mentioned. Tobacco is also much sought after by the natives. Their chief food consists of kankie,* and fish, which is caught in great abundance in the lagoon. Manioc-root is much in use for

* *Kankie* is Indian corn ground, made into dough, wrapped in leaves, and then baked or boiled in lumps, the size of a man's fist.

farina for supplying the slaves while in barracons, and also for their own consumption. Yams are not so plentiful as on many other parts of the coast. Stock of every description is here in abundance, and of a superior description; but unfortunately little attention is paid to the improvement of it. They never fatten any of their stock previous to using them. The soil round this neighbourhood is very good and level.

On a small island, on the opposite side of the lagoon from Popoe, is a large slave establishment with several baracoons, belonging to Isidore de Suza, son of M. de Suza of Whydah, who is the greatest slave-dealer in all Africa, although in other respects a very kind and generous man. Mr. Hutton and myself visited the island, and called upon Isidore. We were ushered into a large hall, or principal apartment, beautifully arranged in the Spanish style, and richly furnished with European materials. Round this apartment were arranged prints, in rich gold frames, of Napoleon in his principal battles, as well as his disinterment at St. Helena, and second funeral in France. In a few minutes Isidore himself made his appearance, and gave us a hearty reception. His house is very pleasantly situated, commanding a full view of the Atlantic Ocean. It is well situated for his trade of slave-dealing. Isidore is a tall, stout man, of

pleasing expression and agreeable manners. He is kind and generous to all his domestics, who live in ease and indolence. The greater part of his domestic slaves are at all times either playing at some game which can be enjoyed either lying down or sitting, or stretched at full length in the dirt, like so many pigs. The African does not play any games requiring exercise of body, but will lie for a whole day scarcely changing his position, except to eat; and on these occasions he generally eats as much as three or four Europeans.

On this island I observed the finest cattle I had seen on this part of the coast. They are properly attended to, having proper sheds, and slaves appointed to attend to them. I also saw a very handsome pony here, and in good condition. Isidore is of Portuguese parents.

After crossing the lagoon, we returned to Popoe, where we went through the same ordeal of reception, by the continued annoyance of the firing of old muskets close to our heads, as well as several four-pounders placed on the sand (procured from the wreck of some of the slave-vessels driven on shore), and fired as quickly as they could be crammed full of powder, nearly as large as swan-shot. Here we were followed by at least three or four hundred ragamuffins of all descriptions, clapping hands, beating tom-toms, firing

muskets, flourishing a sort of bill-hook, which they call a sword, all declaring their great satisfaction and good feeling at the sight of an Englishman. They all followed us into Mr. Lawson's yard, keeping up the same discordant annoyance for at least two hours, when we found that their principal good feeling was towards the rum puncheon, which they emptied in a very short time. They will drink rum as fast as an Englishman will drink beer. I was very glad when I saw their amusement changed from such awful discord to the less noisy clamours of their drinking quarrels. As early as possible I went to bed, but found it impossible to sleep, owing to the noise of these gentry, which did not cease until midnight, when the drunken party were too much exhausted to keep up their clamour any longer. Slaves in barracoons for exportation are fed twice during the twenty-four hours, morning and evening. They are let out of their barracoons, and driven like cattle to the river, eight or sometimes ten on the same chain. The chain is strong, the links about eight inches long and about two inches wide, the iron about three-eighths of an inch thick. They are chiefly fed upon farina, a meal ground from the cassada or manioc-root.

CHAPTER VI.

Gregapojee—Extensive Market at—Native Produce and European Manufactures—Popoe Beads, their Value; probable Origin of—Houses—Situation and Soil of Gregapojee—Fish—Alligators—Population—Return to Ahguay, and thence to Whydah—Toll-house—Fish-trap—Travelling Canoe—Beautiful Scenery of the Lagoon—Oysters growing to Trees—Old Ferryman—Gibbets of three Criminals—Murder committed by them—The English Fort at Whydah—Character of M. de Suza—Treatment of Slaves—Hints with reference to this odious Traffic—Price of Slaves—Slave Hunts—Necessity for Education—Cruelty in the Shipment of Slaves—Visit to Avoga—Account of him—Reception by him—Mode of Riding—Bad Road—Reason for not repairing it—Market at Whydah—Native Manufactures, &c.—Duties imposed by the King of Dahomey—His Enormous Revenue—Head Money—System of Government—Severe Laws, and their Result—Paganism—Abject Superstition of the Natives—Dangerous to show Contempt for their Fetish—Anniversary Offerings for departed Friends—Usual Termination of such Festivals—Snake Worship—Houses built to contain them—The Snake-Lizard—The Field-Lizard—The House-Lizard—Vampire Bats.

ON the 16th, at 10 A.M., Mr. Hutton, myself, and the captain and supercargo of a Hamburgh vessel, as well as the two junior Lawsons, went by canoe up the lagoon, to visit the famous market and town of Gregapojee,* three miles and a half N.W. by N. from Popoe. The town is of little moment,

* Gregapojee is mostly abbreviated into Greejee.

having nothing remarkable about it; but the market is the most extensive of any of the settlements on the lagoon, except Whydah. Cotton, both raw and manufactured into cloth, is sold in the market, the latter very high in price, owing to their tedious mode of manufacture. The cloth is, however, much stronger and more durable than that manufactured in England. Beads, both of European and native manufacture, are offered for sale here; and the Popoe bead is also an article of traffic, but it is very scarce and of high price. Nothing is really known of the origin of the Popoe beads: they are sometimes found in digging the earth in and round the town, when making mortar or swish. They are generally from half an inch to an inch in length, and of a tubular form, much resembling a stout pipe-handle broken into small pieces. They are of a light red coral colour; but though they have, I believe, been minutely examined by scientific men in Europe, the result has not proved very satisfactory. They are balanced with gold in purchasing, consequently very few persons are able to wear them. From the circumstance of their being found at Popoe I am led to the conclusion that these beads have either been manufactured here at some remote period, or that some ship has been cast away, having on board those beads as well as other merchandise,

which has long ago perished. My reason for this belief is, that the lagoon extends along this coast to two hundred miles, and is in no place more than a mile or a mile and a half from the Atlantic, and in many places indeed it is open to the sea. This lagoon has doubtless been formed by the sea throwing up this extensive bank of sand, which is still accumulating, perhaps more rapidly than in any other part of the world, owing to the terrible swell always to be found on this coast, which has in many places washed up a bank so steep as to be scarcely accessible. These beads may consequently have been buried by the continued accumulation of sand. Popoe is built on a bank of this description, between the lagoon and the sea. From the river Volta to Benin the houses are all built of clay or red earth, which becomes very hard and is very durable.

To return to Gregapojee. The market is well supplied with every article of consumption of native produce, as well as several articles of European manufacture, amongst which I noticed the Dutch knife, needles, beads, a few iron spoons, Manchester cottons to a small extent, pieces of hoop iron, principally stolen by the coopers employed in European factories on the coast, which are exchanged with people farther in the interior. Pipes and Brazilian tobacco are also sold in this

market, wooden bowls, grass baskets of neat workmanship, grass mats and bags of great pliability and durability, India and Guinea corn, yams, manioc, farina, meal from the Indian corn, calabashes two feet in diameter, richly carved, large and small earthen pots and dishes of native manufacture, shalots, and two sorts of quashie root, and leaves of the same plant, as well as other medicinal plants used by the natives. Lime from the oyster-shell is also manufactured here as well as sold in the market, for use in cotton spinning. All sorts of stock are sold; pigeons are in great abundance. They are not claimed by any one. We shot a great number; they are small, but very plump and sweet.

The town of Gregapojee is situated on the left bank of the river, on rising ground, on a fine red dry soil; though considerably higher than the neighbourhood, the soil is rich, and very productive. The number of its inhabitants is small in comparison with its market, which is held twice during the week. It is the principal market of commerce for all the neighbouring krooms and towns in its vicinity, either on the lagoon or inland. This lagoon, in a commercial country, would be of great advantage, as the navigation is so easy; the water in most places not exceeding four or five feet, although in some instances I found the deepest part twelve feet, but not for any distance.

The canoes are pushed along by poles, in the same manner as our punts on many of the rivers in England. Revolving paddles might be used with great advantage, or small steamers. The current, which increases during the ebbing of the tide, does not exceed the rate of two miles per hour; and in some places during ebb-tide the water is quite fresh, and used by the natives. Every part of the lagoon abounds with fish of various kinds. Alligators are both large and numerous. Some days, during a journey of ten miles, more than a dozen of these reptiles may be seen on the banks. The bed of the river is found frequently to vary from sand to mud, but no gravel. By digging any considerable depth, I found, however, marine sand, confirming my opinion, that on the present bed of the lagoon the sea formerly rose.

After remaining a few hours at Greejee, I made a slight calculation of the number of its inhabitants, which we estimated to be at least twelve hundred, and I always make it a rule rather to understate the amount than otherwise. We returned to Popoe at 6 p.m. where we remained during the night. On the following day we proceeded by the lagoon back to Abguay, and remained there one night and the next day. On the 18th, in the evening, Mr. Hutton, Mr. Han-

son, and myself, took our departure by lagoon for Whydah. The river is very interesting during the whole distance we have yet travelled, but though the moon was bright, it was not sufficiently powerful to enable me to map the river correctly, which I regretted much. I made my mind up, however, to avail myself of another opportunity to do so.

At about twenty-seven miles by lagoon from Ahguay, I arrived at the toll-house (a place where a barrier is fixed across the river), which is here only sixty yards wide: this barrier also answers the purpose of catching fish. It is constructed of stakes driven into the bed of the river at short intervals; the space between the stakes is filled up with small palm stems or strong reeds, leaving a space at intervals for the fish to pass through, which leads them into a trap formed in a similar manner to our eel-traps in England. During the night, lights of palm-oil are burnt over the traps to attract the fish. My canoe being much lighter than the other, containing Mr. Hutton and Mr. Hanson, I was at the toll an hour before them.

During my stay a large travelling canoe arrived from Whydah, containing several Spanish gentlemen with about twenty young slaves, male and female. At this bar the canoes generally stop an

hour to refresh the canoemen, and pay the toll, which is always made in rum. During our stay the Spaniards very kindly presented their canteen of spirits, containing plenty of wine, brandy, Hollands, and rum, with a good supply of cigars. I of course availed myself of their kindness, and after a few compliments from each party they proceeded on their journey. Soon after Mr. Hutton arrived, when, after remaining a short time to refresh the canoemen, we again resumed our journey.

As the morning dawned, the appearance of the lagoon and the scenery on its banks was really beautiful. But it wanted those delightful villages, and clean cottages and gardens, which are to be seen on the banks of the rivers in Europe, though every opportunity presents itself if the natives were willing to work. Most of the huts on the banks of the lagoon are of the most inferior description, and the people dirty in their habits. When about seventeen miles from Whydah, each side of the river presented a beautiful appearance, having a small tree or shrub, not exceeding fifteen feet high, and resembling the mangrove, with the branches drooping, and the top taking root in the bed of the river, thus forming a beautiful colonnade. The leaves do not reach lower than a yard

from the highest rise of the water. At this place the water is very salt.

I had often heard of oysters growing on trees, but could never before give credit to such information. Here, however, I had ocular demonstration of the fact; the roots of the trees (and as high on the stems as the water rises) being covered with thousands of oysters, as well as the bed of the river, for several miles. Some of them were of enormous size, but they have not the delicious flavour of the Thames oysters.

At 10 A.M. on the 19th, we arrived at the ferry, between Whydah and the beach, where goods are landed and shipped. On the left, or north side, at the commencement of the path or road to the town of Whydah, stands a house occupied by an old ferry-man, who acts also in the capacity of watchman. This old man is supposed to inspect all passes or permits obtained from the caboceer of Whydah to persons leaving the port, specifying the number of people wishing to proceed by canoe for any other place on the lagoon. If any more than the number specified in the permit attempt to pass, the whole are detained, till the smuggled person is pointed out, who is punished by imprisonment. This same old watchman, either upon embarking or disembarking, is supposed to present the parties tra-

velling with a calabash full of clean water and a mug, which is certainly a very great convenience, as the water here is excellent. This order was established by the King of Dahomey, at the recommendation of M. de Suza, senior.

Opposite the ferry-house still remain the gibbets of three canoemen, murderers of the supercargo of a Hamburgh vessel which traded on this coast. He took a passage in a canoe by the lagoon for Popoe, intending to buy oil, but having in his possession eight thousand dollars, he was murdered by three out of the four canoemen. It is needless to say that the money was never found. The natives of this place are the most depraved, unprincipled villains in all Africa, or perhaps in the world. Were it not for M. de Suza and his friends, indeed, there would be no safety for white men.

Upon our landing, hammocks were waiting to convey us to the town, which is three miles distance from the lagoon, through marshes and lakes, which are not, however, deep.

About twelve o'clock we arrived at the old English fort, which has been considerably repaired by Mr. Hutton. It is now used as his factory. Shortly after our arrival, we were visited by several Spaniards and Portuguese, who gave us a very cordial welcome. Mr. Hutton is a great

favourite amongst them, as well as with every one else. The Spaniards and Portuguese of this place all treated me with great kindness. In fact, though they are slave-dealers, they are generous and kind, and very gentlemanly in their manners, particularly to Englishmen. Even the greatest enemies of M. de Suza, if they knew him, would admit him to be so. They also treat their slaves very well, both as regards food and labour, as I have already stated in other parts of my journal; their labour is little or nothing.*

The Spaniards and Portuguese treat their slaves in every respect better than the African slave-merchants; and I know, from personal inquiry, that none of M. de Suza's slaves would accept their liberty from choice. I have found by calculation, that the expense of maintaining slaves for domestic purposes is much greater than the hire of them to perform any labour would be. The only advantage in holding slaves is, that you always have them in the house or premises, and in fact they are always considered as part of the master's family, and their services readily procured, which is not the case in regard to hired slaves; for, so long as the African can procure food by theft or otherwise (at least it is so along the coast), they can never be induced to

* This I know practically, as I am well acquainted with agricultural labour.

work. This is the great drawback upon all enterprise and improvement, either in agriculture or manufacture. The greatest suffering which the slaves undergo is in shipping; but owing to the vigilance of the English men-of-war cruisers, few opportunities for shipping them offer. When these do occur, large numbers are put on board, which frequently causes a loss in the number before reaching their place of destination.

Since my arrival on this coast, I have often considered whether better and more humane measures might not be adapted in regard to the Slave Trade; first, by making it a law in all colonies to which slaves are transported, that they shall be free in a certain number of years—say ten years, if they be transported before sixteen years of age, and seven years, if after the age of eighteen years; and that the free transportation of slaves from the coast of Africa should be allowed. This system might in the end be attended with more beneficial results to Africa, and the slave in general, than the present system.

The price of slaves (owing to the suppression of the Slave Trade) is very high, consequently the kings and chiefs in the interior go annually on a two or three months' slave-hunt, which they call a war. The result of this hunt is, of course, the capture of a number of slaves.

These slaves, (with the exception of those detained as wives or slaves, *for they are the same, or both,*) are sold at a high price to the white men, which is consequently an encouragement to the kings in the interior to follow up these annual hunts. If the trade were open, the markets would be soon supplied, and the kidnapping trade would not be worth following. And if agents were appointed in all our colonies, to which slaves are transported from this coast, to make entry of all the slaves employed, so as to insure their freedom after a limited period, with opportunities of returning to their native country, these slaves would only be serving an apprenticeship to their calling, whatever it might be. They would then return to their native country with a full knowledge of the system of agriculture, of which at present they are entirely ignorant. This would prove, in my humble opinion, the most effectual way to civilize and cultivate Africa. Missionaries are very useful, where the people whom they come to instruct are even partially prepared to receive them; but where the natives are not raised either in knowledge or habit above the brute, I am of opinion that schoolmasters and schools of industry ought to precede the labours of the missionaries. After paving the way for them, no doubt their services would be highly beneficial.

If the plan I have ventured to suggest were adopted, the condition of slaves on their transportation would be much improved, as not more than one-fourth of the number at present put on board of one ship would be sent. Suffocation is well known often to be the result of the crowded state of the slave-ships ; in fact, many slave vessels have been run on shore, with full cargoes of slaves on board, of whom two-thirds have perished ! Then let us think of the enormous expense of keeping so many English cruisers on this coast, and of the sacrifice of life amongst our seamen. And, again, what must be the result of the numerous captures of slaves, who have been taken to Sierra Leone ! I fear these poor creatures will not (in the event of their being sent to the West Indies) *much* improve their condition, more than if they were compelled to serve for the same period in the Brazils.

On the 12th, in company with Mr. Hutton, I visited the Avoga, or caboceer. His name is Dagbwa, which, in the Dahoman language, signifies a large calabash, or gourd, with the pulpy part taken out ; it is then used for domestic purposes, but chiefly to drink out of. The King of Dahomey sent him here to rule, giving him this name, to signify that his Majesty could drink with him, or could depend upon his orders being enforced

through him. Drinking water with friends is considered the strongest mark of friendship, consequently if you are invited by any persons of rank to drink with them, water is always the first thing presented, as being free from any adulteration; afterwards, rum, palm-wine, or peto, is produced. Dagbwa is a well-formed man of middle age, about six feet in height, rather stout, with good symmetry, and high forehead; but, like almost all the natives on this coast, the frontal bone narrows suddenly towards the top. The expression of his countenance is pleasing, his face round and plump, his hair very short, having been lately shaved,—a custom amongst all ranks here.

The Avoga received us in his garden, under the shade of a large tree, called Wooatee; chairs were placed for Mr. Hutton and myself, but the Avoga sat on the ground. No native, indeed, uses a seat of any description, except on particular occasions, when a low stool is sometimes used. The Avoga expressed great satisfaction at our visit. It appeared that he had seen Mr. Hutton before. After drinking water with him, we partook of some Brazilian wine of roses, and aniseed wine; but his favourite drink is common American rum, of the worst quality, which is brought to this coast in great abundance by the American traders. After sitting a short time the Avoga became

tired, and lay down in the dust. This seems at all times his favourite position, as well as that of all others. Yamie, his chief interpreter, is a very pleasant, intelligent man, and speaks good English.

The Avoga has in his possession a very fine donkey, as well as a small pony, which he prizes very much. He seldom rides on either; and when he does venture, he has always a couple of men to hold him on. The chief mode of riding is in hammocks, slung on long bamboos, a species of palm-cane about twelve feet long. The clews of the hammock are made fast near each end of the pole. A negro at each end carries it, the pole resting on his head. The parties are relieved at intervals, four men being the number generally appointed to carry one person. But if he be a very heavy man six are considered necessary. A stranger would feel very much surprised, upon proceeding from the beach to the town of Whydah, to find the road in such a deplorable condition, particularly as a good road might be so easily formed. The path, which is three miles long, is in many places worn down very low, and covered with water for a distance of seventy yards, to the depth of two and a half or three feet; and so it is likely to remain, though so much palm-oil is shipped at this place,

and the punchcons are floated over this water. The reason of this neglect is obvious: if the road were good, and visitors could reach Whydah without being under the necessity of sending to the town for hammock-men to carry them, it might be an annoyance to the slave-merchants. The road might very easily be made good. The country is very level, and the soil the best for agricultural purposes of any I have yet seen. They are now digging a well in the English fort: it is at present twenty feet deep, and the soil at this depth is the same as at the top. At twelve feet deep, jaw and thigh-bones, as well as iron anklets and armlets, in a very decomposed state, were dug up. Doubtless on this spot formerly stood a house, and as every dwelling-house is also the family sepulchre, this may account for finding these remains.

The market of Whydah is superior to any I have seen on the coast, and is better supplied even than Sierra Leone. It is formed of several streets of low huts, built square, and generally joining one another. Those who expose goods for sale in the market are subjected to a very heavy duty to the King of Dahomey, as well as those trading in any other place. The market is superintended by a chief constable, who attends to its cleanliness and regularity. The floors of

the market-huts are composed of well-worked clay, and consequently become very hard and smooth. They are raised about a foot above the streets, passing between the huts or stalls, consequently the latter are always dry. The floors are frequently rubbed over with cow-dung, and immediately swept off as clean as a broom will take it. This is said to be very wholesome in this climate.

The market-place occupies about three-fourths of an acre, or an acre, and is held daily. It is well supplied with every article of native consumption, as well as medicinal plants, and many articles of European manufacture. Among other articles generally exposed for sale are the following:—Pork, beef, mutton; cotton cloth, native and English; thread, beads, gun-flints, tobacco-pipes, iron, pepper, elu (a composition to destroy musquitoes), chuchume, bill-hooks, Badagry pipes, flints and steel, raw native cotton; tancacam, a medical root resembling ginger; goora and kolla nuts; eyo-nuts, used in playing the game of “adjito;” skins of the alligator, deer, bush-pig, and cat; dried rats and mice; raw and dried fish; fish cooked in palm-oil; kootataffue, a root resembling onion, but very bitter; cocoa and dego-nuts, for making oil; boiled and raw Indian corn; country pots and calabashes; lime, made from the oyster-

shell; grass bags and baskets; porcupine quills, craw-fish, palm-oil, tomato, shalots, and occro; water-cresses, salt, farina, ground nut; atoo, or quashie-root; sakwadee, a root similar to ginger, having a taste resembling manioc-root; palm-nuts; bodya, a root used as a decoction to expedite labour in child-birth; agwbaja, used for cartridge-boxes; gun-flints, stones for grinding corn, brought from Abomey; dookwa, ball made from beans ground with palm-oil and pepper; kahoma; akaowo (native name), saltpetre in its original state.

There are several other markets of minor importance in Whydah, all subject to the same scale of duties, which are collected by the Avoga's officer. All goods sent out of the country pay a very heavy duty, such as palm-oil or ivory; in fact, the native duty here on ivory is so great, that very little is now bought. It is always levied on the sellers, who, of course, are subjects of the King of Dahomey. Any hesitation in paying would cost the individual his head. All persons who possess any regular income are taxed accordingly. Some idea may be formed of the enormous revenue exacted by the King, when even one of M. Ke Suza's slaves pays annually a tax of head-money alone to the amount of two thousand five hundred dollars, and another one thousand five hundred; these two sums are head-

money alone, which is always paid according to rank, reputation, and income, independently of duties paid for trade in articles either exposed for sale, or passed from one part of the kingdom to another, or to any other country not under the control of the King of Dahomey. The duty on slaves is very high, and is charged upon the number shipped on board, which is upon the declaration of the Avoga, which is always made by his own head. When more than one party ships slaves, one of the party pays the Avoga generally in rum or tobacco, and then settles with the others, according to the number shipped by each party. All head-money is paid in cowries. Every native of Dahomey is a slave, and pays a duty of so much head-money to the King, consequently many are very glad to leave their country, preferring a foreign bondage where less severity is exercised.

The roads, with the exception of that leading to the beach, are much better than in most of the settlements along the coast, and the houses are much larger and of better construction, and well thatched. The system of government here is also much superior to that of any other part of the coast, although very far behind Europe. But, as I have before stated, the people are so depraved in every respect, that it is necessary the law should

be very rigid to govern them. Perhaps, however, this arbitrary system of government may have, in a great measure, been the cause of the total absence of principle or morals so observable amongst the natives. Besides the punishment of death, imprisonment for life and for limited periods is inflicted here. The prisoners are detained always in irons, and in the Avoga, or cabo-ccer's house. His headman, or chief constable, goes round the market daily, and collects the duties from each individual exposing goods for sale. A portion is exacted from every stall, whatever the goods may be, for the support of the prisoners. Doubtless little attention is in this case paid to justice. On the Avoga's premises is also a store for goods collected as customs, such as rum and tobacco; which are carried up to Dahomey whenever the King thinks proper to make the order.

Paganism is the only worship existing amongst this people. They worship images, which in this, as in other places, are called fetishes, but here they are more disgusting than in any other part of Africa I have yet visited. The form is meant to represent a human figure, as nearly as the clumsy, stupid artist can make it. It is formed of clay, as large as life, and is placed in all the most public parts of the town. The lower parts of the body of the image are out of proportion large, and are

exposed in the most disgusting manner. At certain times a table is laid for him, from which of course everything is taken away by the priest, or fetish-man. They seem quite delighted when convinced that the fetish has enjoyed his meal. Sometimes it is left untouched, which is a sure sign of his dissatisfaction with the quantity, consequently an augmentation must be made in order to appease him. It is even worse than sacrilege in England to meddle with or deny the powers vested in their fetish; and if a white man, even by mistake, is guilty of contempt towards fetish, he is by the priest doomed to instant death, through the power of the said fetish. Undoubtedly the fetish-man would willingly lend his master a hand, but if nothing should happen to the offender, the fetish-man makes the very plausible excuse, that had the offender been a black man, he would instantly have died.

Anniversary offerings are made by all who can afford them, to commemorate the death of their parents. On these occasions sheep, goats, and fowls, are killed in abundance, and the friends and relatives are invited to a grand feast. They believe the spirits of the departed relatives are present, and they often address them as if they were partaking of, and enjoying all their luxuries. This feast generally terminates in the whole party

getting into a brutal state of intoxication. Other customs equally absurd are also kept annually ; this latter custom is held by the moon, which happened this year on the 11th of April. Its purpose is to ensure to all spirits of departed friends a safe and easy passage across the great waters westward. They mean the river Votta. If this custom were not kept up, they believe the spirits would wander on the banks for the space of one hundred years, before they would have performed sufficient penance for their friends' neglect.

The snake is also a fetish or idol here ; and houses are built in several parts of the town for the accommodation of snakes, where they are regularly fed. These houses are about seven feet high in the walls, with conical roof, about eight feet diameter, and circular. The snakes are of the boa-constrictor tribe, and are considered quite harmless, although I have my doubts upon it. They generally leave this house at intervals, and when found by any of the natives, are taken up and immediately conveyed back to the fetish-house, where they are placed on the top of the wall, under the thatch. It is disgusting to witness the homage paid to these reptiles by the natives. When one of them is picked up by any one, others will prostrate themselves as it is carried past, throwing dust on their heads, and

begging to be rubbed over the body with the reptile. After taking the snake up, a very heavy penalty is incurred by laying it down, before it is placed in the fetish-house. Wherever a snake is found it must be immediately carried to the fetish-house, whether it has ever been placed there before or not.

Snakes abound about Whydah; their average length is four feet and a half; head flat, and neck small in proportion. Four different sorts or species are found here. Of the lizard, the most rare is a species of snake-lizard, of a greyish brown colour on the back, belly white; a streak of delicate scarlet blends the colours of the back and belly. They are rapid in their movements, either in climbing or running, but, like the snake, always retreat to cover. The case, however, is not so with the common field-lizard, which is much more nimble, and if pursued generally makes towards a tree or wall. The former is more round and harder in flesh, consequently not so elastic, and if struck with a rod will break short at the part struck. Not so the field-lizard: as I have said, that is nimble in all its movements, and I have often observed it spring into the air to catch a fly. The male is beautifully coloured, blue, red, and yellow; but like the chameleon, it has the power of changing its colour. After death the colours

immediately lose their brilliancy. The lizard tribe is very useful in destroying insects. The house-lizard also abounds in Whydah; this reptile is quite harmless and very nimble. Its claws are very sharp: it is capable of catching a fly or ant when running along the ceiling, although sometimes in darting on its prey it falls on the floor. It destroys spiders, ants, small beetles, moths, and many other insects; it is about five inches long, the head broader and eyes more prominent and brighter than those of any other of the lizard tribe. It is of a colour between a light grey and a brown, without any other variation, and, like the snake-lizard, it is broken by the slightest touch. The field-lizard lays two eggs of the size of the English sparrow's egg, quite white, covered only by a soft cuticle or membrane. The fetish-snake lays a considerable number of eggs, and lays two at the same time. These are about the size of a sparrow's egg also, but both ends are of the same oval form, about the same as the largest end of the sparrow's egg. They are generally found amongst decayed leaves or dry rubbish.

Great varieties of insects are also to be found in and around this neighbourhood, amongst which I have observed some of great peculiarity; but as I am no entomologist, I must content myself with describing a few. First, the vampire-bat, said

not to be found except here and at Abomey, although a species very much resembling the latter is found at Accra and different places on the coast. Still it is very different in size, appearance, and habit; the same sort found at Accra is here also, but it never mixes or associates with the large Whydah vampire-bat.* The former measures only about eighteen inches between the tips of the wings, the latter varies from thirty-three to thirty-six inches. They also fly in the day-time instead of at night. The body is about eight inches long, and twelve inches round; it weighs about a pound and a half. The shape of the head is similar to that of an English terrier, except the eye and nostril, which resemble those of a thorough-bred horse. The ear is much larger in proportion than that of a dog, and is shaped like that of a rat. The front teeth are feline; the back grinders like those of the ox. They possess great power in their jaws, and are as tenacious of life as a cat, living for several days with a severe fracture of the skull. The body possesses great strength, having eleven ribs; its back (that of the male) is of a very dark brown colour, bordered round the diameter or horizontal part of the back (which is flat) with a stripe of grey. The

* I have preserved several specimens of these insects, and sent them to England.

belly is considerably lighter, in a mouse colour, and half way round the throat, on the under side, of a beautiful yellow colour, an inch in width. The female is deficient in the latter ornament. The wings resemble the small bat, and have five large claws and a feeler, or smaller claw, merely attached to the web part of the wing. The framework of the wing is very strong of bone as well as muscle. The first joint from the shoulder-joint to the elbow measures five and a quarter inches, and from the elbow to the wrist four inches and three-quarters, the longest part forming the fingers (middle one), seven inches and a half. The hind legs are short and strong, and attached to the pelvis bone, apparently quite the reverse of any other animal with which I am acquainted. The pelvis is like that of any other animal turned upside down. They are furnished with five strong feline claws on each hind foot, but not placed like fingers and thumb, all grasping or hooking the same way, each claw forming two-thirds of a circle. Except when flying, they roost on trees, always hanging by the hinder claws, the head downwards. They couple like the monkey tribe, and have young annually. They carry their young constantly, till capable of taking care of itself, whether flying or at roost. The female has two breasts or teats, which resemble (anatomically speaking) those of a woman.

The milk is thick and very white. They bear young in the months of February and March, and migrate to different places in the kingdom of Dahomey, according to the fruit seasons of the different districts. Their visit to Whydah is from the end of March till the end of April. They live chiefly upon the gwaba and cachu, plantains and bananas. The native name at Whydah is Tookay. I forgot to mention, that the body is covered with very fine down or hair.

CHAPTER VII.

Locusts—The Winged Ant—Its Destructive Nature—Horse attacked by them—Their Ingenuity in Building—Stock—Great Want of Mechanics—Portuguese Whydah—Emigrants from Sierra Leone—Their Deplorable Condition—English at the Fort of Whydah—Military Resources of Dahomey—Polygamy—Mode of Shipping Slaves—Brutality on these occasions—Porto Sogoora—Mr. Lawson's Slaves—Greejee—Toll imposed there—Zahlivay—Yakasgo—Badaguay—The Cabbage Palm-tree—Wooded Scenery—The Palm-tree—Exploring Visit to the Haho—Misfortunes of Ithay Botho, Capt. Clapperton's Servant—Adventures—Curiosity of the Natives—Podefo and its Market—Alligators—My Crew mutiny from fear—Hippopotami—Superstition of the Natives—A party of Fishermen, and their Fish-traps—Base Conduct of the Fishermen—My Punishment of them and my Crew.

ANOTHER very singular animal of the insect tribe which I met with here, is of the class of locusts, which I have not seen in any other part of Africa. Its form is similar to that of the grasshopper, but it has four long transparent wings. The body is of a scarlet colour, the wings of a bright yellow. It is about four inches and a half long. At a leap, assisted by its wings, it can clear about twelve yards. Another insect is the large winged ant, about the dimensions of the wasp in England. They are well known to all African travellers,

although some of their habits and powers may not have been noticed. One circumstance I shall relate, which convinced me at least of one peculiarity in that insect. Yesterday morning, after a night's heavy rain, I observed several of them going singly in different directions; for they seldom go in large companies like other ants. I caught one, and carried it home in the bend of a twig. It emitted a smell, immediately upon being caught, of the most offensive and loathsome kind. I put it into a tin case with some other live insects, but the smell was so offensive as to compel me to leave the room. In about an hour and a half I returned, and found all the other insects dead. The moment I opened the box, the ant again emitted the most offensive smell.

A thought struck me that instead of the ant destroying the other insects by violence (as I at first imagined) their death might have been the result of the poisonous effluvia emitted by this peculiar ant. I determined, consequently, upon making another trial, and, having caught several of these insects, amongst which was the large white-winged ant, with several varieties of beetles, I took the precaution to fix a partition in the box, that neither party could use violence towards the other. On re-opening the box, which was perforated with small air-holes, all the others were

apparently dead. I took out all but the ant. One peculiar sort of beetle seemed to recover a little after being put in a current of fresh air, but ultimately that died also. I afterwards caught another ant, and held it near a dog's nose, upon which the poor animal struggled and howled. I tried to hold it near my horse's nose, but he also rejected it with bitter determination. I left both ants alive in the box of bamboo, on my bedroom table, and although well ventilated, I awoke quite sick at the stomach. I then took some medicine, and put the ants to death.

To some this statement may seem exaggerated, but those who may be incredulous I would refer to Governor Maclean, late of Cape Coast, and long an African resident. His veracity is not to be doubted; or I would refer to any of the British merchants of our settlements on the African coast.

This species of ant builds hills from twelve to fifteen feet high, and displays wonderful skill in architecture, both as regards durability and protection against foul weather. It has a peculiar method of hardening the mud of which it builds its house, rendering it equal in hardness to cement: these houses are of a spiral form. This ant is armed with two large horizontal fangs, with which he secures his prey, then bites with his teeth perpendicularly to the fangs; these, aided by a

sharp sting, render him (independently of his poisonous odour) a formidable enemy. Another large ant, though of less magnitude and without the offensive smell, is also found in this country, and is probably as dangerous as the former, on account of its travelling in large armies.

I remember shooting a pigeon near Cape Coast, which fell on one of their paths. Before I reached the spot, which was not more than two minutes, they had commenced an attack in hundreds on the poor pigeon, who was yet struggling to beat them off. I was myself attacked, and was actually compelled to strip myself naked on the road, to clear my person of them.

Mr. Hanson, of Accra, informs me of a similar attack made by these ants upon himself and horse, and declares that they would have killed the latter had he not had the presence of mind to throw numerous buckets of water over the poor animal, and dash water up his nostrils, which were literally filled with them. These ants display still more taste in their mode of building, and seem to prefer the Gothic style of architecture. They first build an upright shaft about three feet, then at intervals of about six inches build circular apartments, each formed conically round the shaft, very much like a large bason turned upside down; the shaft resembling a large stick run

through the centre of half a dozen basons. The top apartment terminates in a spiral cone or pyramid, and is consequently quite waterproof. From their skill in hardening the clay, the space between each floor or apartment forms a convenient gallery, where they exercise in bad weather. These apartments are all honey-combed, and have a passage, or rather several staircases, from the lower to the upper apartment through the main shaft.

I ought first, however, to have said something of the higher animals. Oxen are not so numerous here as in Whydah, no attention being paid to the breeding; nor are sheep or goats so numerous as in other parts of this country. The Portuguese and Spaniards are the principal parties who hold any stock, consequently the breed of oxen is much inferior in size to those I have observed in many other places on this coast. Sheep and goats are better bred than oxen; but horses are not at all bred here. Some of the Portuguese and Spaniards have small horses, brought from Badagry and Abomey. Neither the ox nor horse is used for agricultural purposes, although the soil is so well calculated for the plough, being very level, and without a stone even of the smallest size. The wild ox is abundant in the bush near this place, as is also a species of deer, both black

and red. The head is broader and thicker, and its legs less graceful than those of the red deer, which is lighter, and very much resembles our small deer in England.

Swine are very superior in this place, being almost equal to those of England. Wild carnivorous animals abound in the bush in this neighbourhood, particularly the patakoo, or large hyæna, the panther, bush-cat, and small wolf.

Fowls are plentiful here, and some are very large, owing to the breed being crossed by the large Portuguese fowl, which is brought over from the Brazils by the Portuguese slave-dealers. The Guinea fowl is found here also in great numbers, running wild in the neighbourhood.

I felt surprised at first to find this large settlement so destitute of mechanics. There is not, in fact, to be found here a mechanic capable of performing even the coarsest piece of workmanship, either in wood or iron. This, no doubt, is attributable to the extensive slave-trade formerly carried on here, preventing any attention being paid to other pursuits. The slave-trade was so profitable a speculation, that the merchants were enabled to bring everything necessary for their use from the Brazils. The slave-merchants have elegant houses, furnished in a handsome manner. The traffic in slaves, however, is now

much reduced on this coast, owing to two causes; first, the vigilance of the English men-of-war in capturing so many slave-vessels; and, secondly, from the circumstance that the slave-dealers are obliged to pay for their slaves in cash, as the French and English factories established here are able to sell manufactured goods at twenty-five per cent. less than the Spaniards or Portuguese can possibly afford to do. This information I obtained from one of the most respectable slave-dealers in Whydah. He has only been two years in this trade, into which he embarked in consequence of having involved himself in difficulties through speculating in a business with which he was unacquainted in Madeira, of which island he is a native. He is, I am glad to find, disgusted with the trade.

Whydah is divided into three parts, or rather was so formerly. Besides the real Portuguese, there are numerous slaves who have obtained their freedom by purchase, and some by returning as servants or slaves to the slave-dealers who come from Brazil. In many cases, when a rich slave-dealer dies, he gives, by his will, freedom to all his slaves, however numerous they may be. The Portuguese part of Whydah excels, in every sense of the word, both the English and French. This I consider attributable to their superiority in the knowledge of agriculture and domestic economy and

comfort of those returned slaves. Great numbers of them have small farms in a very fair state of cultivation; and they are much more cleanly in their habits and person than those who have never left their native country as slaves. They also live in comfort and plenty, and occupy good and well-furnished houses, while the latter are wallowing in dirty wretchedness, ignorance, and poverty.

The few families who have lately emigrated hither from Sierra Leone are the next who have made any attempt worth mention at cultivation. They seem to strive hard; but without some assistance I fear their efforts are not likely to be crowned with success, as their means are not sufficient to enable them to cultivate the land to any extent, or to export their produce. I am convinced that a great deal might be done to benefit this country and these poor emigrants from Sierra Leone, particularly in such a superior soil as that around Whydah.

Another party, who call themselves English, or belonging to the English fort, consist of some very old men, who formerly were slaves in the fort, and some of them soldiers. These poor old men are quite delighted when mention is made of their early days, and express the happiness they then enjoyed in comparison to what they now experience. Their sons and daughters also consider themselves as belonging to the English. Many

years ago the King of Dahomey issued an order that all the people who acknowledged themselves to belong to the English fort should from time to time assist in repairing the fort, and he placed one man (formerly a corporal in Governor James's time) in charge of the fort ; but, like most Africans, when left to himself, he displayed but little conscience, and let the fort go to ruin, except that part occupied by himself and wives. However, Mr. T. Hutton, of Cape Coast, has now established a tolerable factory in the old fort, and has put the place into a considerable state of repair, although more is required to be done.

Another party here is that of the French, which is very small, having chiefly turned over to the Portuguese. Some few have again attached themselves to the French fort, now occupied by a French merchant, who is doing a profitable business in the palm-oil and ivory trade.

The military resources of the settlement of Whydah are very deficient, having no regular trained army, but only a few standing or permanent troops. They are chiefly composed of slaves, who are summoned to assemble when a slave-hunt is contemplated, and during this service are compelled to maintain themselves, of course, by plunder. When the war or hunt is over, the rabble receive each a piece of cotton cloth to wrap round his loins.

They are then dismissed to their homes, where they remain till their services are again required. The few constant attendants as soldiers are people who are serving for punishment for offences of various descriptions. For instance, if a man commits adultery with the wife of another, and the case is laid before the King, the offender is doomed to serve so long as he is able in the capacity of a soldier, and when unfit for that service, was generally offered as a sacrifice at one of the King's annual customs; but the latter part of this cruel sentence has been abolished by the present King of Dahomey, who is much more merciful than his predecessors. Polygamy is here unlimited, and depravity of every description to an extraordinary extent. The longer I reside here, the more am I convinced, however, that the most predominant passion of the African is theft. The more they are taught, the more accomplished rogues they become; and this is one of the most civilized settlements on the whole of the western coast of Africa, from the number of liberated slaves who have settled here, and who become themselves slave-dealers and farmers. In fact, with the exception of Europeans, these are the only people who show any signs of civilization. The former name of Whydah was Grihwee or Grighwee; but since its subjection to Dahomey it has

become part of that territory, and received its present name. During wars the military of Whydah are attached to the powerful army of Dahomey, which is of a much superior description.

February 28th.—A slave crew was landed here to-day from the *Hydra* steamer. On the 29th I went on board this vessel, and was kindly received by the officers. Here I met with Mr. M'Gregor, first lieutenant, who had been transferred from the *Prometheus*, in which vessel I was passenger from England.

March 4th.—I went by the Lagoon river again to Ahguay, and arrived early on the morning of the 5th. All was bustle and excitement amongst the slave-merchants. They had, late on the previous evening, shipped five hundred slaves in the short space of an hour, although the surf is always very bad on this coast. Unfortunately two of the slaves were drowned during the shipment. It had been intended to ship six hundred slaves, had the *Hydra* steamer not hove in sight. On the following morning the *Hydra* made the slaver a prize, to the great mortification of all who had slaves on board.

It may be interesting to those unacquainted with slave-shipping to learn something of the mode. When a shipment of slaves is about to take place, the slaves are taken out, as if for their usual airing,

perhaps ten or twenty on one chain, which is fastened to the neck of each individual, at the distance of about one yard apart. In this manner they are thus marched in single file to the beach, without any intimation of their fate, about which they seem quite indifferent even when they know it. Every canoe is then put in requisition, and the little piece of cotton-cloth tied round the loins of the slave is stripped off, and the gang on each chain is in succession marched close to a fire previously kindled on the beach. Here marking-irons are heated, and when an iron is sufficiently hot, it is quickly dipped in palm-oil, in order to prevent its sticking to the flesh. It is then applied to the ribs or hip, and sometimes even to the breast. Each slave-dealer uses his own mark, so that when the vessel arrives at her destination, it is easily ascertained to whom those who died belonged.

They are then hurried into a canoe and compelled to sit in the bottom, where they are stowed as closely as possible till the canoe reaches the ship. They are then taken on board, and again put into the chain until they reach their destination, where they are given over to their intended masters or their agents.

March 6th.—Mr. Hutton having returned from Badagry, where he had been visiting his factory, we sailed by the lagoon to the westward, as far

as Porto Sogoora, distant by lagoon forty-four miles. In our passage, we put in at Popoe, and visited my old acquaintance, Mr. Lawson, and his sons. At the landing-place were a number of Mr. Lawson's slaves bathing, all chained together by the neck. They all seemed very healthy and happy, but I could not help thinking that it is well for them that their nature and habits partake so much of the lower animal, otherwise they would be sensible of their wretched situation.

After a short visit to Mr. Lawson, and an introduction to his two principal wives, whose large dimensions I have already mentioned, we again resumed our journey, and after five miles' sail by lagoon, though much less geographically, we arrived at Greejee, a town of great note on account of its market, as I have already mentioned. Here a toll was demanded of us. About one mile farther up the river, another barrier crosses the river, and another toll was demanded. This consisted of two bottles of rum. A great trade is carried on in this latter place, which is named Zahlivay. It is situated on a rising ground, on the left bank of the river. The reason of two tolls being established so near to each other, is, to catch all parties attending the markets of both the latter places, whether on descending or ascending the lagoon, each bar being respectively placed below

and above both towns. Greejee contains twelve hundred inhabitants, and Zahlivay about two thousand.

The river here is at present only four feet and a half deep, and a quarter of a mile broad; the land, level and rich. The right bank is well cultivated, and there are a few plantations of cotton three miles farther up the river. A beautiful belt of cocoa-trees extends along the land, separating the lagoon from the sea. This belt extended for several miles, and, with a close cover of shrubs of the laurel tribe, gives an indescribable effect to the landscape; while, close to the banks, are different patches of cultivated land. But on neither side of the river does cultivation extend for any distance. Three miles higher from the last-named town, and also on the left bank of the river, running S.E., is a small village of two hundred inhabitants (name not known); and two miles and a half farther in the same direction, and on the same bank, is a small town of some note, owing to its inhabitants performing some feat of valour, according to their ideas.

In the river, opposite this little town of Yakasgo, is a small verdant island, but uncultivated, perhaps owing to the inundations during the rainy season. Another village, or kroom, beautifully situated, and only half a mile distant from the

latter, suddenly presents itself, being almost concealed with cocoa, palm, and cachu-trees. This is a fishing village, having a great number of canoes, some of the most simple construction, consisting merely of a cocoa-tree, of about eighteen inches diameter, and twelve or fifteen feet in length, hollowed out with the exception of a foot at each end. This unshapely vessel often carries three boys, who navigate it with a skill quite astonishing, bringing home sometimes a thousand fish.

About six miles higher, and magnetic west, is another town, called Badaguay. This town has a weekly market. Its manufactures consist of cotton cloths, generally blue and white stripe, earthen pots, lime, indigo, country mats, and grass bags holding about a bushel. This town is also on the left bank. The river is still only four feet and a half deep.

Three miles farther, on the right, is a beautiful grove of the cabbage palm-tree, extending for several miles. The belt of cocoa terminates where the cabbage-palm commences. The latter tree is of a very singular and graceful appearance. At the root it is not more than one foot in diameter, and rises to the height of fifty feet. This singular tree gradually thickens till it reaches one-third of its height, its graceful swell increasing its diameter

to twenty inches. It then again decreases in thickness to the commencement of the branches, or leaves, which resemble a number of ladies' fans, each leaf beautifully ribbed like a plaited frill, about four feet long, and spreading so as to form three-fourths of a circle. To those who have never seen one of these trees, it seems a wonderful production of Nature.

The lagoon becomes here half a mile wide, and continues only four feet deep during the dry season. After ascending six miles nearly due west, it widens to three-quarters of a mile, and becomes thickly wooded on the right bank with large trees of different species, mixed with beautiful shrubs of various kinds of the laurel tribe, and numerous orchideous and parasitical plants, together with a great number of singing birds of varied and beautiful plumage. The quiet stillness of the scene, under the rays of a tropical sun, had, at least for a short period, a pleasing effect upon my mind, recalling to my memory scenes of boyhood. Those happy days recur to us now only as it were in dreams, which quickly float past, and vanish on the rapid and silent stream of life.

At sunset we arrived at Porto Sogoora, a town of considerable size, though not of much trade. The chief manufacture here is palm-oil and cotton

cloths. The town is on the right bank of the lagoon, on a strip of land separating it from the sea; the distance between the two latter being one mile, and the town equidistant from each, and in the centre of the bank, which is chiefly sand. The bank close to the lagoon is thickly wooded with a great variety of large trees, with underwood and running plants, of at least twenty different kinds. The palm-tree is cultivated here on account of the nuts, used for oil. Monkeys are in great abundance, passing in flocks from one tree to another, as nimbly as if they belonged to the feathered tribe.

Immediately upon arriving at Porto Sogoora, we called upon the caboccer, or headman of the place, a tall, stout, and good-natured looking man, about thirty-eight years of age. After the usual formality of an African visit, Mr. Hutton, who was on his return to Cape Coast, determined at once to proceed on his journey. Mr. Hanson (agent to Mr. Hutton, at his factory at Ahguay), and Mr. Henrique, half-brother to Mr. Ingram, late Governor in the Gambia, accompanied Mr. Hutton as far as the river Volta. Mr. Hanson and Mr. Henrique promised to return in three days. In the interval I determined to remain at Porto Sogoora, with a view to explore a river named Haho, which I have reason to believe to have

its rise in the Kong Mountains, north of Dahomey. Accordingly I applied to the caboceer for four canoemen to work the canoe, which he readily agreed to supply, but of course on being well paid for it. He also offered to supply me with a young man as servant and cook, which I accepted. I had, in addition, two volunteers; one old man, named Ithay Botho (and now a fetish-man), a servant to Captain Clapperton during his last travels in this country, and another man, a native of Accra.

After giving my canoemen subsistence, my promised servant presented himself, when, to my great surprise, I recognised in him a servant of Governor Hill's at Cape Coast only a few months before. I was agreeably surprised at this, particularly as he could speak English. Poor fellow! he was also much pleased at the opportunity of representing his case to me, and the circumstances under which he was made a slave. It appeared that, after leaving the service of the Governor of Cape Coast, he ventured upon a journey along the coast as far as Little Elmina, a distance of at least two hundred miles. At the latter place he was requested by an Elmina soldier (if deserving such rank) to sell a piece of cloth for him. He states that, after selling the cloth, the soldier accused him of stealing the money. He was, in conse-

quence, seized by the soldier, and sold to a slave-dealer at Popoe. Owing, however, to his being able to speak English, it was not deemed safe to ship him. He was consequently exchanged with the caboceer of Porto Sogoora for two younger slaves, the caboceer considering that he might make him useful as an English interpreter in the course of trade. It is very probable that the suspicions of the soldier were pretty correct, for I myself had previous ocular demonstration of his being a thief. Indeed, you will very seldom err far in suspecting most Africans to be rogues.

March 7th.—At 6 A.M., I called, as is the custom, on the caboceer, who, upon the whole, behaved pretty well and kindly, although for pecuniary motives. He called the canoemen and my Cape Coast servant, and my two volunteers, giving them strict injunctions with regard to my safety. I had also a boy left with me by Mr. Hanson. My party altogether amounted to eight in number. We embarked in Mr. Hanson's canoe, which was comfortably fitted up, and proceeded up the lagoon, which now becomes broad, forming a lake six miles in width and the same in length. On the right bank, and about five miles from Porto Sogoora, we landed, to visit a small kroom, on account of its market, in order to purchase some vegetables. This kroom is distant from the lake

one mile, situated on a vast plain of excellent loamy soil. The inhabitants all turned out armed, but upon their finding my little party friendly, we were well received, and supplied with a calabash full of clean water. After purchasing some vegetables and shooting some wild pigeons, which are here in great numbers, we visited the market-place, although the weekly market was held on the following day.

The market is held under the shade of a silk-cotton-tree, the branches of which extend much farther than any other tree I had ever seen, and are so close as entirely to shade those under it from the burning rays of the sun. This is not usual in the cotton-tree, although they are always, at their full growth, of a great height and the trunk large.

I here observed also a tree bearing a singular fruit, the name of which has escaped my recollection. It is larger than, and much resembles an orange, but has merely a very thin skin, with pores like the orange, inside of which is a shell as hard as that of the cocoa-nut. This shell is about the thickness of a half-crown, and the kernel (which completely fills the shell) is a little thicker in consistence than butter, and of an acrid taste. This fruit is very valuable in making soap, and this soap is considered far superior to any

other in this country. A fruit of the same species, but about one-third of the size, is also found in the neighbourhood, which is cleared of the kernel and converted into snuff-boxes. This kroom is named Sava.

After remaining here about an hour we again embarked, and crossed the upper end of the lake to a very large market, bearing N. 15° W: from the last-named place, and distant three miles and a half. Here we were met by several hundreds of persons, attracted by the novel appearance of the canoe, which was covered in with painted canvass, over a frame-work forming a house, with the exception of a space at each end for the canoe-men, who navigate the canoe with long poles in the lagoon and lake. Hundreds came into the water as high as their middle to get alongside, no doubt induced by other motives than curiosity. My people used every effort, particularly my two volunteers, to keep the people back at a proper distance from the canoe. Besides the oppressive heat, increased by the crowd, the very disagreeable odour from their dirty skin is extremely offensive to those whose nasal organs are not properly seasoned to it. But as soon as I pushed the *jalousies* aside, and thrust my head through the aperture, a speedy and confused retreat was the result. Many were pushed down in the water

and trod upon; but they soon returned, after being assured that I was quite harmless, and could not eat black man. No one of the party had ever before beheld a white man; but it would appear they had always heard, through such of their friends as had ever been on the coast, that white men always choose black men for food in preference to any other. All captains of slavers tell this to the slaves, besides many other absurdities.

This market is well attended, and supplied with every thing necessary for native consumption. Several articles of European manufacture are also exposed for sale. It is about fifty yards from the lake, and entirely void of any shelter or shade, and would not be known as a market-place as distinguished from any other space of ground trodden bare of vegetation. The market of Podefó is held daily, and is chosen as a central position for all the neighbouring towns. The great advantage of this place and other markets on the lake and lagoon is convenient water-carriage. The only dress worn at this place by males, and by those attending the market, is a small piece of cotton, twisted like a rope, tied round the loins and passed between the thighs, and drawn tightly round the lower part of their person. The females generally, who can afford such, wear a cloth wrapped round the body, just below the breast, and hanging a little

lower than the knee. Slaves are taken in great numbers from this country.

We next proceeded to the mouth of the river Haho,* at the entrance of which is a small island, the river passing it on both sides. No doubt this island is formed by the force of the current during the rainy season, which washes down the soil and meets a check at the mouth of the river, by the swell on the lake.

After ascending two miles nearly N., we observed numerous beautiful species of the crane, white, blue, and brown, as well as the large pelican. Alligators were also very numerous. My canoemen now began to show some reluctance to proceed any farther, assuring me that the river was quite unfrequented by any creatures, except those we saw—alligators and biped tribes. I affirmed, that was the very reason why I was determined to proceed, and declared that the first person who disobeyed my orders I would throw into the water. This threat I was soon compelled to put into execution, by throwing overboard the head man of the canoemen. He begged hard to be allowed to come again into the canoe, promising to go wherever I chose. This man was the caboccer's son. I allowed him again to come into the canoe, but still

* This river is called the Haho, and the town Hahotia.

they worked very lazily. I then took my double-barrel into my hand, desiring my servant to tell them that they must not think, because I was a white man and alone, that they should disobey my orders with impunity, declaring that I would shoot the first man who should disobey me. After this they proceeded tolerably well till a large hippopotamus showed his head above the water. He soon, however, disappeared.

I cannot say that I had not any apprehensions for the safety of the canoe, particularly as the river here was not more than twenty yards wide and twelve feet deep. The canoemen showed every symptom of fear, but by repeated threats they were induced to proceed; and, until they had passed the place where the hippopotamus had appeared, they urged the canoe with a speed much beyond any of their previous exertions. The African is generally a great coward, particularly if at any distance beyond his own locality. After many solicitations to allow them to return, finding their appeal of no avail, the men worked tolerably well, and we ascended the river rapidly, the current being not more than one mile per hour.

The course of the river changed so much as to make me almost doubt the accuracy of my compass, but having two on board, I satisfied

myself. After ascending the stream fifteen miles, the scenery on the banks changed from an open plain on each side, with long coarse reeds, to banks rising about seven or eight feet, with large trees of various sorts, many of the drooping kind, their long fibres falling into the smooth, glassy stream as it stole slowly along. At this place the current is scarcely perceptible. The jasmine, twining round some of the smaller trees or shrubs, filled the atmosphere with its luxurious odours, and close to the water's edge were beautiful flags, similar to those of Britain, but bearing a large white flower. The sun was just sinking below the horizon, and his last rays were reflected through the openings of the rich foliage on the smooth surface of the still stream.

Here in the tropics there is no twilight, consequently as soon as the sun disappears from the horizon all is dark as midnight. As we had not seen any thing resembling a human habitation, or even the appearance of a path or footmark, this circumstance, and the tameness of the birds, large and small, induced me to conclude that we were at a considerable distance from any kroom or town; I therefore determined to stop for the night on the first part of the bank clear of the bush I could find. Fortunately, the moon was bright, and in about three quarters of an hour I observed a small

creek on the left bank, which we entered, but found that it did not extend more than a few yards. I rejoiced, however, to find the ashes and marks of a fire having been recently kindled on the bank. We surveyed all round, to ascertain if any path led from this place, but being disappointed we again went on board, and ascended the stream, convinced from the marks already mentioned that some habitation was near. The hippopotamus and alligators were now, however, making desperate plunges into the water at short intervals, from the banks on either side, rendering the navigation in a narrow river hazardous. The water was also becoming deep with mud bottom, so that poles of fifteen or eighteen feet were of no use. I was now obliged to take a pole, to show the canoemen how to use them as oars. Fortunately the current here was scarcely perceptible, and our progress was greater than I anticipated.

After ascending two miles more, I observed a strong light on the left bank near at hand. This was a cheering sight to all of us, as we thought it was a kroom, or at least a habitation; we found it, however, to be nothing more than a camp of seven fishermen, and ten or twelve boys. Each of the men stood on the bank, armed with old muskets, ready, no doubt, to give us a volley in the event of our being enemies. But I had myself two

double-barrels and pistols, as well as my sabre. Upon being addressed, however, by my old friend Ithay Botho, they lodged their arms, and we landed, and found that these people frequently came down the river as far as the place where we observed the last marks of fire on the banks to catch fish, but never ventured lower, declaring, that if they proceeded farther, one large fetish alligator destroyed every person, as well as smashed the canoe. They accounted for our being permitted to pass because I was a white man, and that it intended to have some more of his amphibious friends to witness his grand performance with me. However, I told them that white man's fetish had more power than their fetish alligator. They then described his enormous dimensions and power, which entirely prostrated all the courage of my canoemen. I was in hopes that the dread of returning to encounter such a monster would be an inducement to them to proceed onwards with less reluctance, as I had assured them we could return down the Volta. However, the old fishermen pointed out equal difficulties in ascending, unless great sacrifices were made to propitiate the river-spirit or fetish. My canoemen seemed now hemmed in by dangers on all sides.

The party of fishermen had set their fish-traps, a wicker basket, on the same principle as that used

on the rivers in Britain for catching eels; the light on the bank attracting the fish to the traps, and, as I also found to my no small annoyance, attracting musquitoes in swarms. In consequence of which I and two boys returned to the canoe, thinking to avoid them, but they seemed determined to show their respects to the stranger, not by drinking water with me (as the natives do), but by tasting my blood. With such an annoyance, together with the splashing in the water of different amphibious creatures, I slept but little. At six in the morning we had breakfast, having our cooking utensils on board. This consisted of fish and manioc-root, and a little yam. My servant, the boy from Cape Coast, intimated to me what he overheard during the night, between the canoe-men and fishermen, to the effect that they had determined either to descend the river, or, at least, not to proceed any farther up the stream. If I persisted, however, in proceeding with my two volunteers and two boys only, they would remain on the bank with the fishermen, except one who was to volunteer to pilot us to the first town, about six miles higher up the stream; and when there, the caboceer would demand a toll higher than I was prepared to pay, and in that event seize upon my canoe and property.

Being well acquainted with such characters, I

was determined, though alone, not to give way to them. Accordingly, I ordered all my people on board, which was immediately obeyed; but upon moving from our position the men headed the canoe down the stream, and declared their determination not to proceed farther. Upon this I drew my sword, and drove the whole of the canoemen out of the canoe. My two volunteers, and myself and boys, being sufficient to man the canoe, we pushed off, turning down the river. The canoemen, now finding themselves miserably disappointed, dreaded lest we should leave them alone, and raised the most piteous yells conceivable, begging to be again taken on board, and expressing their readiness to accompany me any where I might think proper. But I had determined, as a warning, to keep them a little time in suspense, and proceeded a short distance down the stream; at the earnest entreaty of old Ithay and my other volunteer, I then returned to take them on board. By this time, however, the fishermen, who had promised them patronage and assistance, completed their villany, by declaring them to be their slaves, and determined to keep possession of them, upon the pretence that they had been turned ashore through their own disobedience.

Upon my running the head of the canoe on

the bank, to my surprise I found each of the seven fishermen with his musket presented towards me. They present their muskets from the hip. Seeing that they had neglected to take the covers of monkey-skin off their locks, and knowing that they could not touch the trigger, I determined to make the first attack, which I knew would be attended with success. I had a gun in my left hand, and ordered old Ithay to come in my rear, ready to hand me a second directly I should have discharged my first two barrels. Mr. Hanson's boy, who showed as much coolness as if I were going to shoot a pigeon, stood on my left with my sword, which was in a canvass case. Standing on the bow of the canoe, with one foot on the gunwale, I desired Ithay to inform them that I did not come to make war, but though I was *only one* white I would convince them that I did not fear them. They might kill me, it was true, but before they could accomplish that, I could kill at least four of them, having four barrels charged with three large slugs each, adding that the first man who attempted to remove his lock cover I would instantly shoot.

At this same moment I snatched the sword-blade out of its scabbard and sprang upon the bank, cut the fore-arm of the man on the right, so that he dropped his musket instantly, and the

next moment I put the point to the breast of a second. This place being a small peninsula, and with no means of retreat, except over the place where I stood, the others threw down their guns and prostrated themselves, begging me to spare their lives. By this time the canoemen had tumbled into the canoe, and would doubtless have left me in turn, could they have done so with safety, but my volunteers and two boys remained faithful.

In my exasperation I broke one musket against a tree, and determined to do so with all the others, but relented, satisfying myself with emptying the priming and dipping the guns in the river. I then returned to the canoe, taking with me also the old man whose arm was cut, and whose musket I had broken. He writhed and groaned as much as if his arm had been amputated. It certainly was cut to the bone, and perhaps a little beyond; but if taken care of it would probably not be attended with serious consequences, although the large blood-vessel on the upper part of the wrist, running in the direction of the thumb, was separated. I had in my carpet-bag fortunately two bandages, one of which I used, with some native cotton, to dress it. This done, I resolved to punish my canoemen, which measure I put into execution with a good stick. I also obliged them to ascend the

river against their former determination. This I did more with a view to enforce obedience, than with any wish to visit the town, still distant six miles. To some it may seem hard to compel individuals to accompany me against their own free will; but it must be borne in mind that their services were entirely voluntary; but they expected, being alone, and when they had me on the lake, to kill time, and obtain pay for their own pleasure.

After we had proceeded about a mile, I observed two canoes ahead, containing the other six fishermen and the boys. They had fled to their canoes, which had been moored a short distance above the encampment. After advancing another mile, I ordered the canoe to be brought round, and commence our descent. This gave great satisfaction to the whole of my party; but very different were the feelings of my prisoner, who till now was, doubtless, calculating upon ample revenge for his wound and the loss of his musket. The other canoes, finding that we were returning, returned also, but could not be induced to come near to us. In passing the place of the encampment, my prisoner begged to be landed, but I was determined to put him to a little more inconvenience, and carried him a considerable distance farther down, landing him on the worst part of the bank I could select.

CHAPTER VIII.

My lonely Situation—Akwoaay, its Population, &c.—Kind Reception by the Gadadoo—Native House of two Stories—Gigantic Cotton-tree—Etay, a Vegetable of the Yam tribe—Voracity of the Natives—Soil, Manufactures, &c. of Akwoaay—Natives of Porto Sogoora—Visit of the Caboceer—Mode of catching Crabs—Great Heat—Visit from Native Women—Mr. Lawson of Popoe—Character of the Natives—Attempt at Murder—Nocturnal Visit—Superstition—Vicinity of a Fetish-house—Flocks of Monkeys—The Monkey, an article of Food—Disagreeable Situation—Cravings of Hunger—Visit to the Greejee Market—An Alligator killed—Usual Notice to the Authorities on such occasions—The Alligator used as Food—Cruelty of the Natives to the Horse—Return to Whydah—Bad Conduct of my Canoemen—Adventures—Arrival at Whydah—Preparations for my Journey to Abomey—Country around Whydah—Farms—Emigrants from Sierra Leone Slave-dealers—Generosity of the King of Dahomey—Soil of Whydah—Corn-mill—Ferns, Vegetables, Fruits, &c.

I now began to reflect a little on the occurrences of the morning, with feelings mingled alternately with anger and regret. Sometimes I felt vexed that I had not punished the villany shown towards me more severely, at others I regretted breaking the old man's musket, and that I had perhaps disabled him for life. This was the

first time that I had ever felt the loneliness of my situation in Africa. As soon, however, as my thoughts turned upon something else this melancholy feeling was forgotten, and my men with much satisfaction gaily urged our canoe down the stream till they reached the lake, which being at this time rather rough, our progress was slow till we reached towards the windward side, where the water was more calm. This lake, the extent of which I have already mentioned, is during the dry season not more than four feet and a half deep upon an average.

After passing down the lake four or five miles, I determined to visit a town of considerable size on the left bank. This town is named Akwoaay, and may contain seven or eight thousand inhabitants. It is beautifully situated on a rising ground, shaded with fine trees of different descriptions. The houses are built of better materials and proportion than those of any of the towns I had visited on the banks of the river between Whydah and this place. The caboocer is also called gadadoo, which he claims as his name, as well as marking the rank he holds as ruler or king.

Akwoaay, Porto Sogoora, Greejee, Popoe, Ahguay, Grand Popoe, and some other towns on the lagoon, are all independent settlements,

with their own chief or king and government, for they have repelled all advances made by the Dahomans. Upon my landing at Akwoaay, I was met by the gadadoo, who kindly invited me to his house to drink some peto with him. I accepted his invitation with great satisfaction, as also did the whole of my party. He had just completed a new house of two stories, which had been planned by a krooman who had at a former period been to England in a merchant-ship. He evinced no small satisfaction in showing us up-stairs, though his upper room was only capable of admitting a person in a crouching position ; still it was enough to make an uncivilized African proud to imagine that he occupied a palace equal to the sovereign of England. His house was about twenty feet long by twelve broad, and, including both stories, ten feet in height. In reply to his question, what sort of a house the Queen of England occupied, I told him that her palace was much larger than his whole town, and ten times higher. At this he seemed astonished and incredulous. However, his kindness was nothing abated, and after we had satisfied ourselves with peto, he ordered fish to be cooked with palm-oil, and plenty of meal from the maize or Indian corn.

While this meal was being prepared, the gadadoo accompanied us round the town, where

I shot plenty of pigeons, which are here very numerous. At this place I measured a cotton-tree, and found it forty-two feet in circumference. Here I also found a root used for food of a description I have not seen in any other part of Africa. It is called by the natives *etay*, and is of the yam tribe. It tastes very sweet, and is about the firmness of an English potato, about eighteen inches long, and in the middle about ten inches thick. It tapers from the upper end, but not so much as a carrot. After our walk, the gadadoo led us again back to his house, and dinner being ready mine was served up by itself in two calabashes, the fish stewed in palm-oil in one, and boiled corn in the other. Unfortunately my host possessed neither spoon nor knife; but I sent my boy to the canoe for both; the rest of the party, of course, never made use of any convenience beyond their fingers, which they used with great dexterity, each endeavouring to cope with the others. This feeling of competition exists amongst them only when eating or stealing. They eat enormously at all times when they find an opportunity of doing so at the expense of others, but when at their own they are capable of sustaining hunger for a length of time. The old gadadoo seemed to enjoy the scene, looking on with as much pleasure as if he were partaking of the fare; as also did the crowd outside,

who could at a little distance see all our manœuvres, the windows being so low. All seemed astonished to see a white man eat with a knife and fork. This was the first time a white man had visited this place within the remembrance of the present population.

After dinner we again partook of some peto, drinking the gadadoo's health, who was apparently about sixty or seventy years of age. He then accompanied us to the beach, inviting me several times to come again and visit his country. The crowd was very great; even as high as the arm-pits the people stood in hundreds in the water, to catch a glimpse of the white man. I had some slight apprehensions respecting my luggage and instruments in the canoe; but every thing came off well. This was one of the very few places near the coast where I experienced hospitality from a native without some pecuniary motive. The gadadoo was first made aware that I had nothing with me to offer him, but mildly replied that he required nothing, and was too proud that his town was honoured by a visit from a white man. He is beloved by his people for his mild government.

The situation and construction of the town, its manufacture of cotton cloths, and its advantages for agriculture, render it a much superior town to any on the lake between this place and Whydah.

Round the immediate neighbourhood of the town the soil is of a light red, excellent for corn, manioes, melons, gourds, and all sorts of vegetables. At some little distance behind, where the land is olwer, the soil is a black sandy loam, and produces excellent yams.

After parting with our venerable host, we pushed off, and made direct for Porto Sogoora, which place we reached about half an hour before sunset. The caboceer's principal people were all on the beach, anxiously awaiting our return, and in fact a party of sundry canoes was ordered to go in search of us, had we not made our appearance at the time we did. The old caboceer was very much pleased to hear of my safe return by a messenger who preceded us. He was just setting out to meet me when I arrived at his house. After relating my adventure he pretended to be in a great rage at the conduct of the people whom he had sent as my canocmen, and threatened to punish them severely; but as one was his near relation, I suppose he considered the punishment I had already inflicted upon them sufficient.

Amongst all the neighbouring towns, Porto Sogoora bears a very bad character. Its natives, in general, are considered to be very great thieves, and even murderers when an opportunity presents

itself. However, I cannot say that I found them at all deserving such an opinion, as far as my experience went: to be sure, they were well paid for any accommodation or civility shown me on their part. After supper I went to bed, and slept soundly; my accommodation being rather superior to most of the natives. The house where I slept belonged to Henrique, already mentioned in a former part of my journal. His principal residence is at Ahguay, but this house is occupied by him when at Porto Sogoora. He was now with Mr. James Hanson, accompanying Mr. Hutton as far as the Volta, on his return to Cape Coast, so that his apartments were appropriated to my servicee.

March 10th.—Early in the morning, the caboceer and his principal captains paid me a visit, as is customary in this country. Of course he expected to drink with me. This caused me to expend the last of my stock of a drinkable description. As I had expected Mr. Hanson and Henrique to return that night, I did not anticipate that I should be in want of anything, particularly as I scarcely ever drink spirits of any kind myself, though in some places, where the water is very bad, it is requisite to mix a little spirit with it. After breakfast I determined to examine the town, which is about a quarter of a mile from the beach. Between the town and the

beach are beautiful ever-green shrubs, of various kinds, bearing delicious, sweet, acid fruits.

Upon reaching the beach I observed a vessel coming from the windward, at a considerable distance. By her rigging I soon perceived that she was a slaver, felucca-rigged. This vessel was taken a few days afterwards by the *Hydra* steamer. Here I observed a singular mode of catching crabs. A hole is dug in the sand, a little out of high-water mark: this hole is about two feet deep and one foot eight inches in diameter at the bottom, closing to eight inches diameter at the top. Round the hole, at a few inches distant, is strewed *kankie*, crumbled into small pieces, like crumbled bread. Early in the morning the crab-catcher visits his numerous traps along the beach, and, upon his approach, these land-crabs run into the hole to conceal themselves, and before they have time to burrow into the sand they are taken and put into a basket. Great numbers are caught in this way. But no other fish here is taken from the sea, the lagoon furnishing ample supplies for consumption, as well as large quantities to dry and send into the interior.

The town of Porto Sogoora is built on a bank of white loose sand, no doubt thrown up from the sea, which has occasioned the lagoon behind. Here the sun acts with great power; Fahrenheit's

thermometer ranging at Porto Sogoora, at this date, from 78° to 86°, and on one occasion to 87°.

After returning home, I was beset by a number of women, who remained in the doorways; several, indeed, ventured inside during my dinner-time. This freedom I did not much relish, and desired my servant to ask them what they wanted. They replied that their object was to obtain a dram of rum, and offer themselves as wives, saying that every great man had a number of wives, and knowing me to be a stranger with no wife, they supposed that of course I wanted a few. Being informed that I was only a traveller, and did not intend to remain more than a day or two, they all seemed disappointed, saying they had heard that I was a rich man come to Porto Sogoora to establish a factory, and buy palm-oil and corn. This idea probably had its origin from the caboccer offering to build me a house and store for my factory, provided I would remain here and establish one.

The caboccer remarked that the people of Ahguay had unjustly given his people a very bad name, which not only prevented white men from visiting and trading in his town, but all the men-of-war from purchasing stock from him. He also complained much of Mr. Lawson, of Popoe, as an inveterate enemy, and one of the

principal slave-dealers on the coast. One of his headmen also assured me that another person, an Englishman, was a regular slave-dealer; but, at present, I deem it prudent, in the absence of unquestionable evidence, to withhold the name of the individual, although I have heard the same story from parties whose veracity I cannot doubt.

With respect to the character given of the people at Porto Sogoora by the natives of Popoe and Ahguay, I believe it to be not without good foundation. Only a very short time ago the master of a slaver, while being landed from his vessel by a party of canoemen belonging to the caboccer of Porto Sogoora, was purposely upset, with the view of getting possession of his money, which he had brought for payment of the slaves, and which they supposed to be contained in a writing-desk which he had with him. They were disappointed, however; for though they got possession of the desk, the master had taken the precaution to send the money ashore previously in an old cask. When they found in the desk nothing but the ship's papers; they gave them up to some of the slave-dealers, but the vessel was gone, and was captured the following morning after sailing.

During the night I was awoke by a violent wrenching at my bed-room door; and my double-

barrelled gun being invariably my bedfellow at this place, I sat up in my bed, which faced the door, with my gun ready. After demanding who was there, I heard some person fall over a stool in running away. At this moment I had almost fired, but heard the Cape Coast boy's voice outside. He detained the party, who proved to be one of the women who had offered her services to me in the morning. Her motives were probably to steal something; however, upon being informed of her narrow escape, she promised not to annoy me any more, and was suffered to depart.

On the following morning, March 11th, I went out with a view to shoot some pigeons for breakfast, accompanied by my Cape Coast boy, and the servant furnished by Mr. Hanson of Ahguay. Not finding any pigeons, and my cowries being all expended, and being without breakfast, I went a little distance into the bush, or thick wood. We passed along a narrow path some distance, till we came to two sticks, stuck up, one on each side of the path, with a small piece of white cotton rag on the top of each. The boys declared that it would be at the peril of my life if I proceeded any farther in that direction, for this was the road to a fetish-house; and the fetish-man had stuck up those sticks as a warning not to attempt to proceed any farther. I pretended, however, not to com-

prehend their palaver, and walked on till I was some distance past the spot, when I looked round, and ordered them to come on; but they stood trembling watching, expecting to see me drop down dead. After many assurances of the absurdity of such superstition, they were at last induced to follow me. Such is the infatuation of the people all along the west coast, and in fact in most places I have yet visited in the interior.

Soon after passing the fetish bar, I observed a flock of monkeys passing from one tree to another, as nimble as so many squirrels, some with a young one hanging to their breast. My boys called the young one a child. I shot one, which we carried home and skinned. My boys assured me that they were excellent food, and were eaten by all the natives of this place. However, in the morning, I could not persuade myself to partake of any of the monkey, but determined to wait and see whether Mr. Hanson would return. I looked for him hourly, as it was now two days past the time he expected to be back when he left me. However, dinner-time came, and I was still fasting. The boys had cooked the monkey very well, with some palm-oil and vegetables, making a very fine soup. Seeing them relish it so much, I was at last, through the cravings of an empty stomach, induced to eat some of it. It certainly was very sweet, and had I not

known what it was, I should probably have relished it much better.

Evening arrived, and Mr. Hanson had not returned. I was now compelled to make another search for something to eat. It being evening, I found plenty of pigeons; for, during the heat of the day, all birds seek the shade in the bush, and remain quiet till the afternoon or early in the morning. I had no vegetable, however, of any description. After some consideration, I fell upon a scheme which succeeded well, and through which I got a sufficient supply of cowries. I possessed a sovereign; and although I knew it was not current here, I sent to the caboocer, requesting him to furnish me with change, as I was now without cowries. At first, he could not comprehend my meaning, but after it was explained to him, he offered to lend me some cowries, which accommodation was all that I required, and I borrowed fifteen strings, valued at one shilling and threepence currency. This supplied me till Mr. Hanson's return early on the morning of the 13th, when, after remaining two hours, we embarked, and sailed down the lagoon to Ahguay, which place we reached a little after sunset.

March 15th.—Mr. Hanson, of Ahguay, myself, and a young Portuguese, went up the lagoon to visit the Greejee market, and also to endeavour

to kill an alligator. We only saw two on our passage up; but on our return, in the afternoon, we first observed one of small dimensions, about five feet and a half. It was close to the water's edge, under the boughs of a low shrub. I fired with a rifle and struck it, but it dropped instantly into the water, and we made no search after it. However, in ten minutes after, we were more fortunate. One of the canoemen observed a large one on the banks several yards from the water, apparently fast asleep. After getting the canoe quite steady, I fired, and shot it through the hardest part of its back; upon which it rushed into the water. After looking about some time, and being about to leave the spot, giving up the search, Mr. Hanson observed at a short distance the enormous head of this monster resting on a broken stake of the fishing-hurdle across the river, the head only above the water. I fired a second shot, which knocked out its eye and carried away part of its skull, upon which it sunk into the water, but immediately rose again to the surface. I then took a sword belonging to the young Portuguese, and ran it into its belly, which was now uppermost, when it again sank to the bottom. Considering it now quite dead, I ordered the canoemen to get into the water and secure it, but all at once we lost it, owing

to the muddiness of the water, caused by the men disturbing the bottom. However, it was very fortunate that we did lose it at this time, as it proved that it was only pretending to be dead, for it was perceived twenty yards higher up the stream still strong, although in this mutilated state. We again commenced our hunt, but before we reached it, the old fisherman had lodged two harpoons in its back. It still continuing to struggle, and appearing strong, I lodged another shot in its head, which being previously shattered, completely smashed it. After a few convulsive struggles, we secured this creature to the stern of the canoe, with a rope borrowed from the fisherman.

After our return to Ahguay we were obliged to give notice to the caboceer of our having killed this alligator; for, as the gall of the animal is a very virulent poison, notice is directed to be given on all such occasions to the headman or caboceer, in order to prevent its being used unlawfully. Men are then sent to take out the gall and throw it into the river, cutting the gall-bladder first. The animal is then delivered to the person who kills it. The alligator is eaten in many parts of Africa, and is said to impart courage to the eater. Be this as it may, I myself would rather prefer remaining deficient in courage than partake of such food. The alligator we took measured

eight feet four inches. I have described the capture of this monster to remove an absurd notion entertained by some, that a bullet cannot penetrate the hard part of the alligator's back. This is the third proof to the contrary within my own experience. Although in each case the ball struck the animal above the round, and on the hardest part of the back, it in no case deviated from the true line from the barrel of the gun. I believe this erroneous opinion to have arisen either from the animal getting away after being wounded, or that the party, firing unseasonably, laid the blame on the skin or crust of the animal as being too hard, or the bullet for not penetrating, when, in fact, the animal was not struck at all.

Mr. James Hanson, being anxious to render me assistance, as well as his generous employer, kindly offered to lend me his horse. Unfortunately, the poor animal was at the time in a wretched state; for, although Mr. Hanson never rode the animal himself, his generosity would never allow him to refuse to lend his horse to any one who desired it. In consequence of his lending it to a Portuguese slave-dealer, named Gonzago, who possessed not a spark of humanity, but rode the poor beast with an old saddle much too large, and with scarcely any padding, the iron of the

tree resting on the back-bone, had caused two dreadful ulcers. This, and neglect in food, no doubt had reduced the poor horse to its wretched condition. The people, I have said already, are void either of sympathy or gratitude, even in their own families; and the poor horse is not held in half so much esteem as the swine, because they cannot eat it. It may remain tied up without food or water until it perish, if left to a negro's discretion. However, as some considerable time must elapse before I commence my journey to the interior, owing to the King of Dahomey not having returned from his slave-hunt, I knew that by proper treatment I could soon get the animal into good condition.

I accepted, therefore, the offer of the horse, and on the morning of the 17th March I left Ahguay for Whydah again, accompanied by the master of an American schooner, named Pearce, taking with us a small canoe with two men to carry the horse. All went on well for a few miles, with the exception of the American, who was sick and feverish. After passing down the lagoon six miles, the horse fell overboard, and I was compelled to go into the water to get him in again. Before we reached Grand Popoe the horse had been upset six times, and as often was I compelled to go into the water after him.

On our arrival at Popoe, which is half way from Ahguay to Whydah, we remained about an hour to refresh our canoemen, and then we resumed our passage. Being occupied with the mapping of the course and soundings of the lagoon, I did not observe, till we had proceeded six miles, that the two fellows had made off up another river to the northward, with a view of stealing the horse. Upon this I ordered my canoe to return in search of the villains, and overtook them opposite a town also named Popoe the Little. On finding themselves discovered, they ran the canoe ashore, and deserted her. I caught one of them, and hired another, taking care to keep the horse ahead till we again reached Grand Popoe, when the men again ran the canoe ashore, while I was purchasing palm-oil.

My American friend expressed some timidity at being without a light now night had come on, he having a few doubloons in his pocket, and having to pass the place where two years ago the Ham-burgh supercargo was murdered. A second time I caught the men; and, after a few good blows with my stick, I pushed them into the canoe, with a promise and determination that I would shoot the first man who attempted to disobey my orders. I remained in the canoe with the horse some time, till, owing to the great weight and the struggling of the horse (though small), the little

canoe again upset in the middle of the stream, now more than ten feet deep. The horse fell on me, but we both got ashore well, and I again got the horse into the canoe, and determined to remain in it, and hold the horse. Mr. Pearce, however, being sick, and not relishing being alone (with the exception of his servant) with four ruffian-like canoemen, I made a switch and put on the horse, sending one canoeman from my own canoe to hold him the remainder of the distance.

My clothes being entirely soaked, I changed my dress and drank a glass of grog, which was the last of our first bottle. We expected that we had another, as Mr. Hanson on the previous evening had ordered two bottles to be packed in our provision-box, one of wine and the other of gin. But, during the night, one of the men who had packed it had substituted a bottle of water for it. This is only a slight specimen of the roguery of this race, on whom England has spent millions, without one spark of gratitude in return.

All now went pretty well, Captain Pearce and myself enjoying our cigar till we came to the toll-bar across the river, which is always shut at twelve o'clock, to prevent any one passing without being observed. We stopped and hailed the toll-keeper, who very independently replied we must wait till morning, though there is an order that the toll

shall be open at any time of the night. However, I went to work, and soon destroyed the pins that secured the slip-bar.* My canoemen, all this time, exhibited the greatest concern. The toll-keeper, upon seeing the canoes pass through, vowed vengeance, and pursued us with two canoes, determined to make us prisoners. But I told my canoemen not to fear, nor yet surrender. My canoe being covered, our pursuers never perceived me till I had my sword-blade close to the throat of one of them; and, instead of taking us prisoners, I made them our prisoners. They had muskets with them, it is true; but if taken suddenly and with determination, they are great cowards. It is singular that the sight of a sword alarms them more than that of a gun. After detaining the men for some time, and taking them some distance from their home, we allowed them to return.

At four o'clock we arrived at the ferry-house at Whydah, at which place we remained till daylight, laughing at our vexatious journey, or passage; and at eight o'clock we once more arrived at my friend Mr. Hutton's factory, English Fort, where we were cordially welcomed by Mr. Robert Hanson and Mr.

* This toll-bar is composed of piles or stakes driven into the bed of the lagoon, touching each other the whole distance across, leaving a space sufficient for a canoe to pass, but after 12 A.M. secured from passage by a slip-bar.

Roberts, agents for Mr. Hutton. I remained at Whydah, awaiting intelligence of the King of Dahomey's return from his war, and the commencement of his custom, or holiday. During this time I occupied myself in learning as much as possible of the manners and habits of the people, as also the condition of the surrounding country. My horse began rapidly to improve, and in a short time, with great attention, the ulcers healed, and he would have been fit to ride, but some villain gave him a dose of some vegetable poison, which nearly killed him; still, by great care, he recovered much quicker than I expected.

Mr. J. Hanson had lent me a military saddle of a light construction, though a little too large, my horse being small, though considered large in this country. With a little alteration and a fresh pannel, however, I made the saddle fit well. I covered my holsters with bear-skin from my helmet tuft, and made a new tuft of black monkey-skin. I also made a crimson cotton velvet shabrack, trimmed with scarlet cloth, and having a snaffle bridle I had brought from England, as also some leather for reins, I made myself a curb, bit, and chain, shoed my horse, and made some spare shoes. This occupied me some considerable time, owing to the want of proper tools. My horse was now strong, and capable of carrying me at a reasonable pace

with ease. Early in the mornings I took a ride, every morning changing my direction, so that in a short time I knew much more of the surrounding country than the oldest residents in Whydah. I also took a great deal of walking exercise, which tends materially to promote good health.

The country ten or twelve miles round Whydah is very interesting, the soil good, land level, and in many places well cultivated by people returned from the Brazils, as I before stated. Since my last mention of these people I learn that many of them were driven away from Brazil on account of their being concerned in an attempted revolution amongst the slaves there, who turned against their owners. These people are generally from the Foolah and Eya countries. Many, it appears, were taken away at the age of twenty or twenty-four years, consequently they can give a full account of their route to Badagry, where they were shipped. They are by far the most industrious people I have found. Several very fine farms, about six or seven miles from Whydah, are in a high state of cultivation. The houses are clean and comfortable, and are situated in some of the most beautiful spots that imagination can picture. It is truly gratifying to find unexpectedly a house where you are welcomed in European fashion, and asked to take refreshment. I invariably found

upon inquiry that all these people had been slaves. This would seem to prove that to this country slavery is not without its good as well as bad effects.

There is another class of colonists, emancipated slaves from Sierra Leone, who emigrated to Whydah, with the intention of farming; but they are inferior in that science to the former class. Though most of them can read, and write a little, unfortunately the male portion of them appear nearly as indolent as the uncivilized native; notwithstanding that the King of Dahomey has afforded them every encouragement, by making them gratuitous grants of land on which they have built a small town. Immediately adjoining, is their cultivated land, which is little more than sufficient to meet their own consumption; but this is chiefly owing to the jealousy of the great slave-merchants, who use their combined influence to keep their produce out of the market. There is consequently little stimulus to exertion in agriculture. Through some means these colonists had been informed that I had come to Whydah for the purpose of establishing a model farm; and I was consequently waited upon by their headman, accompanied by several of his people, at the English Fort. They offered to give up to me all the cultivated land belonging to their settlement,

upon condition of my affording them employment on the farm when labour was required, as they said that their united efforts, under a proper leader, would be worthy the attention of some of the European merchants trading on that coast. They all seemed much disappointed when I told them that I was not in a position to accept their proposal. They derive support chiefly from the females, who are during the season employed in the bush collecting palm-nuts for making oil, for which a market can always be found. Several are also engaged in washing, which they obtain from European slave-agents, who are numerous here. I had during my residence in this place a servant as interpreter, one of these colonists, who had himself been a slave, but had been captured by a British cruiser while on passage to Brazil, and carried to Sierra Leone, and there educated. He afterwards emigrated to Understone or Abbakuta—that saintly place of so many converts*—and commenced slave-dealing. While on his passage, on board a slaver, he was again captured with several slaves in his possession. The slaves were carried to Sierra Leone; but he himself was with the crew of the slaver put on shore at Whydah, where he is now a resident in the above settlement of liberated Africans from Sierra Leone. He now

* See Mission Reports.

practises as a quack doctor, and his wife as a fetish-woman. I believe this is only one of many instances where emigrants from Sierra Leone to Abbakuta, who, on being liberated from slavery themselves, have commenced the same abominable traffic. In spite of what has been said of the moral condition of the last-named settlement, agriculture, commerce, and industry, in my opinion, will be the only permanent means to improve and moralize those people.

On my visit to Sierra Leone, Dr. Oldfield, whose veracity cannot be questioned, and whose position affords a superior knowledge of that traffic, informed me that many of the slaves adjudicated upon at Sierra Leone were obtained through the agency of the colonists of Abbakuta. Does not this fact prove the necessity of devising some means to induce the relinquishment of this unlawful traffic, and to the adoption of honest and remunerative industry? On the coast, especially at Whydah, a ready market might here always be found for corn and other produce, as many ships leave this coast with only half a cargo. I feel confident if a hundred steady men met with some encouragement to emigrate from England as agriculturists and mechanics, they would do well in this country, particularly as the King of Dahomey is so anxious that Englishmen should settle here.

I visited a farm-house where I found a hand-mill for grinding corn and manioc. It was a large fly-wheel, not placed horizontally, but perpendicular, like the barley mill: the felloes of the wheel about six inches broad, and worked in a trough of a semicircular form. The rim of this wheel is covered with sheet copper, having small holes punched through. It is then nailed on the rim with the rough side outwards. The wheel is turned in the same way as a grindstone. The trough can be raised or lowered at will according as they require it. This was made by the farmer himself near this place.

On the borders of a marsh I found some fern of various species, the lady or female much resembling that in England, and the common fern exactly the same as our English fern, with the exception of the size, both species here being much larger. The lady fern measures five feet, and the others six feet four inches. Mangoes, oranges, limes, three different species of tamarinds, grow wild in this country, and many other delicious fruits, with the names of which I am unacquainted; amongst them a damson, very sweet when ripe, dark, brown, or red, and of the size of a cherry.

CHAPTER IX.

Manufacture of Salt—Death of Dr. M'Hardy—Falling Stars—Manioc, the Food of the Slaves—Crops—Mode of storing Grain—Superstition—Hospitality of Don Francisco de Suza—A Tornado—Slave Auctions—Punishment for killing Fetish Snakes—Slaughter of Dogs, &c.—Dogs used as Food—An English Dog rescued—Thievish Propensities of the Natives—Falling Stars—Murder of two Wives—Adjito—A heavy Tornado—Robbed by my Servant—American Brig sold to Slave Merchants—Shipment of Slaves—Sharks—Death caused by one—Preparations for my Journey to the Kong Mountains—M. De Suza's Liberality—His Opinion of Englishmen.

MARCH 24th.—It is Harmattan season to-day. The thermometer has fallen from 84° to 71° Fahrenheit, but the general rise and fall of the thermometer at Whydah may be calculated to range from 78° to 84° during the month of March; though, as will be seen, sudden and extraordinary changes have taken place in the temperature. Salt is made in great abundance at Whydah, and forms one of their principal articles of trade, and is transported to a great distance into the interior. Their method of procuring the salt is simple and easy. Near Whydah the sea flows into the lagoon at high water, consequently it is very salt. During the ebb-tide

the lagoon also ebbs, and the great heat of the sun causes such rapid evaporation, as to leave the salt on the surface, so as to resemble hoar-frost or a slight fall of snow. It is then scraped together, and frequently boiled, which cleanses and whitens it, but the natives generally use it in its original state.

April 4th.—The *California*, Captain Hunt, arrived here from Cape Coast and Accra, bringing the melancholy intelligence of the death of Dr. M'Hardy, colonial surgeon of Cape Coast. He was a young man of amiable and gentlemanly manners, and shewed great skill in the treatment of the fever prevalent in that country. It is rather singular that this gentleman should never have experienced an hour's sickness during the two years he resided in Africa, till the short illness which had proved fatal to him. He had been relieved from his station by Dr. Lilley, and was only waiting for a passage to England. Dr. M'Hardy attended me with great kindness and attention during the fever which attacked me. He was one of the officers of the garrison whose kind and generous treatment I shall ever remember with the warmest feelings of gratitude. Indeed I have experienced great kindness from every European on this coast, as well as from the respectable body of civilized Africans.

April 11th.—At three o'clock A.M., I observed

an extraordinary falling of stars, falling from south to west at an angle of twenty degrees. I visited the same day a small kroom, at the distance of three miles, bearing due west from Whydah. The situation of the village is delightful, and the land well cultivated. Round the kroom are numerous manioc and palm-trees. Maize or Indian corn, and manioc are the chief crops raised in this neighbourhood, on account of the great demand for farina, which is made from the manioc-root. The root is ground in the same manner as potatoes for starch. It is then dried in the sun, and again partially ground till about the same substance as oatmeal. This is the principal food of the slaves, both during the time they are waiting to be shipped and on their passage. Corn is produced twice during the year, and a smaller sort of red corn may be obtained even four times in the year; but I have generally observed a carelessness in the storing of grain in this country, consequently the weevil or moth destroys a great quantity. At this kroom I observed an excellent plan for storing and preserving grain. A large circular jar, formed of clay, is placed upon a platform raised two feet and a half from the ground on pillars, similar to some corn-ricks in England. This immense jar is generally about nine feet in diameter and twelve feet deep. As soon as the first layer of clay is properly hardened, which seldom requires more than

twenty-four hours in a tropical sun, another layer is laid on, and so on till it attains its proper height. A light conical roof is then formed of bamboo, and thatch sewn over it, similar to the covering of beehives in England. This roof can be removed at pleasure, to give air to the grain. When corn is required for the market, or for their own use, it is drawn from a hole left at the bottom of the jar, over which is placed a wooden slide.

A singular superstition exists at Whydah in regard to the position of the body when asleep. On no account will a native sleep with his head towards the sea, nor enter a new house to take possession as a dwelling on a Tuesday or Friday, both those days being reckoned unlucky.

13th.—The thermometer rose to 90°, and at 4 hours 30 minutes fell to 70° Fahrenheit during a tornado.

On the 14th Commander Layton, of H. M. brig-of-war *Cygnets*, came on shore to visit me, and to thank Don Francisco de Suza for his great kindness to me since my arrival at Whydah, for I had informed Captain Layton of the manner in which I had been treated by him. M. de Suza expressed much satisfaction at this acknowledgment of his kindness, not only to me, but to all other Englishmen visiting this place. He is a professed slave-dealer of long standing, as I have previously mentioned, and that circumstance is likely enough

to produce an unfavourable opinion of him ; but a more generous or benevolent man perhaps never existed, in my opinion.

15th.—I went with Captain Layton on board the *Cygnets*, and was received with great kindness by the officers. During the night or previous evening, the *Sea Lark*, Captain Gooch, had anchored near the *Cygnets*. Captain Gooch came on board, and dined with Captain Layton and myself. Both these gentlemen expressed their willingness to assist me in any way in their power consistent with their duty.

On the 25th, at three o'clock A.M., during a dreadful tornado, accompanied with the most vivid lightning and loudest thunder I ever heard, the thermometer fell from 87° to 78° Fahrenheit.

At ten A.M. I was present at a sale by auction of the slaves belonging to a Portuguese merchant, who died on the 23d instant. Being domestic slaves, they sold high ; one, a cook, sold for two hundred and fifty dollars. The slaves are led in one at a time in succession as they are sold, and their persons examined. They are sold to the highest bidder, in the same way as cattle are sold in England. At half-past six a fiery meteor passed to the southward of Whydah, from east to west.

26th.—The wind changed regularly since the 20th from west to north, and at daybreak returned to west, forming the circle of the four cardinal

points in twelve hours. This day and night the thermometer ranged between noon and midnight from 82° to 78° Fahrenheit.

May 1st.—Punishment was inflicted for accidentally killing two fetish snakes, while clearing some rubbish in the French fort. This is one of the most absurd as well as savage customs I ever witnessed or heard of. Still it is not so bad as it was in the reign of the preceding King of Dahomey, when the law declared the head of the unfortunate individual forfeited for killing one of these reptiles, even by accident. The present King has reduced the capital punishment to that described below. On this occasion three individuals were sentenced, as guilty of the murder of this fetish snake. A small house is thereupon made for each individual, composed of dry faggots for walls, and it is thatched with dry grass. The fetish-men then assemble, and fully describe the enormity of the crime committed. Each individual is then smeared over, or rather has a quantity of palm-oil and yeast poured over them, and then a bushel basket is placed on each of their heads. In this basket are placed small calabashes, filled to the brim, so that the slightest motion of the body spills both the oil and the yeast, which runs through the bottom of the basket on to the head. Each individual carries a dog and a kid, as well as two fowls, all fastened together, across his shoulders. The culprits were

then marched slowly round their newly-prepared houses, the fetish-men haranguing them all the time. Each individual is then brought to the door of his house, which is not more than four feet high. He is there freed from his burthen, and compelled to crawl into his house on his belly, for the door is only eighteen inches high. He is then shut into this small space with the dog, kid, and two fowls. The house is then fired, and the poor wretch is allowed to make his escape through the flames to the nearest running water. During his journey there he is pelted with sticks and clods by the assembled mob; but if the culprit has any friends, they generally contrive to get nearest to him during his race to the water, and assist him, as well as hinder the mob in their endeavours to injure him. When they reach the water they plunge themselves headlong into it, and are then considered to be cleansed of all the sin or crime of the snake-murder. But this barbarous custom does not even end here. After the lapse of thirteen days, in addition to an annual custom observed here, custom or holiday is held for the deceased snakes.

During one whole day all persons who are so inclined are permitted to kill all dogs or pigs as well as fowls found abroad or in the streets. After the day's collection all are put in a heap together, some of the poor animals writhing with

agony. They are then distributed amongst the most ravenous of these cannibals and fetish-men, and are all cooked. A glorious feast and drinking of rum then takes place. Dogs are considered, I ought to observe, a great luxury here.

This day a party of vagabonds attacked a very fine English greyhound belonging to the English fort. I met the villains just as they entered the fort in pursuit of the poor animal, which they had already lamed. I gave chase to them, declaring if any one dared to come again into the fort I would shoot him instantly. The whole crowd threw down the dogs they had already killed, and made their escape, for they are great cowards; and many of them, in consequence of my having resided there three months, knew me. I then went to the Avogaw, and informed him of my determination to shoot the first of these villains who dared to enter the English fort, upon which he sent the gong-gong round the town, warning all persons against injuring white men's dogs: as they did not acknowledge fetish, they had no right to meddle with any thing belonging to white men.

May 3d.—The natives employed in carrying gunpowder from the beach to the town of Whydah are in the habit of stealing it. The greater part of the road being sand, they take out the powder and substitute sand. They also frequently

break cowry puncheons on their way, and then send to the owners, declaring that a puncheon has burst on the road. Before the coopers arrive, of course a number of cowries are carried away. Rum puncheons are in nine cases out of ten broached, by shifting one of the hoops, and boring a hole through the part where the hoop is removed.

Whydah has long been known to be inhabited by some of the greatest villains in the world. This may arise, perhaps, in a great measure, from the King of Dahomey not wishing to interfere with white people's affairs, and the merchants being too humane to urge the king's interference. For they are aware that if he were requested to take cognizance of any case of robbery of a white man, the robber would certainly lose his head. But such roguery deserves a severe check.

6th.—Extraordinary falling of stars at two o'clock A.M. in the southern hemisphere, forming an angle of forty-five degrees from E. to W. in the fall. Thermometer range from 82° to 77° ; but during a tornado at 4^h 30' fell to 74° .

7th.—I made myself two pair of trowsers. 8th, 9th, and 10th, finished my little tent, and made it waterproof. 13th, I witnessed a dreadful attack made by a husband upon his wife. I interfered and rescued her.

I have just heard of a most diabolical outrage

and murder of two wives by the husband, from jealousy. The first he treated in the most brutal manner, by forcing a large plantain into the lower part of her person, which instantly caused her death. The second (who was pregnant, and near her confinement) he ripped open with a large knife. The man was of course hung.

Unfortunately the people, natives of this place, are altogether deficient of any rational or charitable feeling. Music is scarcely known, or indeed any other exertion of the mind calculated to correct or improve the natural passions. Adjito is the only game practised here. It is an indolent sort of game, and groups of idle people assemble daily under the shade of the large cashu trees for the purpose. Here they remain smoking and drinking rum during the whole day, instead of cultivating the soil; however, the caboccer, who is an excellent man, has just issued orders that every piece of waste ground claimed by any person in or near the town shall be cultivated and planted with corn, or some other useful vegetable. This order has given great satisfaction to all Europeans at Whydah.

May 16th.—A heavy tornado, which lasted an hour, from three to four P.M., the thermometer falling two degrees. I discharged my new servant, a young Spaniard, for theft. He was one of a crew of villains who landed from the Spanish

slaver run ashore by the *Cygnets*, English war brig. I took this man from charitable motives when he was without food, or the means of procuring any. In a short time he began to steal every thing within his reach, and when discovered made his escape. After three days' search, however, I found out his hiding-place, and seized him. Upon searching him I found some of my property. I then took him to the English fort, and compelled him to inform me where the rest of my property which he had stolen was secreted, which I recovered afterwards.

22d.—I made myself a water-proof cloak, and finished a curb-bit and chain, and converted my saddle into a military one.

26th.—An American brig from Portland, Captain Goodriche, master, was sold by the captain for six thousand dollars to the slave merchants. The crew then turned mutinous and refused to work after the slaves were put on board. The vessel was then manned by Spaniards, who had been put on shore from prizes taken by English men-of-war. Sending vessels nearly valueless to the coast with general cargo, and after having been visited by an English man-of-war several times, discharging their cargoes, and selling them to slave dealers, seems now to be a favourite plan with the Yankees. When the vessel sails she is not suspected, from her apparent unfitness for that trade. This vessel

took on board six hundred slaves in a few hours, and though the swell was so heavy that none of the vessels in the roads could discharge their cargo, not one of the slaves was drowned.

Knowing that a shipment of slaves was to take place, I stationed myself on the road where I knew they would have to pass. The first party consisted of about seventy very strong athletic men, apparently from twenty to twenty-five years of age. These were followed by a number more, carrying pails or buckets for their food on the passage. About forty were children, varying from seven to ten years of age. These were not in chains; but marched with two slight grass cords, knotted at intervals of a yard. The two cords are put, one on each side of the neck, and another knot is made in front of the neck, leaving sufficient room, but so tight as to prevent the head from being slipped through. The others were all in chains; sometimes eighty on one chain. At intervals of a yard are large circular links, which open to receive the neck, and which are secured by a padlock. I was surprised to see with what cheerfulness they all bustled along as if going to a fair. The returned or liberated slaves were all out to witness the procession, which seemed to give them great satisfaction; for they declared they had spent their happiest days in Bahia. I asked several their

reason for leaving such a pleasant bondage; they assured me that it was owing to the revolt amongst some of the slaves in Bahia, who had been the means of ruining many slave-holders and large sugar manufacturers, who were unable to keep or employ them any longer. But, in all probability, these men were of the mutinous party, and had been sent out of the country.

I have just learned that two more American vessels are in Whydah roads at present for the same purpose, and one has lately sailed from Popoe with a cargo of slaves: in fact, the American government seems to wink at the trade. Whoever heard of an American man-of-war capturing a slaver, though there are three American men-of-war on the coast at present? I forgot to mention the circumstance of a Spaniard who was employed as a hand on board the *Medora* schooner, from London. Upon perceiving the slaves put on board the American brig, anchored at a short distance, he jumped overboard to swim to her, but had only been in the water a few seconds, before a large shark approached him. The poor fellow kicked with his feet towards the shark, endeavouring to keep it off, but the shark darted on him, and tore away his arm. A boat was immediately lowered, but before it reached him the shark made a second attack,

and the poor fellow, who was swimming with one hand, was again seized on the back of the shoulders, and dragged under water, the tail of the shark remaining in sight. When the boat reached the spot, the shark appeared on the surface, still holding the man. One of the men in the boat struck the shark's head with a boat-hook, when he relinquished his hold; but the poor fellow's flesh was completely torn from the bone. A small rope was fastened round his back, and he was got into the boat, and after being taken on board the *Medora* died in half an hour.

This coast abounds with sharks; and if a man is so unfortunate as to fall overboard he is sure to be caught by one of them.

June 5th.—Don Francisco de Suza, who has for some time back been exerting his influence with the King of Dahomey to allow me to visit his capital, and pass through to the Kong Mountains, has just received a satisfactory reply. Though M. de Suza is ill and confined to his bed with rheumatism, the old gentleman was so much pleased with the success of his application, that he sent for me to his bed-side to inform me of the good news, assuring me of his readiness to supply me with everything for my journey, and with presents suitable for the King and his principal ministers. Mr. Hutton had charged me not to go shabbily to Dahomey, as, in whatever circumstances I went,

I would surely be considered as the representative of my country; and that, in fact, unless I went as such, I would be little noticed.

Under such circumstances I felt somewhat embarrassed, for Mr. Hutton had been ever since my arrival at Cape Coast my sincere and constant friend. He had supplied me with an order upon his factories at Ahguay, Whydah, and Badagry, for anything I might require to ensure my success, and also requested M. de Suza to interest himself in furthering my views, and to furnish me with suitable presents. M. de Suza, as I have said, declared his willingness to do anything in his power to assist an Englishman; for although English cruisers had captured twenty-two of his slave vessels, yet he respected an Englishman more than any others, his own countrymen not excepted. Under the circumstances, I was glad to avail myself of his proffered kindness, although my satisfaction was mingled with reluctance at my inability to repay the expense incurred, except by pawning myself to any one who might require my services after my return to the coast. This was rather a gloomy prospect; however, I was determined to risk all. On the following day, therefore, according to M. de Suza's instructions, everything was ready, with twenty people to carry my baggage, provision, and cowries. Cowries are a very awkward money, requiring one man to carry two pounds'-worth.

CHAPTER X.

Set out on my Journey for Abomey—Savay—Torree—My wretched Condition—Azoway—Parasitical Plants—Aladda—Cotton tree—Atoogo—Assewhée—Havee—A Butterfly-School—Whyboe—Construction of the Houses—Native Customs—Manufactures—African Character generally—Population of Whyboe—Akpway—An extensive Swamp—Ahgrimmah—Togbadoe—Scenery—Soil—Swarm of Locusts.

AT one o'clock, during a heavy rain, we started from Whydah, leaving my servant, an American, who had belonged to the American vessel already mentioned, but who refused to remain on board after the vessel was converted into a slaver. He had been foolish enough to lend a negro four dollars, and was endeavouring to get it back; but after remaining a whole day, he was of course obliged to put up with the loss of his money.

This was a gloomy commencement of my journey; for I had nothing but a set of villains with me, ready to rob me when an opportunity should offer. The path from Whydah commences E. N. E. magnetic; and two miles N. E., then N. one and three quarters, I reached Savay, a small kroom of one hundred and fifty inhabitants, distant from

Whydah five miles and three quarters, instead of nine miles, as computed by the natives. The country is open, the soil red, loamy sand, of excellent quality. The rain had ceased. One of my carriers broke down purposely, in order that another of his rascally confederates might be employed to assist him, though his load was not forty pounds' weight. He returned to Whydah by another road to avoid meeting me, but M. de Suza's headman, after administering a flogging to him, sent the villain back to me, and so he did not effect his object, having for his villany added eleven miles and a half to his day's journey.

After dismounting a few minutes at Savay, we again resumed our journey. The road still magnetic N. five miles, then changing to N. E. three and three quarters, I reached Torree, distant eight miles and three quarters from Savay, and fourteen and a half from Whydah. The country was level and wooded for the last stage. I stopped at Torree during the night, without a servant, clothes wet, horse wet, and no house for him. I was obliged to cook, and attend to my horse; in fact, to do every thing myself. Heavy rain during the night, and until half past eleven o'clock on the following morning, the 7th, when we again commenced our journey. Bearing N. seven miles and a half, reached Azoway, a kroom with one hundred inhabitants,—last stage a beautifully wooded path,

and good road. Observed some splendid parasitical plants, with a very beautiful flower; one with an octagon-shaped spreading flower of a bright vermilion colour with six yellow petals, about the size of a primrose. The plant is four or five feet high, long, slender, woody stem, of a clinging character. This is the only place at which I have observed this plant.

After stopping five minutes and drinking water with the headman, we marched from Azoway, the country resembling a gentleman's park in England; rising ground three miles to the eastward, road bearing N. two miles, then N. W. seven miles, reached Aladda, a town with a good market and king's house built for the accommodation of white men visiting Dahomey. Near this place I shot a monkey and gave it to my carriers, who considered it a great luxury. I ate a piece of his liver, which was very good. The King keeps wives at this place, the head one of whom sent me water and a present of a fowl. The land is level, with good soil, and plenty of corn; distant seven miles and three quarters from Azoway, and from Torree fifteen miles and a quarter. On the road I had hired some assistant carriers, and my people were now in better marching order, and all seemed comfortable and myself happy. In the house where I slept I found a sheet of paper

written in Arabic, and suspended to one of the beams by the corner. I was told that this was placed there as a charm or amulet, by a Mahomedan priest passing through this place. Here I observed one of the largest cotton trees I ever saw, except one on the banks of the river Niger, which I measured when engaged in the Niger expedition in 1841. That measured fifty-seven feet, but the caboceer of Aladda objected to my measuring this without the King's leave.

June 8th.—We marched from Aladda at forty minutes past nine, bearing N. two miles, then NN.W. three miles, and reached Atoogo, a small kroom of one hundred inhabitants, the country still thickly wooded with immense large and straight trees of various species. Bearing still NN.W. at two miles reached Assewhee, a small kroom of twenty huts; and at two miles further, with several bends in the road, but general bearing NN.W., arrived at Havee, a kroom of three hundred inhabitants, the land well cultivated round and near the kroom. Near this place, and for several miles which we had passed, an extraordinary number of butterflies, of various sorts and colours, were assembled in immense heaps on different spots on the road. Sometimes we clapped a hat upon the heap, and secured fifty or sixty. Upon inquiring as to the cause of such singular

assemblies, the natives, in their own language, told me that it was a butterfly school: but upon again pressing them with the question, why they selected one particular spot, I was told, that whenever any person had occasion to make water, the spot was immediately covered with butterflies. Upon minute observation I found this perfectly correct.

After marching five miles in the same bearing, over a good road thickly wooded with beautiful trees of great height, we arrived at Whyboe, completely drenched from a thunder-storm. Whyboe is a town of considerable size, with a house belonging to the King, for the accommodation of white men. The town is well built; but, like all other towns in this country, the houses are all of clay. Here, and wherever I have passed, no other material could be substituted, for I have not seen a stone so large as a pea, neither at Whydah nor since I left that place. It may be well to mention, that the construction of the houses is much better than in many parts I have visited. Each householder occupies a square of seventy feet, the backs of the houses forming the walls of a square. The doors are inside the square, with the exception of one, as an entrance. In front of the main dwelling is formed a colonnade of square pillars. Under this colonnade, and against the outside of the wall of the dwelling, is a clay seat,

extending the whole length of one side of the square, leaving a space opposite the doorway. This seat is about five feet wide, and one foot and a half high, having a draught or current of air generally. It forms a very pleasant seat, and frequently a bed for the occupants. The slaves or domestics generally occupy another part, but little distinction is observed in general between master and servant, except in presence of strangers, and that with a view to display their dignity.

If a glass of liquor is presented to the master, he invariably shares it with his domestics, who are squatted round him. Upon a master offering the glass or cup, which is never taken out of the master's hand, the other, on his knees, holds his mouth to receive what his master chooses to pour into it, in the same way that rooks, when young, are fed by the parent.

Cloth is manufactured in almost all the krooms I have yet passed; but their method is so tedious, that it becomes expensive; consequently numbers, both male and female, are entirely naked. Those who can afford it generally wear a cloth round their loins, as at Whydah and other places on the coast. Here, to my great satisfaction, my white servant overtook me; Mr. Hanson, agent for Mr. Hutton, had kindly sent a native with him to show him the way. Poor fellow!

he was much fatigued and wet, yet cheerful withal. He was a little feverish, having slept at Torree on a damp clay floor; for even a mat was refused him, though the King orders every accommodation to strangers. This is a proof of the mistaken idea entertained of the kindness of the natives in general. Two days before, when I passed, they pretended great attention, knowing that they would be well remunerated; but this poor solitary white man, with only a negro boy for his guide, they charged eight cowries for lying on bare earth! This is a sample of the generosity of the generality of Africans.

The severe laws and discipline of the King of Dahomey need not surprise us, when we are acquainted with the character of his people. Having got some rice and fowl-soup prepared, I prevailed on my servant to endeavour to take some, but he was unable to eat any thing. I then made him some tea, and spread my own mat for him, and covered him over with my sheet—the only one I possessed, for my others had been stolen. He soon got into a strong perspiration, and in the morning he was quite restored.

Whyboe contains about six hundred inhabitants, who seem better disposed than those nearer the coast; they are more industrious too. The land is well cultivated round and near the town,

producing corn of different sorts, manioc, and yams.

June 9th. — We marched from Whyboe at 6^h 40', bearing still NN.W., the path good and beautifully wooded. At four miles, bearing N., and at one mile and a half, reached Akpway, five miles and a half from Whyboe. Akpway is a small town, with another house of accommodation, which we did not enter, having a long journey this day. We merely halted in the market-place, and took a piece of biscuit and some water. Here I found a man from Cape Coast, who spoke some few words of English. He was now employed in the King's house here. I found him kind and attentive in obeying the King's orders in furnishing us with water for my party and horse. For this I gave him a good dram of rum. Here the path passes over red-sand or freestone, the first stone I had observed.

Marched again at 8^h 45', bearing N. one mile, then NN.W., and entered the swamp, frequently impassable during the rainy season. Fortunately, I was enabled to ride my horse for the greater part of the way. The road was now intersected by trees of immense size, interspersed with smaller (fruit) trees, of different kinds. Amongst these was a sort of damson, of fine flavour, the colour of a ripe plum, and of the size of an Eng-

lish cherry. This swamp continued for about ten miles, in the same bearing. We then reached Ahgrimmah, distant from Akpway thirteen miles and a quarter. We marched from Ahgrimmah at 1^h 10', with occasional bends in the path bearing NN.W., and at five and a quarter miles reached Togbadoe, a market town, with nine hundred inhabitants, situated on a gentle rising ground, and open, with the exception of a beautiful clump of trees at a little distance apart, resembling a vast pleasure-ground or park, not unlike some part of the Great Park at Windsor. On the right of the path, or N.E., at three miles distant, is a beautiful valley, running NN.W. and S.S.E. five miles, crossing the path in the form of an arch, and taking the above direction at one mile and a half distant, forming the shape of a horse-shoe. Here the soil is light, and vegetation not so luxuriant; small gravel on the surface, from which the soil had been washed. At three feet and a half below the surface, ironstone in a congested or fused state is found. At this place we passed one mile through a swarm of locusts. No one who has not witnessed such a scene can form an idea of the immense numbers crowded together. Well might the Egyptians dread such visitors! Upon our approach to the spot where the swarm commenced, the noise was similar to

that of a heavy blast of wind passing through a forest of trees, or like the noise of a heavy shower of hail. This was caused by their hopping to get out of our way. My horse at first felt alarmed; but, after being urged by the whip and spur, he went amongst them, killing many hundreds as he passed, although they are so very nimble; but their excessive number prevented them from getting out of the way. They were about the size of a grasshopper, or a little stouter, of the colour of a bee. Their wings were not full grown, which may account for their not being able to get out of the way. I was told afterwards that they were not half grown. They are much dreaded when they settle down amongst a crop of any description, for they totally destroy every thing within their reach.

CHAPTER XI.

Canamina, its Population—Adawie—Preparations for entering the Capital—Abomey—My hospitable Reception—Visit from Mayho, the Prime Minister—Message from the King—The Palace—The Market-place—Dead Bodies of Criminals hung up—My Reception by his Majesty—Ceremony on Introduction—Conversation with the King—Perform the Sword Exercise before him—His Approbation—Troops of Female Soldiers—The King's Person—Ceremony of the Introduction of Military Officers—Dress of the Female Soldiers—Introduced to the King's Chiefs—Visits—The King's Staff—Review of Native Troops—Feigned Attack on a Town—The King's Soldier-wives—Ashantee Prince—His Majesty's Opinion of England and the English—The vain Boasting of the Ashantee Prince silenced by the King—Principal Officers—The Dahoman Women formidable Soldiers.

AT four miles and a half from Togbado, reached Canamina, a large town, scattered over a vast area of ground, the land level and well cultivated, resembling our fields in England. The country is open to a considerable distance. This town contains at least ten thousand inhabitants. The King has here also a house for the accommodation of white people, although they so seldom visit this place. Ever since Mr. Freeman's visit, the King has been very anxious to encourage intercourse

with English people. At this place we remained for the night, and were well accommodated.

Early on the following morning, June 10th, the pretended governor of the English fort at Whydah, a deceitful old scoundrel, who created himself governor of the fort under the pretence of taking care of it, though, as I had before stated, he has let all go to ruin except the part he himself occupies, met me at Canamina, for the purpose of introducing me to the town of Abomey. After breakfast I cleaned my regimentals, and my white servant got my horse and trappings; ready and the day being fine, I formed a very decent turnout, my regimentals being good, the same as then worn in my old regiment, the First Life Guards. I was amused at the vanity of the old governor, who showed a great anxiety to precede me, with a view of making it appear to the people that he was my superior, and that I was merely his escort. He himself was carried in an old ragged hammock by four negroes, and was dressed in an old worn-out gambroon coat of English pattern. This piece of vanity I suffered him to indulge in till we arrived at Adawie, three miles and a half from Canamina, and with the same bearing as the previous day. I then ordered him to fall in my rear, which order he pretended not to understand. I galloped up to his hammock and stopped him. This seemed to

mortify him very much, particularly as he had always informed the people of this place that he was one of the greatest men of Whydah, and had been appointed by the Queen of England as governor over all white men.

We arrived at Abomey at three minutes past one o'clock, amidst crowds of spectators, and were guided to an excellent house prepared for me by Mayho,* the King's prime minister, an excellent old man, and very different to the generality of uncivilized Africans, not having that covetous and selfish disposition usual with them. He was always anxious to furnish me with every necessary which he had heard a white man required or used. After welcoming me and my people, his first inquiries were for Mr. Freeman, and why he was so long before he again visited him? He then desired to drink my health and a welcome to Abomey from a liquor-case which he had already sent to my house. As he was busily employed with the King in making preparations for my formal reception on the following morning, Mayho soon retired, leaving me to get my house in order. After a short interval plenty of provisions for more than forty persons were sent me

* The higher officers of the household are allowed to adopt their official title as their family name, Mayho being in the Dahoman language Prime Minister.

from the King's house. We were now comfortably accommodated; and I was much pleased with the kind reception I had met with.

My house or houses contained accommodation for three large families, with two kitchens and large yard, the whole completely walled in. In front of my door was a very fine large orange-tree covered with fruit, and a large bench or seat under it entirely shaded from the sun. In the evening Mayho again called on me and delivered the King's compliments, informing me that his Majesty was very happy to hear of an Englishman's arrival in his town, and hoped that many more would visit his capital, assuring me that nothing on his part should be wanting to make every one comfortable. He desired Mayho also to inform me that his Majesty would be happy to receive me formally at an early hour on the following morning. This was gratifying news, as a visitor generally waits many days before he condescends to see them. During all this palaver the whole of the attendants were on their knees, Mayho himself not excepted, this being their mode of procedure when delivering or receiving a message from the King, besides kissing the ground and covering their heads with dust.

On the following morning at an early hour another bountiful supply of provisions arrived, and after an early breakfast I was fully equipped, and

rode, attended by some of the King's principal men, to the market-place or parade-ground in front of his palace or house. On our march to the market-place we passed along part of the walls of the palace, which covers an immense space. The walls as well as houses are made of red sandy clay, and on top of the walls, at intervals of thirty feet, human skulls were placed along their whole extent. On approaching nearer the market-place we beheld, on an elevated pole, a man fixed in an upright position, with a basket on his head, apparently holding it with both his hands. A little farther on we saw two more men, now in a state of decomposition, hung by the feet from a thick pole, placed horizontally on two upright poles about twenty feet high. Passing close to them the smell was intolerable. The arms hung extended downwards, and at a little distance a stranger would (from their shrivelled and contracted condition) suppose them to be large sheep or goats; the skin from exposure had turned nearly to the colour of that of a white man. I found upon inquiry the bodies had been in this position about two and a half moons. All reckoning here is by the moon. The vulture was industriously endeavouring to satisfy his appetite, but the heat of the sun had dried the skin so as to render it impenetrable to his efforts.

On the opposite side of the market were two

more human bodies in the same position as those I have just mentioned, with the exception that the bodies had been mutilated. This excited my curiosity, for decapitation is the favourite mode of execution in Abomey. I was informed that these men had been guilty of adulterous intercourse with one of the King's wives, in consequence of which, they were sentenced to be put to death by being beaten with clubs, and after death mutilated. The King had not yet arrived at the appointed place, where a high stool and footstool were placed for him under a huge umbrella, surrounded by about twenty more of nearly the same dimensions, forming a crescent—his own being in the centre. He had requested, through Mayho, that I would salute him as I would the Queen of England, for he was anxious to become acquainted with European manners and customs. Accordingly, upon a nearer approach I saluted his Majesty according to military regulation, with which he seemed much pleased, and returned the compliment in a much more graceful manner than I expected. He then requested me to dismount and come to him. Upon which, his prime minister and four others next in rank, who were conducting me to his Majesty's presence, desired me to halt till they paid their compliment to his Majesty, forming line in front of me. They

completely prostrated themselves at full length, rubbing both sides of their faces on the ground, and kissing it. They then raised themselves on their knees, where they remained till they had completely covered themselves with dust, and rubbed their arms over with dirt as high as the shoulders.

I was much surprised as well as disgusted with such absurd, abject humiliation. Their robes, which a few minutes before looked clean and respectable, were now, as well as their persons, smeared with dirt. Myself and the Governor of Whydah fort were the only persons who did not observe the same degrading form. Even the soldiers, male and female, although under arms, observe the same humiliation. After this ceremony we stepped forward to the King, and he descended from his stool or throne, and shook me cordially by the hand, declaring his great satisfaction at having an Englishman in his country. He then proposed to drink my health. A table having already been prepared for me, a liquor-case was placed thereon, containing numerous different sorts of flasks and decanters, with as many sorts of liquors, namely, Hollands, rum, brandy, aniseed, claret, cherry brandy, and other cordials. He then asked me whether it was not customary to drink the health of my sovereign first.

I told him that every good Englishman always observed such courtesy, but as I was his visitor I was sure the Queen of England would readily sanction my drinking his own first. This was done in cherry brandy, of excellent quality ; then the Queen and all her family, and afterwards my own health was drunk.

During the time the King is drinking, his face is always concealed from observation by a number of handkerchiefs, held up round his head. At this moment a firing of muskets and beating of gong-gongs and hurraing takes place. After asking me a few questions respecting the royal family of England, his Majesty requested my horse to be brought nearer, so that he might see it and also examine the appointments, with which he seemed much satisfied, particularly upon being shown the holsters and pistols, which were covered with bear-skin. He was also much pleased with the manner of fixing the carbine on the saddle. He then declared that white men knew everything.

He next desired me to ride, that he might see the exercise, at the same time ordering two of his principal men to walk by my side and hold me on. This I did not properly understand at first, not knowing their language, but after retiring a sufficient distance from his Majesty, clear of the soldiery, I formed a circle to the right. My two holders signified

that I must not form circle to the right, the King alone possessing that privilege; whereupon I countermarched, and began a sharp trot, urging my two holders to keep out of my way, but all was of no avail. I then halted, and desired my interpreter to tell the King that Englishmen never required holding on their horse. Upon which he seemed surprised, and told me to do as I thought proper, but begged me rather not to ride for his gratification than run any risk. I again assured him that there was no danger, and put my horse in motion, first at a trot and then a gallop.

The King then stood up, clapping his hands in approbation. Upon which the whole assembled multitude followed the example, which much terrified my horse. After a few more circles performed, the King desired me to dismount and come beside him and sit down, thanking me for my performance. Upon our close approach, his ministers went again through the same ceremony I have already described, and afterwards I was ushered to a seat close to the King, who paid me great attention, and showed every anxiety to give me information and explain everything to me.

It may be well, before proceeding farther, to state that all his attendants and soldiers on guard near his person sit down cross-legged, the soldiers with the butt-end of the musket resting on the ground

between their legs, in a perpendicular position. During this time troop after troop of female soldiers arrived, preceded by a band of very barbarous music, similar to sheep-bells and drums, made from part of the trunk of a hollow tree, with some bullock or sheep-skin covered over the top of it.

The King is a tall athletic man, about forty-three years of age, with pleasing expression and good features, but the top of his forehead falling back rather too much to meet the views of a phrenologist. His voice is good and manner graceful, in comparison with the barbarous customs of the country.

In all directions troops of female soldiers were now arriving and taking their stations at a distance, lying down or squatted, until they are called upon to come before his Majesty. No particular discipline is observed. The regiments severally form up in an irregular column, and the principal, or commanding officer, calls out the officers, who kneel on both knees and cover their heads and bodies with dust. The commander then introduces one after the other each officer of this female regiment; and if any one has in any way distinguished herself, it is commented upon, and the party complimented and rewarded for her valour. This regiment belonged to the King's son, in the

government of a country bearing an ensign or flag, ornamented with the figure of a lion.

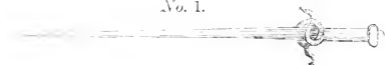
After all the ceremony of compliments and boasting of valour is gone through, the officers fall in, and the whole regiment sing a song in compliment to the King. After that any individual who chooses is allowed to step to the front, and declare her fidelity to his Majesty, and as soon as one retires another takes her place, so that the ceremony becomes irksome. Sometimes the ceremony of one regiment passing occupies three hours. After all is over the whole of the regiment kneel down, with the butt of their muskets on the ground and the barrel slanting back over the shoulder, and with both hands scrape up the dust and cover themselves with it. The dust being of a light red colour, gives them a very singular appearance. Many have their heads entirely shaved, except a tuft resembling a cockade; others only shave a breadth of two inches from the forehead to the poll. After this ceremony they all rise up from the stooping position, still on their knees, but body otherwise erect, and poising their muskets horizontally on their two hands, all join in a general hurrah. Suddenly then they rise up, throwing the musket sharply into one hand, holding it high in the air, at the same time giving another hurrah. The whole then shoulder muskets, and run off

at full speed. Each individual runs as fast as she is able, so that it is a race with the whole regiment of six hundred women. It would surprise a European to see the speed of these women, although they carry a long Danish musket and short sword each, as well as a sort of club.

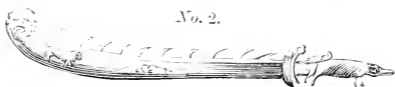
It may be well to give some account of the dress and equipments of these amazons. They wear a blue and white striped cotton surtout, the stripes about one and a half inch wide, of stout native manufacture, *without sleeves*, leaving freedom for the arms. The skirt or tunic reaches as low as the kilt of the Highlanders. A pair of short trowsers is worn underneath, reaching two inches below the knee. The cartouche-box, or *agbwadya*, forms a girdle, and keeps all their dress snug and close. The cartouche-box contains twenty cartridges, about four times the quantity of that used in England, owing to the inferiority of the powder. It is very conveniently placed, being girdled round the loins. The powder and ball, however, is not attached; the powder being in a small leather cup, fitted inside of another, and taken out and emptied into the gun, without any wadding of any description. It consequently loses much of its power, the ball or slugs being thrown in loosely, and fired off more by chance than judgment. However, upon

DAHOMAN WEAPONS.

No. 1.



No. 2.



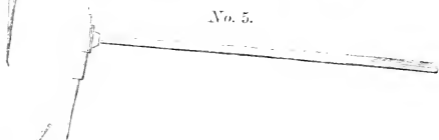
No. 3.



No. 4.



No. 5.



No. 6.



For a description of these Weapons, the reader is referred to the List of Illustrations at the commencement of this Volume.

the whole, these women certainly make a very imposing appearance, and are very active. From their constant exercise of body (for the women in all cases do the principal part of both domestic and agricultural labours here as well as at other places,) they are capable of enduring much fatigue.

Next came the King's second son's female soldiers, from a part called Kakagee's country, in consequence of having the government of that country. These soldiers, about six hundred, went through the same ceremony as the others. His Majesty always anxiously explained every thing to me, and sent to the palace for paper for me to make notes upon. During the day about six thousand women-soldiers passed successively before the King, who frequently introduced the principal officers of this corps to me, relating their achievements. This seemed to give them great satisfaction. Amongst them, he introduced me to one of his principal wives, a stout, noble-looking woman, of a light brown complexion. She commanded the whole of the King's wives, who are all soldiers, amounting to six hundred, present on this occasion. The King introduced her to me as my mother. I was for some time at a loss to comprehend the meaning of this, but soon found that his Majesty had appointed this favourite wife to furnish all Eng-

lish or white men with provisions during their sojourn in this country.

The term mother is, in many cases, misapplied in Abomey; for instance, if a man has a wife, or a number of them, they are called mothers, no one being allowed to call them wives but the King. My inquiries relative to the meaning of this were often erroneously answered, till I observed an old man, whose name was given me, and soon after a young woman was pointed out to me as his mother, though the woman was at least twenty-five years younger than her supposed son. Owing to this, I was very incredulous, telling my informant that he must be mistaken. It may appear singular in a civilized part of the world, to learn that no distinction is made in the term *mother* between the wife and real mother. After introducing me to a number of his chiefs or captains, some of whom are very fine well-built men, the King informed me that I had better go home, as it was now getting dusk. After drinking again with his Majesty, I retired to my house, where I was visited by many of the principal people of Dahomey, and also received the canes of a great many Spaniards and Portuguese (as they call themselves), liberated slaves from Whydah, and who were here attending the custom, or holiday.

In this country it is customary, when a servant or messenger is sent to inquire after the health of any person of rank, to send your cane or stick, which the messenger delivers into the hands of the person addressed. When the King sends his messenger in the morning to make his compliments and inquire after my health, both my people and the messenger-attendants prostrate themselves and kiss the ground to the King's cane.

Next morning, June 12th, as early as seven o'clock, I was again summoned to attend the review. On approaching his Majesty, the same ceremony was observed as on my introduction yesterday. He again asked me to ride, and told me he should like the principal officers in command of the male soldiers to be present at this day's review to see me. Accordingly, some of the principal ministers came with me to show me where to stand, to allow the passing soldiery to have a full view of the King's visitor, or King's stranger, as they called me. The soldiers were now fast arriving from all quarters; each regiment preceded by its band, whose instruments produced the most discordant sounds that can be imagined—drums, elephants' teeth, bullocks' horns, and a sort of triangular iron tube, which they beat with a small stick, and which gave forth sounds like a sheep-bell.

The commander rides in the centre of his regiment, if provided with a horse (which is not stronger than a Shetland pony), with two men holding him on. Others who have no horses are carried in hammocks. After about four thousand men had passed me, marching without any discipline or form, I returned to the King's canopy to await the commencement of the review. In a short time the female soldiers made their appearance in full marching order, with provisions, amounting to about seventeen hundred. This corps was preceded by its band. The drum is carried on the head, one end to the front and the other to the rear; the person beating it walks behind the carrier. The drum belonging to the corps was ornamented with twelve human skulls. The women carrying provisions march in the rear, each of them having a certain portion of baggage; some carry mats for the female officers to lie upon, and one woman carries a large umbrella for the commanding officer. Those carrying provisions have large calabashes on their heads, weighing about sixty pounds each, containing different sorts of provisions, such as fowls cooked in palm-oil, kankie, dab-a-dab, made of the same material as kankie, but boiled instead of baked. This is the principal food used here for general consumption, as well as on the

march. Seven standards are also carried with this regiment, the tops of which are ornamented with human skulls. This regiment belongs to Megah, the King's principal jailor.

About two hundred marched past as I have described, followed in succession by the King's women, to-day amounting to six hundred, all from the King's palace. These were headed by Dagbyweka. The drum was also ornamented by twelve skulls of traitors, or men caught in arms against the King. This corps observed certain regulations on the march not customary with the others: nine women and an officer marched in front as an advance guard, at a short interval fifty supporters, then followed the main body. One individual officer is always appointed to lead the attack, who is distinguished by a sword of different pattern. An attack is, if possible, always made in the night, or very early in the morning.

Next followed the female soldiers from Apadomey, commanded by Knawie (or white man's mother). Next, Ieandee people, a country distant one day's journey to the W.N.W. of Abomey.

After this procession, which consisted altogether of about eight thousand women, well armed and clothed, had passed, the King asked me to go and see what his women-soldiers were about to perform. I was accordingly conducted to a large

space of broken ground, where fourteen days had been occupied in erecting three immense prickly piles of green bush. These three clumps, or piles, of a sort of strong briar or thorn, armed with the most dangerous prickles, were placed in line, occupying about four hundred yards, leaving only a narrow passage between them, sufficient merely to distinguish each clump appointed to each regiment. These piles were about seventy feet wide and eight feet high. Upon examining them, I could not persuade myself that any human being, without boots or shoes, would, under any circumstances, attempt to pass over so dangerous a collection of the most efficiently armed plants I had ever seen. Behind these piles already mentioned, were yards, or large pens, at the distance of three hundred yards, fenced with piles seven feet high, thickly matted together with strong reeds. Enclosed therein were several hundred slaves belonging to the King.

It may be well to state that this affair was entirely got up to illustrate an attack upon a town and the capture of prisoners, who are of course made slaves. After waiting a short time, the Apadomey soldiers made their appearance at about two hundred yards from or in front of the first pile, where they halted with shouldered arms. In a few seconds the word for attack was given, and

a rush was made towards the pile with a speed beyond conception, and in less than one minute the whole body had passed over this immense pile, and had taken the supposed town. Each of the other piles was passed with equal rapidity at intervals of twenty minutes; after which we again returned to our former station in the market-place. Here we found his Majesty waiting for us. He anxiously inquired how I was pleased with the performance of his female soldiers, and asked if I thought the same number of Englishwomen would perform the same. I, of course, answered, *no*: we had no female soldiers in England, but we had females who had individually and voluntarily equally distinguished themselves.

In a short time after our return, the Apadomey regiment passed, on their return, in single file—each leading in a string a young male or female slave, carrying also the dried scalp of one man supposed to have been killed in the attack. On all such occasions, when a person is killed in battle, the skin is taken from the head, and kept as a trophy of valour.* I counted seven hundred

* It must not be supposed that these female warriors kill according to the number of scalps presented; the scalps are the accumulation of many years. If six or seven men are killed during one year's war, it is deemed a great thing: one party always run away in these slave-hunts; but when armies meet the slaughter is great.

scalps pass in this manner. The captains of each corps, in passing, again presented themselves before his Majesty, and received the King's approval of their conduct. After all had passed, each regiment again formed in column before the King, and each officer was presented to me, and their deeds of valour recorded, for which they were promoted. No promotion takes place unless merited on account of some act of distinguished merit. When the King's household troop or regiment formed up, his Majesty asked me if I observed the form of an animal worn on the white cotton skull-cap of this corps. I replied in the affirmative. This animal, he informed me, was killed by some of his women when in the bush during the last war, a few months ago; and he had ordered the figure to be worn on the cap as a badge of distinction.

One officer of this corps of King's soldier-wives was introduced to me. Her name was Adadimo. This female had, during the two last years' war, taken, successively, each year a male prisoner, for which she was promoted, and his Majesty had also presented her with two female slaves. Adadimo is a tall thin woman, about twenty-two years of age, and good-looking for a black, and mild and unassuming in appearance. The King also introduced her to an Ashantee prince and some attendants, who were here on a visit, of which I was not

before aware. No doubt the King of Ashantee had sent them as spies to ascertain whether I really did pass through Dahomey to the Kong Mountains or not, as it will be recollected that, upon the King of Ashantee refusing to allow me to pass, the Governor of Cape Coast (Captain Hill) told the King's messenger that I should pass to the mountains in spite of him (the King of Ashantee). After presenting Adadimo to the Ashantees, he addressed her and the regiment to the following effect, the regiment being now on their knees:—He told them that I was one of the Queen of England's soldiers, sent on a friendly mission or visit, to collect information respecting his kingdom; and he himself felt proud and much gratified to be able to inform them all of the circumstance, more especially as he could assure them that the Queen of England was the greatest and most powerful sovereign in the world, and far surpassed all countries in war, as well as in the manufacture of guns and cloth, the two British articles best known in the country. He repeated that the highest possible compliment was paid to Adadimo, by her being introduced to me, and having her name registered in my book. During this speech she remained on her knees, and returned me repeated thanks. The same example was followed by the whole regiment.

Next came a regiment belonging to a country called Ginoa, commanded by a female of the same name. This regiment consisted only of three hundred women. This corps make no prisoners, but kill all. After all this ceremony was over, the principal male officers prostrated themselves, and went through the regular form of harangue, as if this review had been actual service. They informed his Majesty that they were happy to congratulate him upon the return of his victorious army and capture of a great number of slaves.

His Majesty, then turning to me, addressed me in a loud voice to the following effect: "You come from the greatest and richest country in the world, and I am truly gratified at seeing you in my country. The only thing I regret is that so few Englishmen come to see me. I should at all times feel proud to do any thing in my power to accommodate an Englishman, and endeavour to make him comfortable in my country. I am aware," he added, "that I have not in my power all the necessaries required by Englishmen, but if I were more frequently visited by them I would take care to procure everything necessary for their comfort. You have travelled much in Africa,* and from what you have seen you are

* It is a surprising fact, that my last visit to Africa, in the Niger expedition, was well known to him, though by what means

now aware that I am as far superior in Africa, as England is to Spain or Portugal, not," he said, "excepting the Ashantees, some of whom he observed were present, and could judge for themselves: although in former times," he remarked, "the Ashantees surpassed him as far as he now surpassed them."

I do not know how the Ashantee relished this observation, but I suppose not well, as he is a conceited fop, and upon the whole a sharp, shrewd young man. I put some questions to him respecting his country, but his answers were both evasive and untrue, thinking no doubt that I was quite ignorant on the subject. He informed me that Coomassie was four moons' journey from Dahomey; and also in order to make his country look great, told me and the King that there were no less than one hundred English merchants in Coomassie buying gold when he came away. Upon which I flatly contradicted him, and told him that only one white man resided in Ashantee, Mr. Chapman, a missionary, who had lately been ill-treated by a set of ruffians. This mortified him very much; and he remarked to the King that white men only came to Ashantee for what they could get, and boasted of the great presents his father

I cannot tell, unless through the Ashantees, as we brought the Ashantee princes to Africa.

had made to Mr. Freeman; but I informed his Majesty that the King received ten times more from Mr. Freeman than he ever received or expected in return; that Englishmen never expected any return for a present. The Ashantee persisted in what he had stated, and declared that any present received by the King of Ashantee was made merely through fear. Upon this the King, in an angry tone, ordered him to be silent. He was aware that England feared no nation, and he would not suffer an Englishman to be insulted in his country.* This terminated my conversation with the Ashantee on that day.

It will, doubtless, seem singular, that the male soldiers are not mentioned as taking any part in the two days' review, but they remained inactive the whole time, except when eating. At this part of the ceremony they played their part, being amply supplied with provisions. In fact, every one present, on both days, although so numerous, was supplied with plenty. No person, however, except myself, was furnished with a table, not even the Spaniards nor Portuguese, although many visitors of both nations, who were present at the custom, still remained here, knowing that I

* The King told the Ashantee to take back his father's present, a gold-hilted sword, and tell him that all the gold in Ashantee would not induce him to intercept an Englishman.

was expected. The Ashantee prince objected to drink out of a calabash, seeing that I was supplied with tumblers, but he was told by one of the King's headmen that he was only a black man, and that if he did not choose to drink from the calabash he might go without. He preferred the former, and drank out of what he had used all his life—the calabash. The male soldiers were seated on the ground without any regularity, forming a crescent in the rear of his Majesty.

Before breaking up, the King assembled all his principal officers, and introduced them to me, describing their rank and office. Amongst them were some of his cousins—Hadabadja, Agerbee, and Gadypapu, three captains of the male troops, remarkably fine men, with good craniums and heads much of the Moorish cast, although darker—not so dark, however, as the genuine negro character. Egboza is commander-in-chief of all the King's army, and son of Kakagee, the principal of the King's house, being both treasurer and chamberlain. After many more introductions to inferior officers the principal officers were desired to drink the Queen of England's health. This was to be drunk out of a human skull, apparently not long before it had been useful to the original possessor. However, as this was considered the highest compliment that can be paid

to any person, I drank my sovereign's health from the bony goblet. The King also joined. I then proposed his Majesty's health, which was drunk from the same vessel. This concluded the second day's performance.

I may be permitted to make a few remarks on the army of women. It is certainly a surprising sight in an uncivilized country. I had, it is true, often heard of the King's female soldiers, but now I have seen them, all well armed, and generally fine strong healthy women, and doubtless capable of enduring great fatigue. They seem to use the long Danish musket with as much ease as one of our grenadiers does his firelock, but not, of course, with the same quickness, as they are not trained to any particular exercise, but, on receiving the word, make an attack like a pack of hounds, with great swiftness. Of course they would be useless against disciplined troops, if at all approaching to the same numbers. Still their appearance is more martial than the generality of the men; and if undertaking a campaign, I should prefer the females to the male soldiers of this country. From all I have seen of Africa, I believe the King of Dahomey possesses an army superior to any sovereign west of the Great Desert.

CHAPTER XII.

Visit to the King at his Palace—Description of it—Reception by his Majesty—Gaudy Dress of the Attendants—Masks, Ornaments, &c.—Occasion of the War between the Mahces and Dahomans, and its Result—The King's Walking-staffs—Dance performed by his Majesty—Another Review of Female Troops—Execution of Four Traitors—Horrible Occurrence—Disgusting office of the Blood-drinker—Ludicrous Scene—The King's Mother and Grandmother—Dance performed by them—Costume of the King's Favourite Wives—I perform on the Jew's Harp—I dance with his Majesty—His Message to the Queen of England—Ridiculous Customs—Court of Appeal established at Abomey—Character of the King—Domestic Slavery—A Slave-hunt—Military Distinctions—Want of natural Affection in the Natives—Roguary of my Servant—The King's Commissions to me—An Interesting Incident—Murderous Attack on me by my Servant—Inquiry into the Occurrence—My Servant compelled to accompany me.

JUNE 13TH.—To-day I attended at the King's house or palace. After passing through two quadrangles of about sixty yards by thirty, we entered the principal square. This square is formed of three sides of houses or long sheds; and on the opposite side to the principal part or side is a high wall of clay, with human skulls placed at short intervals on the top. All the quadrangles were filled with a mob of armed men, some sitting, some lying down asleep, others walking about smoking.

This palace, for the King has many, is divided into different apartments, all on the ground-floor; for though the ridge of the roof is of sufficient height for two stories, yet the thatch is brought down so low as to reach to within four feet of the ground. Along the front is a low piazza, extending the whole length of the building. The main entrance is in the centre of the side of the square. In this entrance the King lay on a fine crimson carpet, trimmed with gold lace.

At first I could not perceive his Majesty, as he was placed so far back under this low dark piazza, although I was told that he was paying his respects to me by motioning with his hand. However, I returned the compliment towards the spot where, according to appearance, he was, surrounded by numbers of his favourite wives. Upon being desired to approach nearer, I was directed by Mayho and some more headmen, who accompanied me, who advanced slowly on their hands and knees, myself in the centre, till within a few yards of his Majesty, whom I could now perfectly see. The King raised himself to a sitting posture from the large crimson silk velvet cushion on which he had been reclining, and very kindly asked me how I felt after sitting with him so long on the previous day. He then ordered a very large canopy, or huge umbrella, richly ornamented, to be stuck up.

A hole was accordingly dug in the ground, and the handle of the umbrella placed therein, the earth beat tightly round it, similar to a large mushroom. A table was also placed under it, with plenty of refreshment, both of solids and liquids.

After I was comfortably seated, his Majesty advanced towards me to drink my health, which was accompanied with loud hurrahs from his people. Provisions were then distributed in all directions, after I had been furnished. At some distance behind me were some Portuguese gentlemen, whom I had observed on the two previous days, but his Majesty seemed to take no notice of them more than of his own people. They were furnished with food in the same manner as his own people, without table or spoon, or any other implement beyond the calabash containing the food. I was a little surprised at this, particularly as I was aware that the Portuguese were the purchasers of many of the King's slaves; but through my interpreter, Mayho thus explained the matter. He said the King was well aware that the pretended friendship of the Portuguese was entirely for selfish and pecuniary motives, whereas the English were not slave-dealers; moreover, that England was an independent nation, and the greatest in the white man's world, as he himself was of the black man's world; and declared that the friendship of one Eng-

lishman was worth that of a thousand Portuguese, and that the King's father had always taught him to respect an Englishman. His Majesty desired me to drink the health of the Queen of England and all her family. I then proposed his Majesty's health in the name of the Queen of England. At this he seemed much pleased, and asked me if the Queen allowed me to drink his health. I replied certainly: and that when a *genuine* compliment is paid to the Queen of England, she always returns it to the meanest of her subjects. This drew a general shout of applause from all his Majesty's head people.

The King now retired to his previous position; and after I had partaken of some eatables, the day's amusement commenced. All the principal men in his Majesty's service were ordered to the front. They were all dressed in their most gaudy dresses, of various shapes and colours, according to the taste of the wearer; but all of the headmen wore silver gauntlets, and a profusion of beads and anklets, generally made of a common small iron chain, in substance similar to a horse-collar chain used in England, but the links merely closed, not welded. Others of lower rank, or second, as they are called (for each headman has his second), were dressed in their military dress. Several of the principal men were also disguised in

masks and clowns' dresses, who performed antics and all manner of buffoonery. Some had on masks resembling the head of a bear, others that of a monkey. Some also displayed a pair of silver horns fixed on the forehead by a bandeau. About ten yards in front of the place where his Majesty lay, three skulls were placed on the ground, forming an equilateral triangle, about three feet apart. At a little distance from the three last-named skulls a calabash was placed, containing several skulls of distinguished men taken or killed in war. On a low stool was also placed a large imitation of a skull in silver, but a very indifferent imitation, of Portuguese manufacture; and seven standards, with ridiculous devices rudely cut from different-coloured cloth, and sewed on them, chiefly relating to their defeat of the Makee or Mahee* people, a country about six days' journey to the northward of Dahomey. The pole of each standard was mounted with the skull of a caboceer, or ruler of a town.

It would appear that the Mahees had many skirmishes with the Dahomans. On one occasion a trading party went from Dahomey to the Mahee country to traffic, but were robbed of their goods and murdered. This circumstance so enraged the King of Dahomey that he immediately collected all his soldiers, male and female,

* Makee is pronounced Mahee in the Kong mountains.

and marched them into the enemy's country. His army, however, returned without either a negotiation or gaining a victory. Whereupon the King ordered his soldiers to return immediately, with orders to destroy the capital within three days. Accordingly, they returned by forced marches, and reached the capital of the Mahee country, which was found to be strongly fenced round with the same prickly bush I have already mentioned. The same night, or early on the following morning, the female soldiers took the place, with the King and his wives, and a great number of his headmen, without any resistance, and in three days the Dahomans (according to their own account) took one hundred and twenty-six towns, making the greater part of the enemy prisoners, and putting to death those who offered any resistance. This was the last great war in which the Dahomans had been engaged.

Near the King were placed several large staffs or walking-sticks, with a skull fixed on the upper end of each, the stick passing through the skull so as to leave about seven inches of the stick above the skull for the hand when walking. The stick is about four and a half feet long, and is used as the ancient pilgrim's staff, being grasped perpendicularly, thumb upwards.

In a short time his Majesty expressed his wish to dance, which was approved of by all the people

by loud yells and the firing of muskets. The King then came forward to the open space in front, where the three skulls were placed, and commenced a dance, or rather elephantine motion, the movement being all in the hips and shoulders. After moving in this way about one minute, his Majesty took one of the staffs and skulls, and recommenced dancing amongst the three skulls, which lay on the ground. He then ordered a cigar to be lighted for him, and began smoking; at the same time he folded his arms, with the staff under his arms, resting with his breast on the top of the skull, and displaying all the indifference possible. He then advanced towards me and gave me a cigar, and again desired me to drink his health. He asked me if I should like to be present on the following day to witness the execution of four (men) traitors, and proffered me the honour of being the executioner. This honour, however, I declined; but he pressed me, observing he should like to see the capability of my sword, which he admired much. I told him that I would rather save a man's life than take it, unless in my own defence. This he admitted was all very good, but asked me whether I should like to save the life of a person who had attempted the life of my Queen? I, of course, replied, Certainly not. Then he told me that the crime of these men was similar. His Majesty now retired, and shortly afterwards

sent me a second supply of provisions in several large calabashes, as wide as the old Winchester bushel, containing fowls, mutton, and pork.

The soups made here are very superior, though perhaps too hotly seasoned for European palates. Owing to the great concourse of people the heat was so great as to cause a drowsiness to come over me in consequence of sitting so long. His Majesty, observing this, very condescendingly forwarded to me a fine silver snuff-box, desiring me to take a pinch, at the same time directing his prime minister to tell me not to remain any longer than I felt inclined; but as I was aware that the whole affair had been got up at an enormous expense, entirely on my account, I returned my thanks, and informed the messenger that I enjoyed it much, and remained a considerable time longer, after which I begged leave to retire. He sent a messenger with his cane, in the evening, to ask how I was after sitting so long.

14th.—Again I visited the palace at half-past eight o'clock. The head, or commander, of one of his Majesty's female regiments, named Godthimay, placed herself on her knees close to the three human skulls; and a regiment (before mentioned) who killed the alligator, presented themselves on their knees in tens, and Godthimay, as their spokesman, harangued the multitude and the King, extolling the valour of these women.

When the harangue was over, Godthimay passed along the kneeling rank, and placing a hand in succession upon the head of each, dismissed them, and ten more occupied their place until this tedious ceremony was completed.

The ceremonies of this day were nearly a repetition of those of yesterday, till the time arrived (an hour before sunset) when the four traitors were brought into the square for execution. They marched through the mob, or assembled crowd, apparently as little concerned as the spectators, who seemed more cheerful than before the prisoners made their appearance, as if they were pleased with the prospect of a change of performance. The prisoners were marched close past me in slow time, consequently I had a good opportunity of minutely observing them, particularly as every person remained on his knees with the exception of myself and the guard who accompanied the prisoners.

They were all young men of the middle size, and appeared to be of one family, or at least of the same tribe of Mahees, who are much better looking than the people of the coast. Each man was gagged with a short piece of wood, with a small strip of white cotton tied round each end of the stick, and passed round the pole. This was to prevent them from speaking. They were arranged in line, kneeling before the King. The head gong-gong

man then gave four beats on the gong, as one—two, and one—two, the upper part of the gong-gong being smaller than the lower, and thus rendering the sounds different, similar to our public clocks in England when striking the quarters. After the four beats, the gong man addressed the culprits upon the enormity of their crime and the justice of their sentence. During this lengthened harangue the gong-gong was struck at short intervals, which gave a sort of awful solemnity to the scene. After this, the men were suddenly marched some distance back from his Majesty, who on this occasion refused to witness the execution. The men were then ordered to kneel in line about nine feet apart, their hands being tied in front of the body, and the elbows held behind by two men, the body of the culprit bending forward. Poor old Mayho, who is an excellent man, was the proper executioner. He held the knife or bill-hook to me, but I again declined the honour; when the old man, at one blow on the back of the neck, divided the head from the body of the first culprit, with the exception of a small portion of the skin, which was separated by passing the knife underneath. Unfortunately, the second man was dreadfully mangled, for the poor fellow, at the moment the blow was struck having raised his head, the knife struck in a slanting direction, and only made a large wound; the next blow caught him

on the back of the head, when the brain protruded. The poor fellow struggled violently. The third stroke caught him across the shoulders, inflicting a dreadful gash. The next caught him on the neck, which was twice repeated. The officer steadying the criminal now lost his hold on account of the blood which rushed from the blood-vessels on all who were near. Poor old Mayho, now quite palsied, took hold of the head, and after twisting it several times round, separated it from the still convulsed and struggling trunk. During the latter part of this disgusting execution the head presented an awful spectacle, the distortion of the features, and the eyeballs completely upturned, giving it a horrid appearance. The next man, poor fellow, with his eyes partially shut and head drooping forward near to the ground, remained all this time in suspense; casting a partial glance on the head which was now close to him, and the trunk dragged close past him, the blood still rushing from it like a fountain. Mayho refused to make another attempt, and another man acted in his stead, and at one blow separated the spinal bone, but did not entirely separate the head from the body. This was finished in the same manner as the first. However, the fourth culprit was not so fortunate, his head not being separated till after three strokes. The body afterwards rolled over several times,

when the blood spurted over my face and clothes.

The most disgusting part of this abominable and barbarous execution was that of an old ill-looking wretch, who, like the numerous vultures, stood with a small calabash in his hand, ready to catch the blood from each individual, which he greedily devoured before it had escaped one minute from the veins. The old wretch had the impudence to put some rum in the blood and ask me to drink; at that moment I could with good heart have sent a bullet through his head. Before execution, the victim is furnished with a clean white cloth to tie round the loins. After decapitation the body is immediately dragged off by the heels, to a large pit at a considerable distance from the town, and thrown therein, and is immediately devoured by wolves and vultures, which are here so ravenous, that they will almost take your victuals from you.

June 20th.—I again visited the palace, to attend the custom or holiday. The commencement of this day's amusement presented a most ludicrous scene. Four tall men, singularly dressed, and with bullocks' tails tied so as to hang over their hips behind, arranged themselves in line, in front of his Majesty, and by passing at the side step, lowering and poising the body by the bend of the knee, caused the tail to make a circular motion of a disgusting appearance. This was considered one of

the most interesting parts of this performance of buffoonery.

I forgot to mention that the palace which I visited this day was different from that which I visited on the two previous days. In the entrances of the doors, human skulls were built in the walls, about half the skull projecting beyond the surface of the walls. After a number of introductions, similar to those on the former days, the King's mother entered the court, preceded by six women, carrying large brass pans filled with skulls, with shank bones fixed perpendicularly to the outside of the pans. Another pan, covered with scarlet cloth, as also two other pots of an oval shape, were carried on the heads of females, with a skull placed on the top, or over the mouth of each. After parading these different vessels round the palace-yard, they were placed on the ground, in front of several calabashes (previously placed there), containing a number of scalps. The King's mother is a stout old lady of about eighty years of age, and was dressed in a rich silk velvet tunic of crimson, with a large robe or train supported by two women. Her head is covered with an immense large Spanish beaver hat of nine inches brim, trimmed with gold lace. The mother placed herself in front of the King, and prostrated herself, throwing dirt or earth over her old grey hair; like all the others, no distinction

being made in her case. The old woman then got up and danced before his Majesty; and at this moment, the King's grandmother arrived. She is still more stout than the mother, and although about one hundred years of age, still preserves her plumpness and symmetry.

These two ancient dames both joined in the dance, and it was certainly surprising to see with what agility they moved, considering their years. They again prostrated themselves, and advanced towards his Majesty on their knees. After a short conversation they distributed a large quantity of cowries amongst their head people. The cowries are all strung on a piece of grass, forty cowries on each string. Fifty strings is a head, and the value of a dollar of silver. The King's principal or favourite wives wear coronets of silver, as well as the wives of his principal ministers. Some of the King's wives also wear a short dagger, similar to those worn by young midshipmen in the British Navy, stuck between a bandeau and the head, point downwards. His Majesty came, as usual, to my canopy and shook hands with me, inquiring after my health, and desired to drink to me; but, after a moment's consideration, proposed the health of the Queen of England first. After drinking to Her Majesty, the King drank my health, and in return I drank his health. His Majesty then desired all his headmen to draw near, and begged me

to play the Jew's harp, with one of which I had presented him. This ancient Israelitish instrument afforded much sweeter music than their bullocks' horns and elephants' teeth, and was consequently much admired. The King next desired me to play while he danced to my music, and afterwards desired me to dance with him and play the while. It was rather a difficult task to dance and play the Jew's harp at the same time. However, as this was considered the highest mark of honour which could possibly be conferred upon me, civility would not allow me to refuse; and although I never was an excellent dancer, I did my best on this occasion, and gained the applause of his Majesty, as well as the deafening applause of all present, except the Ashantees and some Portuguese, who were extremely jealous of me, particularly as the King never condescended to notice any of them during their stay at Dahomey, farther than by sending them provisions daily, as is the King's habit during this annual festival or custom.

This day his Majesty gave away to his people eight hundred head of cowries, and gave me five head and a gallon of rum for dancing with him. He then desired me to play to and dance with his favourite wives, after which he sent plenty of provisions for myself and people. The amusement terminated in a similar way to those on the preceding day, and in the evening I

returned home, through a dense crowd of people scarcely passable for the space of half a mile.

After this I did not visit the palace till the 19th, when his Majesty desired my presence. The ceremony on this day was much the same as on the previous mentioned days, but the King seemed rather disinclined to let me proceed any farther, until I should take a message from him to England for the Queen of England, and that upon my return I should be welcome to go through any part of his kingdom, together with as many Englishmen as I thought proper to bring with me. However, I informed him that it was impossible for me to do so, as I could not return till I had visited and passed over the Kong Mountains; and that my objects were purely scientific, and as much for his benefit as that of others. This, he said, he doubted not, for he would never suspect an Englishman of any thing unjust, or unbecoming the character of so great a nation; but as he himself could not write, he was anxious to send me as his messenger to the Queen of England. I informed him that the Queen of England never received any communication of importance verbally, but that it must be reduced to writing, and I volunteered to be his scribe for that purpose. For this he returned me thanks, and then at once consented to allow me to proceed, promising also to send a guard of honour with me through the Mahee

country, with whom the Dahomans have of late been at war. He seems very doubtful of my safety beyond his capital, although he does not confess it. He has so lately conquered that country, that I do not believe the King has great confidence in them, farther than their dread of the law compels them. However, he informed me that I must wait a week or ten days, till he could arrange which of the caboceers, or headmen, to send with me.

From this period till my march for the Kong Mountains I passed my time heavily, rarely taking any exercise, on account of the ridiculous custom of being obliged to turn out of the road if any of the King's wives should meet you. They are in all parts of the town and neighbourhood, employed on different domestic occupations, but principally in carrying food in immense gourds or calabashes on the head, containing provisions for the King's ministers and principal men, who, although they live in their own houses with their families, yet are all furnished with food by the King, which is prepared in the palace.

The approach of the King's wives is always announced by the ringing of a small bell, which is carried by a female servant or slave, who invariably precedes them. The moment this bell is heard all persons, whether male or female, turn their backs, but the males must retire to

a certain distance. In passing through the town this is one of the most intolerable nuisances. Several other customs exist, one or two of which it may be well to mention. On passing many different places, either in hammock or on horse-back, the traveller is obliged to get out and walk, and upon passing out of the town from Dahomey towards the coast, are a sort of custom-houses, where your pass is demanded.

This is all very well, but the nuisance does not end here. Should you have a number of fowls as presents in Dahomey (which is mostly the case) and should any one of the cocks crow in passing, or while you wait to be interrogated by the appointed officer, the cock is seized as the King's property; or if more than one crow, the offenders, as many as they may be, are seized. However, I am quite convinced from what I have already seen of the King, that he might easily be persuaded to abolish many of these ridiculous observances. In fact, he is doing away with many absurd customs: for instance, until last year the King's head caboceers were allowed, upon the death of any of their relations, to sacrifice as many of their own domestic slaves as they choose; but this year he has abolished that power in the caboceers. I believe this humane change has been principally brought about through the advice of Mr. Freeman, who is much in favour with his Majesty.

The King has also abolished through the whole of his extensive dominions (both Dahoman and Malice) the power of putting to death any criminal found guilty of any crime affecting life or limb. The criminal has now the power of appeal to a court established at Dahomey, for the purpose of hearing such cases. I have myself been present at two of these appeals. The parties, in one instance, were from the Kong Mountains, considered in this country a very great distance off. His Majesty acted as judge, and, although both parties had previously been condemned to death, they were liberated by him; his Majesty objecting to the efficiency of the evidence against the accused. The King's cross-questions to the witnesses were very shrewd.

The King possesses talent far beyond the generality of his subjects; in fact, his noble mind seems to have been formed to govern. His subjects seem happy and contented under his government; particularly *now*, since slaves are only extorted from neighbouring kingdoms, who are either deemed hostile, or declared such through some frivolous excuse. But as soon as this source of revenue is exhausted, in all probability recourse will be had to contributions upon his own subjects. Domestic slavery to the native is, as I have frequently observed, nothing more in

the interior than easy servitude ; the slave in the Mahee country is the same as one of the family. They eat together, work together, and are in every way associated together as one family. Their labour is always easy, and they are much better provided for than they could provide for themselves.

But the horrors of the slave-trade commence when the kings of any country or kingdom of any magnitude are in want of slaves. Some pretence is then made for making what they call war, although it is nothing more than a slave-hunt. This is conducted in the following manner :—The point of attack is probably reconnoitred by one individual during the day, who then retires, most likely unsuspected of any evil design. The attacking party is afterwards marched close to the town, and about two hours before daybreak an impetuous rush is made upon the place, which is (in the interior) generally surrounded by a broad close-growing fence of a very dangerous prickly bush, about fifteen feet high. Such, however, is the practice and dexterity of the King of Dahomey's female soldiers, that this terrible fence is scarcely deemed an obstacle. Then commences the dreadful slaughter and capture. The people, in general, are asleep when the attack is begun, and when roused so suddenly, and perhaps their house already on fire, make some resistance, whereupon they are instantly put to death.

The others are tied round the neck with a piece of small grass rope, each soldier having that article as well as a piece of chalk. Each soldier uses his own private mark on the back of as many slaves as he may capture, and also secures the scalps of as many as he murders in the attack. After all is over, these slaves and scalps are presented to the King or chief, who gives each soldier according to the amount of his capture a sum of cowries, as well as allows him to attach a cowrie to the stock of his gun, which is reckoned an honourable distinction, and is given as medals to civilized armies.

Their method of fixing these cowries to the stock of the gun is as follows:—The gun-stock is first smeared with blood from the victim (when time will allow), coat after coat, until a certain thickness is obtained; the cowrie is then pressed into the crust of blood, which soon dries. Some of the old soldiers have their gun-stocks entirely covered with cowries, although one cowrie only is given for each victim. This is a very cruel regulation, as it not only stimulates the soldier individually to murder, but also excites a jealousy in those who do not possess an equal number of distinctions, so that when the next opportunity occurs, it is still more marked by unrelenting cruelty.

Next to murder we may consider the cruelty of tearing away the husband from the wife, and children from the parent, without the slightest remorse. It is true, the soldiers themselves have many of them experienced the same treatment, although this circumstance does not alter the atrocity of the proceeding. It is well, indeed, for these unfortunate creatures, that Nature has withheld from them the finer and warmer feelings of our nature possessed by their paler brethren. It will seem strange to many, but it is no less true, that the majority of Africans will sell their own offspring for a good price, with much less reluctance than an Englishman would part with a favourite dog. I have often been surprised to observe how soon these newly captured slaves forget their situation and sorrows. When a meal of kankie and palm-oil is put before them all their sorrow seems to be forgotten.

In fact, it can scarcely be otherwise, when we reflect upon the example always before their eyes. One man has as many wives as he can purchase or support; I should rather say, the wives support the husband, for they do all the laborious part of the work, while the husband, as I have before stated, lies at home, indulging in tobacco and rum, or in gambling. All the neighbouring markets are attended by the wives, with different

articles for sale, and the profits are handed over to the husband. The husband also disposes of any of his wives when he chooses, as well as the children, so that when you see a family by one man collected together, you are quite unable to trace any family likeness of one to another; and their regard for each other is just as little as between strangers in England.

June 22d.—The King sent me a very fine young bull, a goat, and two fowls, two bags of meal, and one of salt; and on the following day Mayho sent me a fine goat and two fowls.

24th.—I rode out; but was much annoyed by being obliged to get off my horse at certain places to walk. On the 27th I detected my Sierra Leone man, who acted as my interpreter, stealing cowries, although I gave him good pay and food; the same as I partook of myself. This same man had received a good English education; it appears, however, that nothing can make an African honest at heart.

On the 29th the King sent for me, and expressed his want of a large bed-cover, fifteen feet by six, of red and blue velvet, showing me the pattern, as well as many other rich patterns. On the 30th he again sent for me, requesting me to give his compliments to the Queen of England, and beg her to send him fifty yards of red, white, blue,

and green silk. He also showed me numerous patterns of rich silk and silk velvet robes, richly embroidered with gold. This day he also showed me a very singular piece of patchwork, composed of pieces of cloth from every part of the world where cloth is manufactured. It was of all colours, and was six hundred yards long by two yards wide. The King takes great pride in this noble piece of patchwork.

July 2d.—A very singular and interesting incident occurred to my Sierra Leone servant. I sent him out to market to purchase some vegetables, accompanied by another man to carry what he might purchase, as these Sierra Leone black gentry (liberated slaves) are too proud to carry anything when passing along the market. He observed an old woman, whom he thought much to resemble his mother. The poor old woman, too, scrutinized his features with much interest. To the great surprise of both, they soon recognised in each other a mother and son. This circumstance would not have come to my knowledge had the mother and her daughter not called at the gate of my house on the following day, requesting to see her son. It happened to be my dinner-hour, and he was absent. Not knowing the reason of his absence at the time when he knew I required him, I asked for an explanation.

He then reluctantly told me that his mother had called upon him. As I was very incredulous about the truth of this, for this is a very frequent pretence when an excuse is required, I desired to see her. Accordingly the poor old woman, with her daughter and son-in-law, were introduced to me, and I desired them to sit down, that I might have an opportunity of learning something of their history. I asked my servant why he had not mentioned the circumstance on the previous day, whereupon he confessed that he was ashamed to introduce his own mother, because she was old and coarsely clad.

Their history ran as follows:—About twenty years ago the son, my interpreter, was captured in the Annagoo country, and was carried down to the coast, not by the Dahomans, but by the King of Badagry's people. From Badagry he was shipped on board a slaver for the Brazils, but the ship was taken by an English cruiser, and brought into Sierra Leone. Here, with five hundred more, he was liberated and educated; but, unfortunately, his education proved more to his disadvantage than otherwise, as it tended to aid his villanous disposition. This man being young at the time of his capture could give me no information respecting his native place, consequently no person knew his country, but which could only be

ascertained by the scars or marks on the face, with which each country distinguishes its own people. The Yarriba people are very much disfigured; but the Dahomans are not marked at all, except such marks or tattooing as the parents may choose to inflict on the lower parts of the person by way of ornament.

Within the last few years the power of the King of Dahomey has rapidly increased, while that of the neighbouring kings and chiefs has decreased in the same proportion; and the kingdom of Dahomey greatly enlarged, sometimes by the addition of twenty towns, and a large extent of country to his dominions, during his annual war, or rather slave-hunt, which is (as I have before stated) carried on with great cruelty and barbarity. This has been probably more particularly cruel on account of all the surrounding kings and chiefs having declared an alliance with each other, and a determination to make a distaff of the King of Dahomey's head. Such a declaration is always sufficient for the Dahomans to go to war against any country; and, as the King is very powerful, he is always successful; and consequently, possesses a great number of slaves. About six years ago the Annagoos made an attack on one of the Dahoman frontier towns, committing every species of cruelty. In consequence of this, the King of

Dahomey determined to punish them, which he effectually did. The Annagoos are a very bad people. Amongst the prisoners taken were the mother and sister of my servant already mentioned. In consequence of the age of the mother, she was placed in one of the country palaces, merely to assist in keeping it clean. They had plenty of food, and the privilege of attending any of the neighbouring markets they may think proper. By this means the prisoners (if they may be so termed) obtain any little private luxury. The King is very kind both to his slaves and free people. Although no individual in his dominion can be called free, yet a great distinction is made. His domestic slaves perform all the laborious duties of the household; yet his nobles and head men and women are not less subservient to him in their different capacities.—But I am digressing. Twenty years had now elapsed since the son had been separated from his mother, and he supposed his mother to be long since dead; while the mother was quite ignorant of the fate of her son. I felt great interest in this meeting; but such is the general brutality of nature in these slave countries, that the meeting seemed to excite little of the warmer feelings of human nature; in fact, they seemed to regard the circumstance as no more than any ordinary event. I asked

my servant if he wished his mother to be liberated, and allowed to go home with him to Whydah, his residence. At first he seemed grateful for the proposal; but, after a few days, when his mother again called, and I offered to make a request to the King to grant his mother and sister their liberty, he began to hesitate and calculate the additional expense which it would entail upon himself. Although this could not exceed one half-penny per day, he said, that as they seemed to be comfortable, they had better remain where they were.

Such was the filial gratitude of an educated African, who had not seen his parent for nearly twenty years; and, although the poor old mother was anxious to be with her son, the heartless fellow seemed glad to shake off the connexion, and to avoid the opportunity, which under such circumstances seldom occurs, of being reunited with the parent from whom he had been so ruthlessly torn.

July 3d.—My white servant being without shoes, I this day made him a pair of untanned bullock's hide. According to his statement, he was a French Canadian. He came to me from an American brig which arrived at Whydah with a cargo of tobacco. The vessel was sold by the captain for four thousand dollars to the Portuguese,

and sailed in a few days after with six hundred slaves on board. This circumstance, it will be recollected, is noticed in a former part of my Journal. My servant, at first, appeared a very good trust-worthy man, and boasted greatly of his courage and qualifications for travelling in Africa. But I observed to-day that he had been drinking, and determined to watch him. Going shortly afterwards into my store-room I caught him in the act of stealing cowries; he had also stuffed the sleeve of my coat, which was laying on a bamboo-table, with them. Upon remonstrating with him, he flew into a violent passion, using the most disgusting language, and at the same time drawing a butcher's clasp-knife, with which I had entrusted him, and with which he threatened to murder me. It was now time to act on the defensive. I succeeded in knocking him down, and, after having secured the knife, I flogged him with a small riding-whip, and discharged him. With all his boasted valour, he was afraid to return alone to Whydah, and still more afraid to remain in Dahomey, till my return from the Kong Mountains. I had not determined on making any report of the circumstance to any person of power in Dahomey, lest it might act prejudicially in regard to the good opinion formed of Englishmen; but to my

surprise, in less than an hour after the occurrence had taken place, the King despatched my friend Mayho to ascertain the facts of the whole affair.

After hearing my story, I could not help admiring his shrewdness and anxiety to investigate the affair honestly. Calling the fellow into the apartment, he questioned him. The inquiry lasted a full hour; after which, Mayho addressed my servant as follows:—“Maurice,” (such was his name,) “I have carefully investigated this affair; and, from your own confession, I find you guilty of one of the greatest crimes you could commit against the Dahoman laws, and I regret much to find a white man guilty of such a crime. However, I am very glad to find that you are not an Englishman. Had you been a black man, your head would have been struck off to-morrow; and even now, if your master makes a formal complaint to the King, your punishment will be severe. However, I shall leave the case entirely to the discretion of your master.”

Upon hearing this, I begged that no more notice might be taken of the affair, and at the same time, gave him some cowries to pay his expenses from Dahomey to Whydah. But he was afraid to go by himself. He begged Mayho to allow him a person to accompany him. This request, how-

ever, was peremptorily refused, and he was assured, that if he were such a coward as not to dare to go by himself, he was not worthy of any indulgence. He was told he might remain at Dahomey till my return from the Kong Mountains, or accompany me, if I thought proper. The poor creature acknowledged his dread of accompanying me to the Kong Mountains, and also his fear of remaining alone in Dahomey till my return. Whereupon Mayho got so exasperated with the coward, that he declared he would compel him to accompany me to the mountains. This declaration, of course, left him no alternative. So, accordingly, the matter was arranged.

CHAPTER XIII.

Departure for the Kong Mountains—My Dahoman Guards and their several Duties—The King's Wife—Neighbouring Krooms—Soil and Aspect of the Country—Varied Scenery—Cana—Bobay—Illness of my Servant—Immense Blocks of Granite—Custom-house—Duties imposed—Milder Laws established—Dtheno—Travelling Traders—The Azowah—Destruction of the Shea Butter-tree—Its Manufacture declared to be lawful—Description of this Tree—Immense Mountains—Ruins of Managlwa—Destruction of that Town by the Dahomans—Beautiful Scenery—Markets—Setta Dean—Reception by the Caboccer—Dance performed by him—Setta—Serenade—Supply of Provisions—Custom of Tasting—The Caboccer's Speech—The Natives expert as Cooks—Variety of Food—Palm Oil—Ocro—Presents from the Caboccer—The Widow's Mite—Harmless Deception—Presents to the Natives—Dance performed by the Soldiers—Situation of Setta; its Soil, &c.—Its Population.

JULY 9TH.—According to a previous arrangement with his Majesty respecting my journey to the Kong Mountains, which are situated in the Mahee country, at an early hour this morning I was awoke by the sound of drums and horns from a band assembled in my court-yard. My good old friend Mayho entered my apartment soon after, announcing that my guard was all ready for the march. Upon this, I made preparations for

getting my own people ready as quickly as possible. This was no easy task, for the African is naturally slow and indolent, and my people, moreover, were principally people from Whydah, who, like most of their race, are great cowards when at any distance from their own country; more especially were they so on this occasion, as they knew I was going through the Mahee country, the inhabitants of which were known to be a fierce and warlike people. However, after some considerable delay and grumbling, I got myself and party ready; but even then several of the lazy fellows raised an objection to proceeding, alleging that their loads were not well proportioned. Upon using the horsewhip, however, pretty sharply amongst them, I enforced obedience.

The captain of my guard begged me not to trouble myself to punish the men, telling me that I had merely to point out any individual who might show any inclination to disobedience or misconduct, and he would punish him severely. He said he was well acquainted with the character of the Whydah people; "Besides," he observed, "the King had given him strict orders to watch them narrowly, on account of their thievish propensities." This being said in the presence of all the Whydah people seemed to take them much aback; but it had an excellent effect, as all my

orders were given through the captain of my guard. They were also aware that in Dahomey theft is punishable with death. After Mayho had fallen in, and inspected the guard, I was desired to parade them myself, which, to satisfy myself of the efficiency of the men and their equipments, as well as to see their store of ammunition, I did.

My guard I found consisted of a hundred picked men, who had all been through the late wars in that part of the Kong Mountains which I was now about to visit. This arrangement was made with a view to give me every information respecting the country we might pass through. After my inspection, Mayho, as well as the officers, seemed much gratified to find that every thing was to my entire satisfaction. Mayho next called out all the officers and petty officers of my guard, explaining the several duties of the various ranks. Amongst them were two whose duties were of a very peculiar nature. The first was a caboceer, a man of great trust, and a native of the Mahee country, through which I should pass. He was selected on account of his superior knowledge of that country. His instructions were to walk in advance of my horse's head, not more than five yards, so as to be near me, to answer any inquiry I might make respecting the country. His duty

was also to point out, by striking with a stick, any obstacle in the narrow paths* along which we should pass, so as to prevent my horse stumbling.

The next person who was introduced had the rank or title of the *King's Wife*. This rank seemed to me to be very absurd, for the individual was an uncommonly fine young man. I was soon made aware on what account this title was given, and its nature. Mayho explained to me that a certain number of men, the most trustworthy, were selected from the King's household to accompany different divisions of the army when on any particular expedition. These men are called King's wives on account of the reliance and trust placed in them. Their duty is to report, by private messenger to the King, any misconduct or neglect of the superior officers; but in this instance, his orders were to receive any report or complaint I might have to advance against my captain, or any caboccer or chief in any of the towns through which I might pass. In the event of my making any complaint, a messenger, who is also sworn, is despatched to head-quarters, to report it to the King.

His Majesty had given orders that as soon as

* The paths are so narrow in most instances as only to admit of one foot at a time, and are sometimes two feet deep.

I was quite ready to march, a messenger, who was in waiting, should be despatched to the palace to inform him. The messenger, upon his return, communicated the King's desire that I should remain a few minutes longer, when, to my surprise, another messenger arrived with two more heads of cowries and a keg of rum, although he had already furnished me with a good supply. The King had made arrangements that, upon my passing through my own gate to commence the march, one gun was to be fired as a warning; upon which, twenty-one guns of heavy ordnance were fired in succession, accompanied with a continuous rattle of small arms, my band striking up. One half of my guard marched behind me, the other in front. Thus we marched for the Kong Mountains. Mayho, and several more of the King's household and principal caboceers, as well as many of the principal traders and merchants of the town of Abomey, accompanied me about a mile on the road, all of whom seemed to evince a lively interest in my safety and success. After passing through the gates of the town, my friends halted, and gave me a hearty shake of the hand, wishing me every success. They then returned, and I resumed my journey.

The path, after leaving the gates of the town a few yards, turns short from S.E. to N., and passes

through beautifully cultivated fields of corn of various sorts, as well as many different sorts of beans and peas. Many sorts of ground beans are also cultivated here, some of the size and shape of a large marble, and of a delicious flavour, commonly used by the natives in soups and stews, as well as separately. This scene was truly beautiful, the corn full six feet in height, with beautiful white and red flowers about a foot in height, so numerous that at a little distance the ground appeared a continuous bed of flowers. At short distances were many small but neat krooms, from which issued the sable inhabitants to get a sight of the King's stranger, as they termed me. Many of the most courageous came close to the path to pay respect to me. I cannot express the delight I now felt, to find myself, after all my disappointments, marchings and countermarchings, fairly on the road to the far-famed Mountains of Kong, and under such favourable auspices, more especially after the King of Ashantee had refused to let me pass through his country for the purpose.

After marching seven and a half miles through the sort of country I have described, a large town, bearing N.W., was pointed out to me, distant two miles from the path. My principal guide informed me that several markets were held there, as well as a market kept close to the path, where pro-

visions ready cooked, as well as peto, are sold for the accommodation of travellers. At eight miles we found ironstone in a fused state. The soil now changed from a red or brown colour to a rich black loam, still well cultivated, in drills,—a convincing proof of the advantages derived from the instruction of many of the returned slaves from the Brazils. Here some of the stalks of corn measured seven and eight feet in height. Rice is also grown here to a considerable extent, and, like some other kinds of grain, gives four crops in twelve moons, or twelve months, as stated by the natives.

After marching eleven miles, we passed over low hills running in a range from N.W. to S.E. as far as the eye could reach, the sight of which was gratifying and refreshing to me, having been now so long used to the same dull, level country. On reaching the top of these hills, though low in comparison with our Scottish mountains, I felt as if released from confinement. We halted for a few minutes to take the bearing of some objects, which my guide pointed out as close to the path, several miles ahead. On looking round, and contemplating the rich and varied scenery, peculiar colour of the sky, and singularly formed clouds, like those of northern latitudes, my thoughts involuntarily stole back for a moment to old Albion,

and I compared the scene now before me with my early recollections of home. No sound of the creaking wain or clattering axle, no voice of the ploughboy guiding his team, broke upon the ear, nor clean farmhouse on mountain side—all around me was silent as death; and although I was on the highest eminence of these hills, not a bough or leaf was in motion—no bird of any description was to be seen or heard. All was silent as the grave. Every thing of animal life seemed glad to conceal itself in the shade until the decline of the sun.

We again resumed the march, and at twelve miles the path to Cana branched off to the right. Cana is the first large town on the main road from Abomey to Whydah. After a short journey from the above place, we arrived at a romantic little kroom, surrounded by large and splendid trees and beautiful shrubs. The market-place in front of the town was completely shaded from the oppressive rays of the sun. Here we found waiting for us some of our luggage-carriers, who had been sent on in advance. My Whydah men seemed quite fatigued, although their load was light in comparison to the size of the men; while on the contrary, the women carriers belonging to the principal officers of my guard were quite fresh and full of joke, apparently quite delighted with their journey.

After we had seated ourselves in the market-place, provisions in abundance were placed before us, with plenty of water and pecto. Here I was visited by all the head men and women of the kroom, who declared themselves highly gratified at having the honour of entertaining the King's stranger. This kroom is named Bobay, and stands on a gentle rise, and is of very picturesque appearance, and very clean.

After remaining about an hour in Bobay we recommenced our journey. The path was now very narrow, and was nearly closed in with shrubs on each side. After leaving this kroom about half a mile the road became clearer. At this place we met a small caravan, or trading party, proceeding in an opposite direction to ourselves. They seemed very much surprised at seeing me, as well as my white man, who, with all his boasting, seemed now quite exhausted. I therefore dismounted and allowed him to take my horse to enable him to get along. We were now on the summit of the hilly ground, which had been on the rise ever since we left the kroom. The scene and country again became open and very interesting, with a beautiful valley about two miles to the northward, and on the opposite side of the valley a low range of hills running from S.W. to N.E. The path now, at thirteen miles and a half, changed from E.N.E.

to N. 30° towards E. ; and in the bottom of the valley was a beautifully romantic glen-stream running to the westward, overhung with many parasitical plants. The sound of the water falling over one block of granite after another had a pleasing effect as it burst upon my lonely ear, long unaccustomed to such pleasing music of early days in my own native Scottish glens.

I could not help stopping a minute to gaze on the scene now before me. I may be excused for confessing that all my boyish feelings seemed to rush around me, and for a moment to overwhelm my heart. It was but momentary, however, and perhaps it is well that the mind of the traveller becomes hardened, otherwise he would be unfit for the performance of his arduous duty.

After passing a short distance farther through the bush, composed chiefly of the shea butter-tree, as well as the male and female palm, with many other shrubs of the laurel species, we again came upon an open plain, with the exception of a few clumps here and there sprinkled over the surface, giving it the appearance of a gentleman's park in England, were it not for the length and rankness of the grass, which is here never less than three or four feet. Mountains richly wooded now broke upon the view, bearing E.N.E., and about eight hundred feet high, with here and there

immense blocks of granite, showing their crowns above some of the tallest trees. The soil here, at fifteen miles, changed, and I observed small blocks or boulders of granite and whinstone, with a thin stratum of sandy clay of a drab colour. At nineteen miles the path again changed to N.E., and at twenty miles we came upon the small kroom of Dtheno, through which the path runs.

In this kroom is a custom-house for collecting the duties upon all goods carried through it, from whatever part they come. The heaviest duties are imposed upon tobacco and rum, which are brought from the coast in great quantities: these goods are chiefly of Brazilian and American manufacture. The rum is invariably of a very bad quality. A small duty is also imposed upon all regular traders, even on articles of native growth or manufacture. This is imposed upon the trader instead of license, and is considered more fair to the trader; for should he not sell his goods he has not the duty to pay; but, on the other hand, if he has a good trade, he can afford to pay the low rates of duty. These custom-house establishments are invariably the property of some one of the King of Dahomey's ministers, as well as all the duties collected at such establishments. They are established in all the most convenient parts of certain districts, by the same

rule as our turnpike-gates in England, so that every person must pass through them. These customs are bestowed by the King as the rewards of conquest upon his caboceers,—each of his Majesty's cabinet ministers, or caboceers, having an army of his own; and when a war takes place, and the Dahomans prove victorious, the town taken is considered as belonging to the minister or caboceer whose soldiers capture the town; or rather, his right of monopolizing the trade of the town is established, so far as to supply it himself with all goods of British manufacture or produce, with the exception of such traders as have obtained permits as a proof of their having paid the duty. The trade is entrusted to the most confidential or head men belonging to the caboceer owning the trade. I found them invariably clever, intelligent, and generous people. The King also imposes upon each caboceer a slight duty, according to the amount of their trade.

I ought also to mention that in many instances during the late wars between the Mahees and the Dahomans, when any of the caboceers of the former surrendered their towns without fighting, the King of Dahomey allowed them to retain their own trade unmolested, and at the same time reduced the duties to the same scale as the Dahomans themselves, and also after a time supplied their soldiers with fire-arms, having previously

no arms but bows and arrows. The King of Dahomey commands the whole of the European trade from the coast.

I was very much pleased to find that the King had established much better and milder laws than existed formerly. These are of an European character, with which the generality of the natives seem very well satisfied. This custom-house and kroom belonged to Mayho, prime minister of the King of Dahomey. I always found him to be a man of great talent and benevolence. Arrangements had, doubtless, been previously made, so that at this place, Dtheno, we again found abundance of refreshment, such as plenty of kankie and peto, for myself and soldiers, with good water. For myself and private servants, as well as the principal officers of my guard, abundance of roast and stewed fowls, Muscovy ducks, and Guinea fowls, were provided.

At this place we found numerous traders from different parts of the country, resting their carriers until their several duties were paid and permits obtained. The duties are either paid in kind or cowries. After remaining about three-quarters of an hour under the shade of some trees of gigantic size, both with regard to trunk, limb, and leaf, during which time the usual civilities of prostration and throwing dust over the head were performed,

as acknowledging my superiority, and their own obedience to the King's English stranger, and distributing some Jew's-harps, needles, and thimbles, we bade our generous hosts farewell, amidst assurances of their pleasure and satisfaction at seeing me, and faithful promise to treat me even better should I ever again favour them with a visit.

At twenty-three miles we crossed a small stream, called Azowah, running from east to west, the bed consisting of blocks of granite of irregular form and size. The trees here were stunted and scrubby, owing to the annual burning of the grass, which is done partly with a view of consuming the decayed vegetable matter, and partly to destroy the vegetative powers of the shea butter-tree. The destruction of this tree is a suggestion of the Spanish and Portuguese slave-dealers, the shea butter having formerly been a considerable article of trade amongst the natives, and it was feared would become one of European trade, and tend to attract the attention of the natives to its manufacture to the injury of the slave-trade. The slave-dealers of Whydah consequently made interest with the King of Dahomey to impose a heavy duty upon the shea butter exposed in the markets for sale. Still the demand of the natives was so great for this article, that even the duty imposed did not

discourage them from the manufacture of it, till this duty was doubled. This imposition being too heavy, caused the poor natives to establish a system of smuggling, and, with a view to abolish smuggling, strict orders were issued to burn every tree in the kingdom of Dahomey, as well as those of the Mahee country subject to the King of Dahomey. Still, with all the burning, vegetation is so rapid and powerful, that much of the above article is still produced. In consequence of the manufacture being declared illegal, numerous petitions were presented to his Majesty, or rather verbally conveyed to him, declaring the medical properties of the shea butter, and its beneficial use as an ointment, as well as a stomachic tonic; and his Majesty, with his exemplary goodness of heart, notwithstanding the solicitations of the most influential slave-dealers, declared the manufacture of a certain quantity (sufficient for the above-named purpose) to be lawful throughout the whole of his dominions.

A short description of the shea butter-tree and plant may interest some of my readers. This tree has much of the character of the laurel, but grows to the height of eighteen or twenty feet. Its leaf is somewhat longer than the laurel, and is a little broader at the point; the edges of the leaf are gently curved, and are of a dark sap green

colour. The nut is of the form and size of a pigeon's egg, and when ripe is of a dun or light brown colour. The substance of the shell is about that of an egg, and the kernel completely fills the shell. When new it is of a white drab colour, but if long kept becomes the colour of chocolate. The kernel, when new, is nearly all butter, which is extracted in the following manner:—The shell is crushed from the kernel, which is also crushed, and then a quantity is put into an earthen pot or pan, placed over the fire with a portion of water and the nut kernels. After boiling slowly about half an hour the whole is strained through a grass mat into a clean vessel, when it is allowed to cool. Then, after straining the fibrous part from it, it is put into a grass bag and pressed so as to obtain all the oil or butter. This is poured into the first vessel along with the first-mentioned portion, and when cold is about the consistence of butter.

The nuts hang in bunches from the different boughs, but each nut has its own fibre, about seven or eight inches long, and about the thickness and colour of whip-cord. The nut is attached to the fibre in a very singular manner. The end of the fibre is concealed by a thin membrane about half an inch wide and three quarters of an inch long. This membrane is attached to the side of the nut,

and when ripe relinquishes its hold, and the nut falls to the ground, when it is gathered for use. A good-sized healthy tree will yield about a bushel of nuts, but the greater number are not so prolific. The trees close to the stream present a more healthy appearance, probably on account of being better watered, and the fire being less powerful close to the stream.

Besides the shea butter-tree, there are many other beautiful trees, amongst which I observed the tamarind, the quashie, and different species of the mimosa, and running plants. The aloe is also in great abundance here, and in seed.

At twenty-four miles we crossed a valley running N.W. and S.E. This valley is thickly wooded with large trees, beautifully adorned with various running plants and thick underwood, so much so as nearly to close up the path, which is, as I have described already, at all times very narrow. At twenty-five miles, bearing NN.E. and on the left of the path, are immense mountains or blocks of granite with large detached fragments on the summit. At twenty-six miles and a half, and four miles to the eastward, are the ruins of a former large town, named Managlwá. This town was romantically situated on an elevated position amongst an immense cluster of singularly formed spiral rocks, much resembling broken columns or spires

of several hundred feet in height, rising far above the tops of the tall and beautiful trees which clothe the mountain. This town was one of the frontier, or first towns in the Mahee country, and one of the first which was destroyed by the Dahomans after the Mahees declared war against the King of Dahomey. My guide informed me that the whole of the population were either killed or taken as slaves, and the town set on fire. The inhabitants are said to have fought desperately, preferring death to defeat. The King and all his caboceers or headmen were killed, and their heads are still preserved at Dahomey as trophies of victory.

At twenty-seven miles, bearing N. 10° W. the country again became level, and presented cultivated patches at intervals along the path, with small krooms at short distances. The scenery now became beautiful and striking, the mountains to the east, north, and west, forming an amphitheatre. Close to the main path, along which we were passing, are small markets, held at the terminus or junction of minor paths, branching off to small towns or krooms at some distance. The articles exposed in these markets for sale are generally very limited, consisting chiefly of provisions and articles necessary on the journey, such as kankie, roast beef, and elephants' flesh, as well as boiled

pork and goats' flesh; and the following vegetables ready cooked, yams, manioc, and sometimes sweet potatoes. The native traveller may for a few cowries obtain refreshment at these places. Water is sold at these markets at a very high price, as well as peto.

At thirty-two miles, bearing north, the country is still open and level close to the base of the mountains, at this place distant eastward four miles, westward eight miles, and north twelve miles. At thirty-three miles we arrived at Setta Dean, so named after the family, or headman residing here as collector of the customs. This custom-house belongs to Mayho, the King of Dahomey's prime minister. Here is a fine quadrangular court-yard, three sides of which are formed by a close broad hedge of various shrubs, with an outer hedge of the prickly bush, the remaining side composed of different apartments or huts, for the accommodation of the officers of customs, and also for carriers of goods, who may be weary and unable to proceed farther till recovered from their fatigue. Here is also a guard of soldiers, who perform similar duties to our police-officers in England, and afford protection to all goods deposited in their charge.

In this place we were again supplied with plenty of provision, water, and peto, and were desired to remain till the caboccer of Setta, a large town one

mile farther, where we were to lodge for the night, should come and meet us, and take us into the town with military honours. My people were now all much fatigued after thirty-three miles march on a very narrow and rough path, and under a tropical sun, so that they were glad of the opportunity thus afforded them to obtain a little rest.

After remaining an hour, the approach of the caboceer of Setta and his soldiers was announced by the noise of their drums and horns, formed of small elephants' teeth. My soldiers were now ordered again to fall in, in marching order, and to receive the caboceer, who in a short time afterwards entered the quadrangle, escorted by about two hundred well-armed soldiers. The troops were drawn up similar to our form of relieving guard. The caboceer, his captain, and other officers, advanced to the front till within four paces of the spot where I stood. They then prostrated themselves on the ground. Raising themselves to their knees, they remained in a kneeling posture, rubbing themselves over the head and arms with dust; and then again they stooped to kiss the dust in token of humiliation and submission to the King's stranger, and Queen of England's captain, as they called me.

After the usual complimentary palaver on such

occasions, the caboceer and soldiers of Setta commenced dancing to their rude music. Their dances, however, are anything but what an Englishman would consider dancing, for they very seldom use their feet, but go through a number of fanciful movements, according to the taste of the individual performers. The principal movements are by throwing the shoulders backwards and forwards, in some degree resembling the gymnastic exercise used in drilling our English soldier in order to expand the chest, but much quicker. Another motion used by them, which is considered the most amusing in the dance, is a rotatory movement of the hips, changing to a backward and forward motion of a most disgusting description. After this party had performed their dance, my guard went through a similar dance.

It was now about sunset, and I was very anxious to proceed, for, as my readers will recollect, there is no twilight within the tropics, therefore as soon as the sun disappears from the horizon all becomes dark as midnight. We accordingly resumed our march, and at thirty-four miles arrived at the town of Setta, where we were met by all the inhabitants. A number of the caboceer's people met us with torches, it being rather dark. Here the crowd was so great, as to prevent my progress for upwards of half an hour. After this we

advanced to the market-place, which is under the shade of three large trees, with branches of enormous extent. Here they again commenced dancing, being generally joined by the inhabitants of the town. I now dismounted, and seated myself under one of the trees till this ceremony was finished, when I presented the captain of each party of soldiers with a couple of flasks of rum, to give a dram to each of their men, or at least to give them each a taste; after which, we were shown to our quarters. These were much better than I expected. Being very tired, I was soon stretched on my mat, but was much disturbed by the caboceer sending a band of picked musicians, with instruments something similar to the hautboy. Although the sounds were not void of melody, still their absence to me at this time would have been a great relief; but as I knew they were sent with a view to amuse me, I bore the annoyance with tolerable grace.

In about an hour after entering my quarters, numerous large calabashes of provisions of various descriptions, with plenty of peto and water, were brought into the court-yard, and placed in front of my quarters. This was a present from the caboceer for myself and soldiers. After the usual forms of tasting had been gone through, I ordered

the provision to be divided amongst my soldiers and private servants, of course reserving some for myself. Finding my servant Maurice in a feverish state I gave him some medicine, in hopes that a night's rest might improve his condition, and after a few visits from different parties of influence in Setta, I was allowed to retire to rest. I felt thankful to be left alone, and in a few minutes fell asleep, forgetting once more the anxieties and cares of my chequered life. My slumbers were sweet and refreshing, and my little mat was to me equal to a bed of down, and much more convenient, as it could be rolled up like a sheet of paper, and carried in the hand.

July 10th.—Early in the morning, I was awakened by the caboccer's messenger, who had been sent to inquire after my health. Thank God, I was well and quite refreshed, and felt no longer the fatigue of the previous day's journey. Not so, however, my poor white servant: he was still suffering much, and was in a high fever. I again administered James's fever powder and sedative of opium. Soon after the messenger's return the caboccer and principal officers came to my house, or quarters, to pay their morning compliments, and palaver for about three quarters of an hour. During this time I gave each of them a glass of rum. They then retired, and in a short time

returned with an enormous quantity of provisions for our breakfast. The dishes, or calabashes, containing the food, were all placed on the ground, in the yard in front of my house, in order according to the different sizes.

When this arrangement was finished the chief caboceer and attendants advanced and placed themselves before me, at the distance of about four yards. They then knelt down on both knees, my own captain or caboceer following the same example, accompanied by several of his principal officials and headmen. These, however, placed themselves in my front, facing the former party. The caboceer of Setta then commenced a very clever complimentary speech, declaring his own great satisfaction, as well as that of all his people, at being honoured with a visit from the King's English stranger; and at the same time expressing a hope that I and other Englishmen might again frequently visit his country. Thanks were returned by the captain of my guard in the name of his Majesty the King of Dahomey. Both parties then prostrated themselves, kissing the ground and throwing dust over their heads, and rubbing themselves all over the head and arms with the same. Next he presented me with the food which had been sent, the tasters touching each dish as they were named, similar to the mode of touching and call-

ing off messes in a soldier's mess-room. The pots and calabashes amounted in all to thirty-seven in number, some containing as much as an English bushel.

The natives are in general very good cooks, and contrive to make a great number of dishes from the same material. Of the animals cooked were bullocks, roasted and boiled, as well as stewed, sheep, goats, venison, and the young elephant, pork both roasted and boiled, fowls, Guinea fowls, Muscovy ducks, and turkeys; and of vegetables, yams, manioc, sweet potato, India corn or maize, with numerous varieties of underground peas, as well as many other sorts above ground. Their food is generally highly seasoned with pepper and palm-oil, which, when fresh, has an excellent flavour, and is very wholesome.

It should always be remembered, that the palm-oil imported into England is not the same as that used by the natives. The oil sent to England is merely the outside of the nut, similar to the outside of a plum or any other stone fruit. The oil exported is extracted from this pulp, but the palm-oil used here in cooking is extracted from the kernel taken out of the stone of the palm-nut. It is equal to our best salad oil. A vegetable called *accro*, of great utility, is generally used in soups. It is boiled till quite stringy, and is given to

invalids. It is said to be very strengthening. Shalots and different sorts of pepper are also much used, as well as bananas and plantains.

After the usual ceremony of presenting me with provisions had been gone through, and I had thanked my generous host, the caboceer and his attendants repeated the same form of prostration and throwing dust over their heads, and rubbing dust over the arms and head, acknowledging my thanks. The caboceer's and my own taster now commenced tasting every dish, in order to shew me that everything was good and wholesome. Then, after drinking water with the caboceer, as a mark of sincere friendship, we were left to devour our food, my soldiers and other people using their naked fingers even in eating stews and soups, and each individual endeavouring to cope with his comrade. We were also furnished with plenty of peto, which is here manufactured in a superior manner.

After breakfast several Dahoman traders came to pay court to me. One of them presented me with a very large Guinea fowl, quite black, with jet black legs. The caboceer also presented me with two of the common Guinea fowl, and some of the traders or merchants from Dahomey subscribed and purchased some goats, and some peto, which they presented to me. In fact, during the

whole day presents were arriving from different parties. Amongst them was a very old woman, apparently about ninety years of age, and nearly blind. This poor old creature, anxious to show her loyalty to the King and respect for his stranger, presented me with two eggs and four strings of cowries, in all probability all that she possessed in the world. She expressed her shame at making so small a present, but I assured her that a white man did not estimate a gift according to its intrinsic value, but according to the intention with which it was bestowed, and told her to remember that the Great Fetish above, God Almighty (for they have an idea of such a Being) did not estimate our gifts by their magnitude, but by the purity and sincerity of the heart. In return for her present I gave her as much as I did to those who had given me a hundred times the value. This seemed to give universal satisfaction to the multitude assembled. After receiving the presents the poor old woman prostrated herself after the manner of her country, and remained in a kneeling posture till she had sung a song in praise of the white stranger.

A little harmless deception was here attempted to be played off at my expense by one of the soldiers of my guard. This young man was one of the King's huntsmen, and being anxious to compete

with the others who made me presents, by some means procured a very large Guinea fowl. Making a hole through the neck of the bird with a knife, or some similar instrument, he assured me upon presenting it to me, that he always shot his birds in the neck, and with bullets. This I knew was not true; and upon making some further inquiries, with a view to ascertain whether this was the suggestion of his own brain or proceeded from others, I learnt that he had been prompted by others, probably with a view to raise my opinion of their superior skill in shooting. I soon convinced them, however, of my total disbelief of their being able to strike any prescribed part of a bird of much larger dimensions than the Guinea fowl, and offered the man ten head of cowries if he would even hit a bird in the neck fastened to a peg stuck into the ground. The caboccer, however, refused to allow him to try. Of course this objection saved the young huntsman's credit for the present, but I had made up my mind to test his capabilities on the first occasion which might present itself. In the meantime I made him a present of a paper of needles and a thimble for the fowl, for which he seemed very grateful.

Having received so much kindness from everybody in this place, I determined to make a general distribution of needles, having upwards

of six thousand with me for the purpose of giving away. News to that effect soon spread through the town, so that my court-yard was soon filled, and hundreds waited outside. With some difficulty I cleared a small space for myself to sit down and distribute my needles, giving four needles to grown women and two to female children; but I soon found several of the young ones come a second time. As soon as the caboceer became aware of this, he gave orders that any one who should be detected coming a second time should be flogged. This threat had the desired effect; still a considerable time elapsed before I had finished making my presents to the female portion of the assemblage. The caboceer very judiciously hinted the necessity of either reducing the distribution in number, or confining it to the old people, remarking that I had many other towns and countries yet to pass through. This advice was well timed, and I forthwith acted upon it, although some hundreds arrived after I had left off.

Dinner-time had now arrived, and a messenger came to inform me that it was on the way to my house. After a few minutes a quantity of provisions exceeding that of the morning was placed before me in the same manner as before, and with the same ceremony as I have already described. I selected

such dishes as I preferred for myself and people, and the rest were given to the soldiers. After dinner the caboccer sent his head messenger to ask if I would allow him to order a parade of his soldiers to dance before me for my amusement. Of course etiquette demanded my assent, but I postponed the honour till I had taken a survey of the town and its neighbourhood, and had made some observations upon its soil and productions. This proposal was readily assented to, and after I had dressed myself in uniform, I mounted my little charger, and rode round part of the town, accompanied by all my own private servants, except my own white servant, Maurice, who was still suffering from illness. During my ride I came in contact with the horse of the captain of my guard. My own as well as his being entire horses, made some desperate efforts to come in contact with one another, and I was obliged to punish mine severely with the spur, which caused him to plunge and kick violently. The people seemed very much astonished, and expressed their admiration of the white man's horsemanship.

Horses are not bred in this country, consequently very few of the natives ever saw a horse, except at Dahomey, whither a few are sent as presents to his Majesty. The rider is invariably

held on the animal's back by two men, who walk on each side. After I had taken a survey of the town, which occupied about an hour and a half, I returned to the market-place, where I found all my own soldiers (with the exception of those who had accompanied me) as also the soldiers of Setta: the market-place being comfortably shaded from the sun by large trees, gave the assemblage a very imposing appearance.

I now dismounted, and sent my horse to the stable. A seat having been prepared for me, I took my position by the side of my captain, the soldiers of Setta commencing the amusement by dancing of the most singular description; the motion being chiefly, as before described, from the hips and shoulders—an excellent gymnastic exercise, and well calculated to strengthen the limbs and expand the chest. After a few awkward leaps they were formed up, and ordered to charge; upon which an irregular rush was made in the direction of a supposed enemy. During this operation an irregular fire was kept up, with shouts or yells. They then suddenly returned, each soldier bringing with him a bough or a handful of grass, and laying the same at the feet of the caboceer or captain. These are considered as heads cut off their enemies in the charge with the short sword, which is carried by

all soldiers, as well as a musket. My guard now took their turn in the dance, and went through the same manœuvres as the former. After this, both parties sat down pretty well tired. I then distributed a quantity of rum amongst the caboceers and headmen, to give amongst their people, which was received with shouts in my praise.

I could not help strongly contrasting the different dispositions of the people here and those on the coast. The people of this country are governed by good laws, and although to Europeans they may appear very stringent, yet they are quite necessary to govern a savage people. After my friends had drank my health, and I had returned the compliment, I went back to my quarters, where I found my white man Maurice a little recovered, but still obliged to lie down.

Again I was visited by all the head people of Setta, many of whom asked me very shrewd questions respecting England, our trade and manufactures. The extent of our shipping, and our power on the ocean, seemed to surprise them most of anything. Of this they had a previous knowledge, from visiting Dahomey, and no doubt, heard there of the capture by us of so many slavers. In a short time supper arrived. My visitors remained with me until a late hour, when I was glad to go to rest.

The town of Setta is situated on a gently rising ground, commanding a view to a great distance in all directions. The soil is a rich loam of a clay colour. Corn is grown here in abundance, and of various sorts; ginger is also cultivated here. The country abounds with game, partridges, and Guinea fowl. Cattle here are very good, and numerous in proportion to what I observed on the coast. Sheep and goats are here also in abundance. The domestic fowls are the Guinea fowl, common fowl, and Muscovy duck, as well as the common duck of England. Pigeons are generally found in great abundance in all the towns and villages. The caboceer of Setta is a very fine man in person, about six feet in height, and well formed, and with good features and a pleasing expression. Before leaving his town he presented me with a very fine bullock.

Setta contains about nine thousand inhabitants. Their worship is pagan, but they are not at all prejudiced against any other religion. They manufacture the earthenware which they use in this place. The town is surrounded by a clay wall about the height of seven feet only and three feet thick.

END OF VOL. I.

