

# WESTERN AFRICA:

ITS

## HISTORY, CONDITION, AND PROSPECTS.

BY REV. J. LEIGHTON WILSON,

EIGHTEEN YEARS A MISSIONARY IN AFRICA,

AND NOW ONE OF THE SECRETARIES OF THE AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN BOARD  
OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE design of this volume is to give information about a portion of the world of which very little is truly known. There is no want of knowledge of the facts which led to the first discovery of Western Africa, the manifold efforts that have been made to plant European colonies along her shores, the scenes of violence that have been enacted there in connection with the foreign slave-trade, or the persevering efforts that have been made to put an end to it; but beyond these general facts very little is known, even at the present day, of the actual state of the country. The interior life of the people, their moral, social, civil, and religious condition, as well as their peculiar notions and customs, have always been a sealed book to the rest of the world. There has been no lack of books on Africa, but most of them have been confined, in the information they give, to single and isolated districts, or been written by transient visitors, who could see nothing but the surface of things. Little or no reliance could be placed on any information derived from Africans who were brought to this country in former years as slaves. They had no knowledge of the country, except of the particular district in which they were brought up. Besides, it was so long after they were brought to America before they ac-

quired sufficient knowledge of the English language to impart what information they had, that all the freshness of their early recollections had passed from their minds, or were so mixed up with the bewildering associations of their new homes, that they could not give any reliable account of their native land.

The writer has spent between eighteen and twenty years in the country. He has had opportunity to visit every place of importance along the sea-coast, and has made extended excursions in many of the maritime districts. He has studied and reduced to writing two of the leading languages of the country, and has enjoyed, in these various ways, more than ordinary advantages for making himself acquainted with the actual condition of the people. He claims for his book the merit of being a faithful and unpretending record of African society.

In the preparation of this work the writer has had to consult books on what relates to the early discovery of the country, and of such portions of it as he has not had opportunity to visit in person. The principal authors that have been examined are Barbot, Murray, Mungo Park, Walker, Fox, Bandinal, Heeren, and some other writers. The chapter on the history of Ashanti has been condensed from Beacham's book on the Gold Coast and Ashanti. What pertains to Dehomi is drawn from Lieutenant Forbes's work on that country, Duncan's Travels, and Freeman's Journal of a Visit to Dehomi. But the great body of the book is the result of the writer's own observations and knowledge, and it is presented to the public as such.

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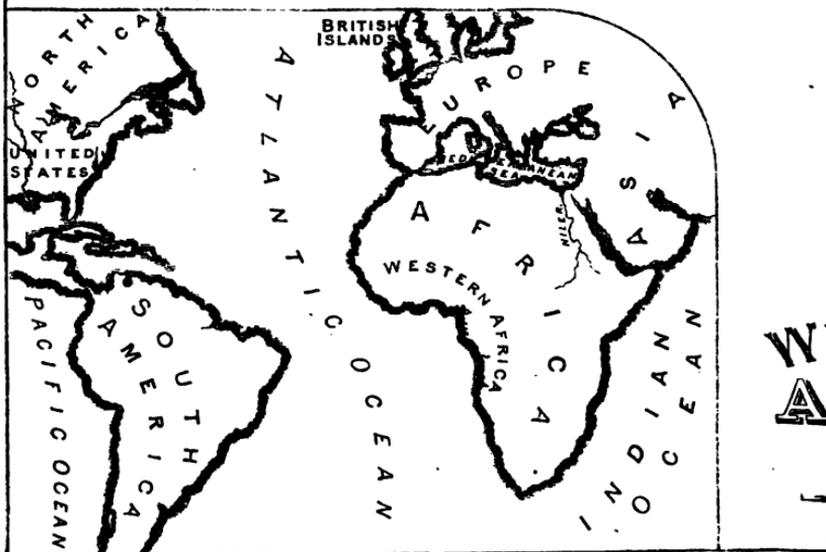
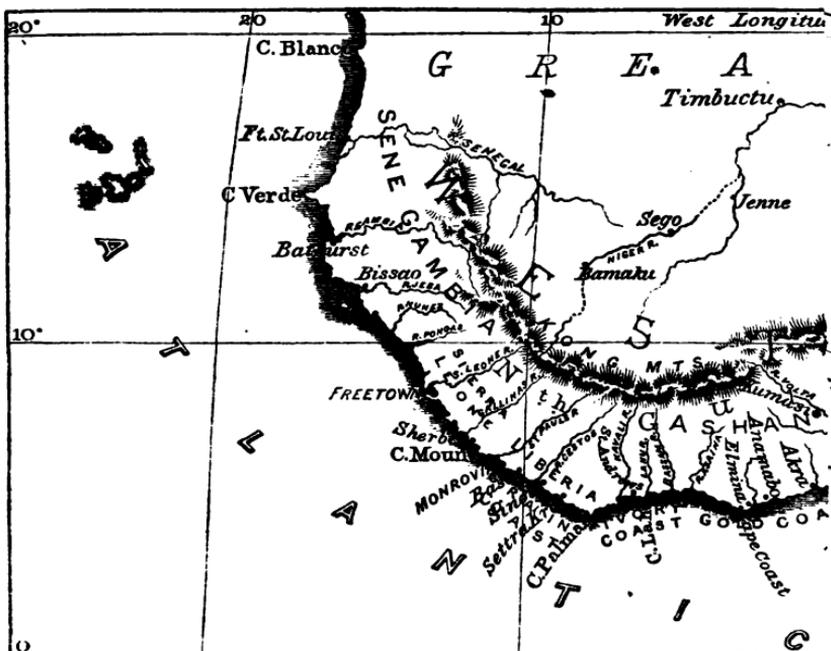
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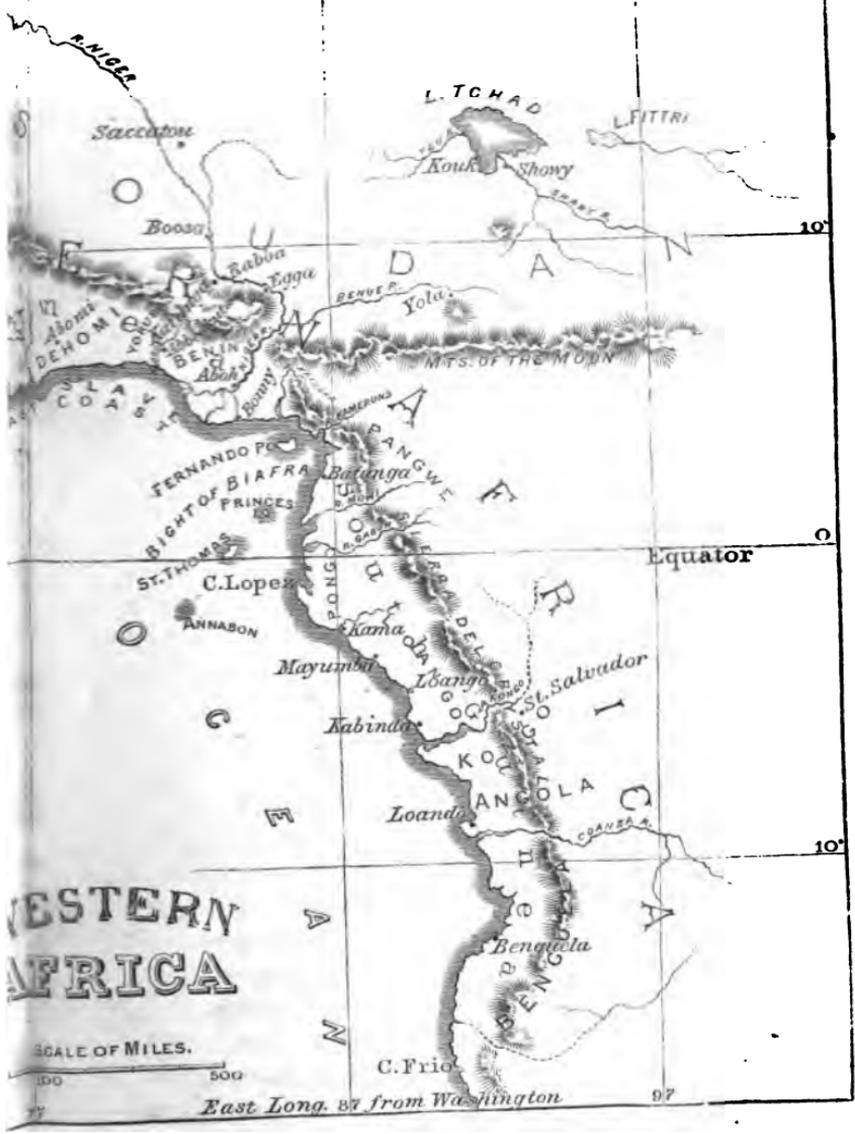
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# WESTERN AFRICA.

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## PART I.

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### CHAPTER I.

**Africa.—Its ancient Races.—Attempts made to circumnavigate the Continent of Africa by the Phœnicians.—Sataspes.—Eudoxus.—Hanno's Voyage along the Sea-coast.—Early Settlement of Western Africa by the Negro Race.**

In the earlier ages of the world the continent of Africa was inhabited by three distinct aboriginal races, all of whom are mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures, and recognized there as the descendants of Ham, the son of Noah.

The first and most prominent of these were the ancient Egyptians, who are regarded as the descendants of Mizraim, the second son of Ham. Their history is well known, and it is no part of the plan of the present work to give even a sketch of it.

The second family was known to Greek and Roman historians as the Libyan race. They are supposed to be the descendants in part of one branch of the family of Mizraim, and in part from Phut, the third son of Ham. Whether these two branches formed a mixed race, or were interspersed as separate families over the same region of country, is not certainly known. They occupied all the country between the northern borders of the Great Desert and the Mediterranean Sea. In this family were included the Numidians, Mauritanians, and other names equally familiar in Greek and Roman history. The only descendants of this once nu-

merous and powerful people are the modern Berbers, who are to be found in many parts of the Barbary States, but their chief place of residence is along the northern slopes of Mount Atlas.

The third family was known to Greek and Roman historians as the Ethiopian or Black race. These are spoken of as the descendants of Cush, the eldest son of Ham. The terms Cush and Ethiopia are interchangeably used in the historical parts of the Old Testament for the same people. One of these terms is of Hebrew origin, and is indicative of the origin or parentage of the people; while the other is Greek, and is descriptive of their physical character. This term was applied both to Asiatic and African races.

The chief locality of the African branch of the Ethiopian family was on the Upper Nile, and in what is now known as Nubia and Abyssinia. But they were scattered indefinitely over the whole of the central and southern parts of the continent, so far as those regions were known to the ancients. From this family have undoubtedly descended the modern African or Negro race. From the account which Herodotus and other ancient historians give of the habits and physical character of the ancient Ethiopian stock, they do not differ essentially from the modern African race—a people who are now spread over two-thirds of the whole continent, and are vastly more numerous than they ever were in any previous period of their history.

But however correctly informed the ancients were in relation to the inhabitants of Africa, they had no just ideas either of the shape or the size of the continent itself. They were aware that it was surrounded on all sides by water, except at the narrow Isthmus of Suez; but they had no proper conception of its full size, or of its great extension toward the south. They were not indifferent, however, to the solution of its geographical outlines. They were as curious to ascertain its external form as modern nations have been to ascer-

tain its internal geography. Various attempts were made at different times to settle this difficult problem by circumnavigating the continent. Herodotus records one which there is the strongest reason to believe actually achieved this great object. According to his account certain Phœnician navigators, under the direction of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, performed this voyage about six hundred years before the Christian era. The narrative of this extraordinary exploit is very meagre and unsatisfactory, but one or two facts are incidentally introduced into it, short as it is, which go very far to establish its credibility. "The Phœnicians," he says, "setting sail from the Red Sea, made their way into the Southern Sea. When autumn approached, they drew their vessels to land, sowed a crop, waited till it was grown, reaped it, and put to sea. Having spent two years in this manner, in the third year they reached the Pillars of Hercules, and returned to Egypt, reporting what does not find belief with me, but may perhaps with some other persons, for they said in passing Africa they had the sun to the right, *i. e.*, to the north of them. In this way Libya was first discovered."

Much has been written both in favor and against the truth of this narrative. To the candid reader, however, while there is nothing incredible or marvelous in the narrative itself, there are several facts which render it at least very probable. The length of time assigned to the voyage, allowing five or six months' detention for raising a crop of grain, is about what we would expect it to be, when we consider the distance they would have to sail, and the rude state of navigation in that age of the world. But the strongest corroboration is to be found in the very fact which caused the faithful historian himself to question its correctness. He had no idea of the astronomical phenomenon that would necessarily have presented itself to these navigators, when they got to the south of the equator. And, at the same time, it is scarcely possible that these adventurers could have conceived the idea of see-

ing the sun to the north of them, if it had not been the result of actual observation.

Several other attempts were made to circumnavigate the continent of Africa. One of these was by a Persian nobleman, of the name of Sataspes, who was condemned by Xerxes to be impaled, but had his sentence commuted to the task of sailing around the continent of Africa. He passed out between the Pillars of Hercules, but was so much terrified by the open swell of the Atlantic that he put back and returned home, and ultimately suffered the penalty that had been denounced against him.

Another trial was made to accomplish the same object by Eudoxus, a native of Cizicus. He also passed out between the pillars, and followed the coast to the southward, until he fell in with natives who he fancied spoke the same language which he had heard on the eastern side of the continent. If this were really true, he must have extended his voyage beyond the Gulf of Benin; for no one language is known to extend across the continent at any point north of this. His provisions failed him here, wherever the place may have been, and he was compelled to return to the Mediterranean.

But the most interesting enterprise of which we have any reliable information, and the only one which throws any light upon the remote history of Western Africa, was undertaken by the Carthaginians, under the direction of Hanno, a distinguished general, and, as is generally supposed, between five and six hundred years before the Christian era. Among all the great nations of antiquity the Carthaginians were the most distinguished for their commercial enterprises. Their ships frequented almost every port in the Mediterranean, and sometimes they found their way even to the barbarous shore of England and Ireland. They planted colonies in all parts of Northern Africa, had highways for commerce with Egypt and Ethiopia, and they are known to have had commercial intercourse with people living south of the Great Desert. Hav-

ing carried their enterprises into all these regions, they next determined upon exploring and settling the western shores of Africa. For this purpose an expedition was fitted out, consisting of sixty ships of fifty oars each, and 30,000 persons of both sexes, with ample provisions, and every thing necessary for so great an undertaking. The object of the expedition was three-fold; *viz.*, to explore the country, found colonies, and promote commercial speculations.

The expedition having cleared the Pillars of Hercules, sailed two days along the coast and founded their first colony, which they called Thymatirum. A short distance beyond this, at a promontory called Solœis, they erected a temple to Neptune, and proceeded on their voyage. A short distance farther on they came to a beautiful lake, the edges of which were bordered with large reeds, and here they found elephants and other wild beasts in great abundance. A day's sail from this place brought them to another lake, where they founded five small colonies near to each other. The next important point in their voyage—but we are not informed how long they were in reaching it—was the great River Lixus, on the banks of which they found a pastoral people whom they called Lixitæ. They seemed to be a mild and quiet people, and treated the Carthaginians with much kindness. In the same region they found Ethiopians of a much less hospitable character. They were also told that there were Trogloditæ dwelling in the mountains, where the Lixus took its rise, who were fleetier than horses. Having procured Lixitæ as interpreters, they continued their voyage three days farther, and came to a large bay, where they founded a city and called it Cerne. Here they judged themselves to have sailed as far from the Pillars of Hercules as it was from that place to Carthage. This statement corroborates the general opinion that this ancient Cerne is the same as the modern Arguin, which is situated about 20° north latitude, and about two hundred and forty miles north of the Senegal River.

The next place they made was a large lake, which they entered by sailing through a small creek called Chretes. In this they found three islands, all larger than the island of Cerne. One day's sail brought them to the extremity of a bay overhung with mountains, which were inhabited by savages clothed with the skins of wild beasts, and who prevented their landing by pelting them with stones. The next point in their voyage was a large and broad river infested with crocodiles and sea-horses, and from this place they made their way back to Cerne.

After recruiting, they resumed their voyage and sailed along the shores for twelve successive days. The inhabitants along this region were Ethiopians, whose language the Lixitæ interpreters did not understand. They always fled at the approach of the Carthaginians, and it was impossible to have any intercourse with them. Having held on their way two days farther, they came to an immense opening in the sea (probably a large bay), on either side of which they saw fires at night rising at intervals in all directions. Having replenished their stock of water here, they continued their voyage five days farther, and arrived at a large bay which their interpreters said was called the Western Horn. In this bay they found a large island, in the centre of which was a salt lake with a small island in it. When they went ashore in the daytime they saw no inhabitants, but at night they saw fires in every direction, and heard a confused noise of pipes, cymbals, drums, and shouts, and being greatly frightened, their diviners advised them to leave the place as speedily as possible. The farther they went, however, the deeper they plunged into mystery. They soon found themselves abreast of a country blazing with fires, streams of which seemed to be pouring from the mountain tops into the very sea. Having proceeded four days farther, they came to a country which seemed to be in a universal blaze at night, and at one point the fire seemed to blaze up to the very stars, which they were

told was the chariot of the gods. Three days more brought them to another bay called the Southern Horn. In this bay was a large island filled with savage inhabitants, the greater part of whom were women. Their bodies were hairy, and their interpreters called them *Gorillæ*. They attempted to seize some of the men, but they escaped out of their hands to the rocky precipices, and defended themselves with stones. They secured three of the females, but found them so unmanageable that they put them to death and preserved their skins.

Here their voyage terminated. Their provisions became so low that they were compelled to retrace their steps.

To what point on the coast this voyage extended it is almost impossible to ascertain. Different writers have come to conclusions widely at variance with each other. M. Gosse-  
lin contends that it did not extend beyond the River Nun, on the frontiers of the Morocco coast. Major Rennell, on the other hand, fixes its termination to the northward of Sierra Leone, and supposes the island of the *Gorillæ* to be the island of Sherbro. Bougainville traces these adventurers to the Gulf of Benin. This immense discrepancy shows that there must be very few data in the narrative itself upon which to build an opinion, or that one or more of these geographers must have used their materials very unskillfully.

There are facts in the narrative, however, that furnish the basis for conclusions which may be regarded as at least an approximation to the truth. These voyagers when they arrived at Cerne, concluded that they had sailed as far from the Pillars of Hercules as it was from that to Carthage. This reckoning would place Cerne somewhere not far from the modern Arguin, which is  $20^{\circ}$  north latitude. From this point the number of days of direct sailing was twenty-four. Allowing them to have sailed forty miles a day, they would have reached Cape Mount, near Sherbro, which is in accordance with the reckoning of Major Rennell, and no doubt is

much nearer the truth than the conclusions of either of the other two.

The description they give of the different localities they visited is so vague and indefinite, that it affords little or no aid in determining what points they actually referred to. The confused noise of drums and shouts which fell upon their ears at night, and the fires which blazed up in every direction around them, is a remarkable feature in their journal, and goes farther to confirm its truthfulness than any thing else. If due allowance is made for their superstitious notions and excited imaginations, they saw and heard nothing but what is perfectly familiar to every one who visits that country at the present day. These Carthaginians happened to be running along the coast at the season of the year when the natives of the country were preparing to plant their farms; and this is always done by cutting down the undergrowth and grass, and setting fire to it when it becomes perfectly dry and combustible. This is generally done at night; and if the farm happens to be on the summit of a hill or on the precipitous sides of a high mountain, the flames might well seem to blaze up to the stars. The confused noises of drums and shouts were but the accompaniments of their evening dances, and would not fall less strangely upon the ear of a visitor at the present day, provided he had no knowledge of the intent of it, than it did upon the ancient Carthaginians.

The contest they had with the *Gorillæ* is unlike any thing that would be likely to take place now; and we scarcely know what interpretation to put upon this part of their story. It is possible, however, that the Chimpanzee tribe may have been much more numerous two thousand years ago than they are at present, and shut up, as they may have been, on a contracted island, they may have become fierce, and made a more vigorous defense than they would now on the main land, where they have immense forests to which they could retreat from their human pursuers.

It is an interesting historical fact that the Negro race had reached the western frontiers of the African continent more than two thousand years ago, and that they were then distinguished not only by the same physical characteristics, but by many of the customs and habits that have been continued, with little change, even down to the present time. What revolutions may have taken place in their moral, social, and civil condition during the long interval which elapsed between the period of the visit of the Carthaginians and the modern Portuguese discoverers, it is impossible to conjecture. Among themselves there are no historical records; and even their traditionary stories do not extend over more than one or two centuries, and are always mixed up with so much of the fabulous, that they can not be received without great abatement. That this people should have been preserved for so long a period, in constantly increasing numbers, and that in the face and despite of the most adverse influences, while other races, who were placed in circumstances much more favorable for the perpetuation of their nationality, have passed away from the earth or dwindled down to a handful of modern descendants, is one of those mysterious providences that admits of no rational solution, unless it be that they have been preserved for some important future destiny.

## CHAPTER II.

Geography of Western Africa.—The three principal Divisions.—Natural Scenery.—Its Rivers.—Lagoons.—Seasons.—Winds.—Its Inhabitants of Senegambia, Northern Guinea, and Southern Guinea.—General Character and Condition of the People.

WESTERN AFRICA, in the modern and general acceptation of the term, is that portion of the continent lying along the Atlantic Ocean, between the southern borders of the Great Desert, in  $16^{\circ}$  north latitude, and the Portuguese province of Benguela, in about the same degree of south latitude, and varies in width from two hundred to three hundred and fifty miles. It bears about the same geographical relation to the continent of Africa that what are here called the Atlantic States do to North America.

The great chain of mountains which stretches across the entire continent—from the Straits of Babel-Mandeb, on the east, to the Gulf of Benin, on the west—and known as the *Jebel-el-Komri*, or *Mountains of the Moon*, about two hundred miles before it reaches its western termination sends off two great spurs in opposite directions.\* One of these spurs, or chains, runs in a northwesterly direction, keeping nearly parallel to the sea-coast, and not more than two hundred miles distant, until it reaches the latitude of *Sierra Leone*, where it makes an immense sweep into the interior, inclining to the northeast, until it reaches and is lost in the sands of the *Great Desert*, at the distance of seven or eight hundred miles from the sea-coast. This chain is more than two thousand miles long, and is known as the *Kong Mountains*. It forms the eastern

\* Recent researches show that this chain of mountains is not continuous through the whole breadth of the continent.

boundary of the northern half of Western Africa, and separates it from the great kingdoms of Soudan, or Central Northern Africa.

The other chain separates itself from the main range nearer to the sea-coast, and for the first hundred miles keeps in sight of it, after which it bears off in a southeasterly direction, until it gets to the distance of two hundred and fifty miles, and then resumes a parallel line to the sea-coast, until it reaches the latitude of Benguela, where it terminates. This chain is between ten and twelve hundred miles long, and was called by the early Portuguese navigators the "Sierra del Crystal." It forms the eastern boundary of the southern half of Western Africa, and separates it from the unexplored regions of Central Southern Africa.

Those portions of the continent lying along the Atlantic, to the north and the south of what are regarded as the proper boundaries of Western Africa, are respectively assigned to what is better known as North and South Africa.\*

Western Africa may be divided, according to the character of its population, into three grand divisions. The first of these is Senegambia, which extends from the southern borders of the Great Desert to Cape Verga, in  $10^{\circ}$  north latitude, a point nearly equidistant from Sierra Leone and the mouth of the Rio Grande, and extends interiorward to the distance of seven hundred miles.

The second division, known as Upper, or Northern Guinea, extends from Cape Verga to the Kameruns Mountains, in the Gulf of Benin, a distance, coastwise, of more than fifteen hundred miles, but not more than two hundred and fifty miles wide.

The third division is known as Southern Guinea, sometimes called "Southern Ethiopia," and extends from the

\* The whole length of this portion of the continent of Africa, following the winding course of the sea-coast, is something like 4000 miles, and has an area something more than 1,000,000 square miles.

**Kameruns Mountains**, in  $4^{\circ}$  north latitude, to **Benguela**, in about  $16^{\circ}$  south latitude.

The physical aspect of the country, as might be inferred from its immense extent, is not only very varied, but presents some of the richest and most exuberant natural scenery to be found any where in the world. Some portions of **Senegambia**, as also certain districts in Northern Guinea, are flat and monotonous, but these are exceptions to the general features of the country.

In the vicinity of **Sierra Leone**, **Cape Mount**, and **Cape Messurado**, the eye rests upon bold head-lands and high promontories enveloped in the richest tropical verdure.

In the region of **Cape Palmas** there are extended plains, somewhat undulating, that are beautified with almost every variety of the palm and palmetto. On the **Drewin** coast the country rises to high table-land of the richest aspect, and of immense extent. The **Gold Coast** presents hills and dales of almost every conceivable form and variety; and as we approach the equatorial regions, especially in the neighborhood of **Fernando Po** and the **Kameruns**, mountain scenery presents itself of exceeding beauty and surpassing magnificence.

The four great rivers of Western Africa, taking them in their geographical order, are the **Senegal** and **Gambia** of **Senegambia**, the **Niger** of Northern Guinea, and the **Kongo** of Southern Guinea.

The **Senegal** takes its rise in the chain of mountains which forms the dividing line between **Senegambia** and the northern kingdoms of **Soudan**, and after pursuing its course along the southern borders of the **Great Desert** for the distance of something like 800 or 1000 miles, it discharges itself into the ocean in about  $16^{\circ}$  north latitude. It has but a moderate draught of water at its outlet, and can admit, therefore, only the smaller class of vessels, but for such it is navigable to the distance of six or seven hundred miles.

The **Gambia** takes its rise near **Timbo**; the capital of **Futa-**

Jallon, at not more than three hundred and fifty miles in a direct line from the sea-coast. Its course is meandering, and its whole length is not less than eight hundred miles. It has a much greater depth of water at its mouth than the Senegal, and is navigable for vessels of ordinary tonnage for several hundred miles.

The Niger, or Quorra, is the great river of Western and Central Africa. It takes its rise on the eastern side of the Kong Mountains, and at no great distance from the sources of the Senegal and Gambia. After an immense sweep, first in a northeasterly and then in a southwesterly direction, it discharges itself into the Gulf of Benin by eight or ten different mouths. Its whole length is scarcely less than two thousand miles, and were it not for the rapids at Broussa, it would be navigable for as great a distance as almost any other river in the world. About two hundred and fifty miles from the sea-coast, and just before it forces its way through the Kong Mountains, it receives the Tchadda, a stream in size equal to itself, and perhaps not less in length, from the southwest.

The Kongo takes its rise on the south side of the Jebel-el-Komri, and about the middle of the continent. Its general course is southwest, and its whole length is not less than one thousand or twelve hundred miles. It forces its way through the Sierra del Crystal Mountains, and discharges itself into the Atlantic Ocean in about 6° south latitude, and thus divides Southern Guinea into two nearly equal halves. It is navigable to the distance of several hundred miles, and is one of the finest rivers in the world.

The rivers of the second class are Rio Grande of Senegambia; the Sierra Leone, St. Paul or Messurado, Kavali, St. Andrews, Cape Lahu, Basam, Asaini, the Volta and Lagos of Northern Guinea; and the Kameruns, the Gabun, Nazareth, Ambriz, and Kozanza, of Lower or Southern Guinea. None of these rivers are more than two or three hundred miles long, and they all take their rise in the great

range of mountains which forms the eastern boundaries of Western Africa. Those in the Gulf of Benin, and in Southern Guinea, are generally very wide at their mouths, and form excellent harbors for shipping, but none of them are navigable to a greater distance than one hundred miles.

Western Africa is singularly deficient in bays and harbors for shipping. Goree, Gambia, and Sierra Leone, have excellent harbors, and furnish every facility for commercial enterprise. But between the last mentioned place and the rivers in the Gulf of Benin—a distance coastwise of something like fifteen hundred miles—there is not a single bay, harbor, estuary, or indentation of any kind, where a vessel of any considerable size can be shielded from storms and the heavy swells of the open ocean. Ships have to ride at anchor in the open sea, and at most places one or two miles from the land; while the lading and unloading must be effected by boats, and often through the heaviest and most dangerous surf. This must always be a serious impediment to the development of the commercial resources of Northern Guinea. From the Gulf of Benin southward almost every river of any size forms an estuary or bay at its mouth, and affords safe anchorage for vessels of the largest size, among which may be mentioned, Old Kalabar, Kameruns, the Bay of Corisco, the Gabun, the Bay of Kabinda, the Kongo River, and Loando St. Pauls.

There is another feature of the sea-coast region that should not be overlooked. In consequence of the exposed condition of the sea-coast to the heavy swells from the open ocean, the rivers and smaller streams are frequently obstructed, and form for themselves backwaters or lagoons. These lagoons are separated from the ocean only by a narrow bank of sand, which is thrown up by the outer swell. They are sometimes two or three hundred miles long, but generally have only a few feet depth of water, and are seldom more than a quarter or half mile wide. One of these lagoons extends nearly the

whole length of the Ivory Coast; another along the greater part of the Slave Coast; and a third from Cape Lopez to Mayumba. They furnish great facilities of intercourse and commerce to the maritime tribes, but are too shallow for ordinary shipping. In the rainy season, when they become swollen to an unusual degree, they force a passage through the embankment of sand which separates them from the sea, but as soon as the water reaches the level of the sea, the breach is filled by the sand thrown up by the outer swell, and the water soon rises again to its usual height.

A belt of the densest wood and jungle of a hundred miles wide extends along the whole length of Western Africa, and is no doubt the chief cause of the sickness which prevails in this region. Where the land has never been cultivated, forest trees of giant size may be seen in every direction. At some points they are the only landmarks by which mariners can identify the situation of some very important native villages. When these natural forests are once cut down, the land is soon covered by a jungle of undergrowth, which is almost impenetrable for man or beast. Beyond this belt of wood and jungle the country is more open, the air is drier and freer from miasma, and the climate decidedly healthier, both for natives of the country and foreigners.

The climate along the sea-coast is by no means oppressively warm. The alternate land and sea breezes, which prevail during three-fourths of the day, moderate the temperature, and render the climate rather pleasant than otherwise. The general range of temperature is between 70° and 90°, seldom below the former or higher than the latter. The land wind usually commences blowing about 1 o'clock A.M., and continues until 10 A.M. The sea-breeze commences about 12 M., and blows without intermission until about midnight. The interval between the cessation of the land and the commencement of the sea breeze, is usually the warmest and most oppressive part of the day. The land-breeze is usually cool,

damp, and disagreeably chilly. The sea-breeze, on the contrary, is cool and refreshing.

The only seasons recognized in the country are the dry and rainy. The distinctions of summer and winter, as also spring and autumn, are unknown.

The rains follow the sun, and are always most abundant where it is vertical. The consequence is that the rains prevail at different places at different times. In Senegambia, for example, the rainy months are from May to September, which are the dry months at the equator.

Another fact, accounted for on the same principle, is, that at the tropics, where the sun is vertical only once a year, there is only one dry and one rainy season, but both of a longer period; whereas at the equator the sun is vertical twice a year, and the consequence is, that there are two dry and two rainy seasons, but of shorter duration.

Another difference is, that the rain falls in very heavy showers near the equator, and mostly at night, while near the tropics it rains constantly for weeks and months in succession. Toward the breaking up of the rainy season, tornadoes prevail on all parts of the coast, but, like the seasons, they prevail at different places at different times. They occur every four or five days, blow with violence for the time, but seldom last more than one or two hours; and they generally come in the afternoon, after an unusually sultry day. Sometimes they come from the land, and then again from the sea. The cloud, when first noticed, is seldom larger than a "man's hand," and is accompanied by quick and faint flashes of lightning. It spreads rapidly, becomes dark and lowering, and the lightning and thunder become louder and more vivid. The cloud gradually forms an arch as it rises up and extends itself along the horizon, the pendent ends of which are ragged, and in the course of an hour from its first appearance it begins to advance with almost visible rapidity. The sea wind is lulled, the heavens become darkened, and there is an air

of solemn silence, which seems to be felt alike by man and beast. If from land, its approach is seen in the violent agitation of distant trees, the smoke of the falling rain, and the whirling of dry leaves as in a whirlwind. The first sensation is that of a gentle breeze, then quick and successive gusts, which increase in violence until every tree around you begins to creak and bend and wave before its tremendous power. When it has reached its acme of violence, it declines very nearly as rapidly as it commenced. Sometimes after it has blown entirely over, it sets back in the opposite direction and blows very nearly as long and as violently as at first. Vessels seldom suffer any harm from these tornadoes, if the captain is on his guard. When it is seen coming up, all sails are taken in except enough to steer by, and remain so until the fury of the wind has passed by, when they may gradually be raised again, and the vessel then flies before the tornado in perfect safety. The air is always cooled and purified by these tornadoes, and persons always feel relieved by the invigorating air which succeeds.

The Harmattan wind, as it is called, prevails at certain seasons in Senegambia and Northern Guinea, but is seldom felt in any part of Southern Guinea. This wind comes from the Great Desert, and prevails in the months of December, January, and February, blowing three or four days in succession. It is felt by vessels to the distance of three or four hundred miles from the sea-coast. It is always attended by a dry, hazy atmosphere, and almost every thing, animate and inanimate, feels its influence. Door and window-shutters and wooden furniture are cracked and split by the dryness which it occasions. Veneering is detached from furniture, the covers of books are twisted and bent backward, and the lips and hands become chapped as in very cold weather.

During the prevalence of this wind the sails of ships become discolored, and the fine dust which collects upon them

becomes so thick that you may write your name upon them. Formerly it was thought that this dust was blown from the Great Desert, but Lieutenant Maury traces it from South America. The air is pleasant and bracing for Europeans; but the natives of the country find it very disagreeable, and have to resort to the use of all the covering for their bodies that they can get during its prevalence.

The inhabitants of Western Africa may be arranged into three great families, corresponding to the geographical divisions of the country already mentioned. Indeed, these divisions are themselves based upon this arrangement of the leading families of men, more than upon any natural or geographical outlines.

These families all belong to one race, known as the Negro or African race; but among themselves there are marked and essential differences, which will not be overlooked by those who would form a correct idea of the true state of the country.

In Senegambia there are three leading families, known as the Jalofs, the Mandingoes, and the Fulahs. By many it is doubted whether either of these are pure Negroes. The Fulahs show the strongest marks of being a mixed race. These families are farther distinguished from the inhabitants of Northern and Southern Guinea by professing the Mohammedan faith, while the other two are essentially pagan.

The inhabitants of Northern Guinea are known as the Nigritian family, from their supposed descent from the great Negro families living in the Valley of the Niger. Those of them found in Northern Guinea may be subdivided into six or seven separate families, of whom we shall give a fuller account when we come to write more particularly of that portion of the country. In complexion, features, and other physical characteristics, there is much more uniformity among the inhabitants of Northern Guinea than among those of either of the other two general divisions; and this may be attribu-

ted to the fact that this family, though spread over a vast extent of country, from east to west, is nevertheless comprised in only a very few degrees of latitude, while the other two extend over a much greater number of degrees of latitude, and consequently have a much greater variety of climate.

The inhabitants of Southern Guinea are known as the Ethiopian or Nilotic family, from their supposed descent from the ancient nations of the Nile. They are spread over the whole of the southern half of the continent of Africa, from the Mountains of the Moon to the Cape of Good Hope, and are supposed to be an entirely different race from the great Nigritian stock, occupying all the country between the same mountains on the north and the southern borders of the Great Desert. They differ in many respects from the inhabitants of Upper Guinea. They are not so robust or energetic as the Nigritian race. Their forms are more slender, their features are better, and they are characterized by more shrewdness and pliancy of character.

There are no extended political organizations any where in Western Africa, with the exception of the Fulahs in Senegambia, and the kingdoms of Ashanti and Dehomi, in Northern Guinea, and neither of these are larger or more powerful than the second-rate kingdoms of Europe. As a general thing, the people live together in small independent communities, varying in population from one or two to twenty or thirty thousand. The form of government every where is nominal monarchy, but, when closely scrutinized, it shows much more of the popular or patriarchal element than of the monarchic.

The inhabitants of Western Africa, though greatly debased by the multifarious forms of heathenism found among them, are not, nevertheless, to be ranked among the lowest order of the human race. Compared with the civilized nations of the earth, their deficiencies are palpable enough; but compared with other uncultivated races of men, they would oc-

copy at least a very respectable medium. In their native country, and that portion of it which we have under consideration, they have fixed habitations; they cultivate the soil for the means of subsistence; have herds of domestic animals; show as much foresight as almost any other people, in providing for their future wants; have made very considerable proficiency in most of the mechanic arts, and, at the same time, they evince not only a decided taste, but an equal aptitude for commercial pursuits. They have no written literature, and no system of education, with the exception of those who have been brought under the influence of Moham-medanism; but they have almost any amount of unwritten lore, in the form of fables, allegories, traditionary stories, and proverbial sayings, in which are displayed no small share of close observation, lively imagination, and extraordinary shrewdness of character.

Among the various branches of this wide and extended family there is great diversity of character, habits, social condition, superstitious notions, which we shall describe more fully when we come to speak of them separately. Before taking up these points we must give some account of the first intercourse established between this people and the civilized nations of Europe, and show what has been the influence of the latter upon the general character of the former.

## CHAPTER III.

## PORTUGUESE DISCOVERIES IN WESTERN AFRICA.

Causes which originated these Discoveries.—Prince Henry.—First and Second Expedition.—Gonzales Baldezar doubles Cape Bojador.—First Slaves brought from Africa to Portugal.—The Discovery and Settlement of Arguin.—New Impulse given to these Discoveries.—Death of Prince Henry.—Erection of the Fort at Elmina.—Discovery of Fernando Po, Kongo, and other places in Southern Guinea.—Cape of Good Hope doubled by Vasco de Gama.—Three Objects aimed at by the Portuguese in these Researches: Commercial Gains, Propagation of the Catholic Religion, and the Search after "Prestor John."—Participation in the Slave-trade.—Decline of Portuguese Influence in Western Africa.

It is well known that the maritime enterprises of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which led to the discovery of America and the passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, had their origin with the Portuguese.

A variety of circumstances conspired, during the fourteenth century, to awaken a spirit of commercial enterprise and maritime discovery among the nations of Europe. The success which had attended the commercial speculations of the Genoese and Venetian merchants, the discovery of the Canary Islands by the Spaniards, and the invention of the mariner's compass more than either perhaps, had contributed to awaken and foster this spirit.

It is somewhat singular, however, that the Portuguese, who were at the time the weakest and the feeblest of the nations of Europe, should have been destined, nevertheless, to be leaders in a series of the most brilliant discoveries recorded in the history of the world. The geographical position of their country, and the frequent wars in which they

were engaged with the Moors of Northern Africa, undoubtedly suggested the idea of making discoveries along the western shores of Africa. Whether they had any knowledge of the discoveries of the Carthaginians in the same region, previous to the Christian era, is not known.

Prince Henry, the third son of John I. of Portugal, was undoubtedly the originator, and, for a long term of years, the chief director of all the discoveries that were made in Western Africa. During the war which he maintained so valorously against the Moors, he gained a great deal of valuable information about the country generally, and conceived the idea of reaching the East Indies by sailing around the continent of Africa.

In order to carry out and facilitate this plan he took up his abode near Cape St. Vincent, one of the most southerly ports of Portugal, that he might have the last view of his departing ships, and catch the first sight of them on their return from their perilous voyages. He was only twenty-one years of age at the time, and he devoted the whole of his future life to this one great object.

Up to the beginning of the fifteenth century none of the Portuguese ships had ever passed Cape Nun, on the coast of Morocco; and, indeed, the name itself implied either that it was impassable, or had never been passed.

About the year 1415 two small vessels were dispatched by the prince, which went one hundred and fifty miles beyond this cape; but as they approached Cape Bojador, they were so much frightened by the open swell of the ocean which met them here, that they put about their ships, and returned home with all possible speed.

This expedition, though it amounted to nothing of importance in itself, served, nevertheless, to inspire courage in others, and it was not long before another was fitted out for the purpose of following up the undertaking. This second expedition, in attempting to double Cape Bojador, was driven

out to sea by a heavy gale, and the party, when they supposed themselves on the point of being lost, discovered Porto Santo, one of the Madeira Islands. This led to renewed researches in the same direction, and the year following Madeira itself was discovered. The first colony was planted here in 1420, and the vine and the sugar-cane, which have flourished so wonderfully, were introduced at that time.

In 1433 Gilianez succeeded in doubling Cape Bojador, which was regarded as one of the greatest exploits of the age, and awakened in Portugal a feeling of interest almost as strong as the discovery of America afterward did.

Soon after this Gonzales Baldeza extended his voyage one hundred and sixty miles beyond Cape Bojador, and brought home with him a valuable cargo of seal-skins, which he presented to Prince Henry. This was the first cargo of any kind that was ever taken from the western coast of Africa to Europe, and it not only awakened a lively interest in the community at large, but gave a new impulse to commercial enterprise.

In 1442 Gonzales returned from a second voyage of two years and a half, and brought with him this time ten slaves, and some gold dust. This was the first gold, and these were the first slaves that were ever taken from the western shores of Africa, and may therefore be regarded as the beginning of that inhuman traffic in men, which has continued with little or no interruption for more than four centuries. We are not informed by what means the slaves were obtained, but probably they were kidnapped, for this was the invariable practice of these who followed up this iniquitous traffic. The slaves were presented by Prince Henry to Pope Martin V., who thereupon conferred upon Portugal the right of possession and sovereignty over all the country that might be discovered between Cape Bojador and the East Indies. In accepting these slaves the Pope gave his sanction to the iniquitous transaction by which they were taken; but it would

be difficult to say whether he was guilty of greater injustice in conferring upon Portugal territory over which he had no jurisdiction, and which as yet had been but partially discovered, or inhumanity in consigning the whole African race to perpetual servitude.

The year after this another Portuguese mariner, of the name of Tristan Nunez, passed Cape Blanco in  $21^{\circ}$  north latitude, and discovered the island of Arguin, which is supposed to be the ancient Cerne of the Carthaginians. Near this island he captured some native boats and made their crews slaves, fourteen persons in all, and took them to Portugal.

In 1446 another adventurer, of the name of Diniz Fernandez, discovered Cape Verd, and the year following Lancelot entered the Senegal. About the same time Tristan Nunez pushed his discoveries as far as the Rio Grande and the Nunez. Here he lost his life in an attempt to kidnap some of the natives of the country, and enjoys the unenviable reputation of having conferred his name upon one of these rivers by this act of lawless violence.

In 1448 Alphonso succeeded to the Portuguese crown, and conferred upon his nephew, Prince Henry, the control of all the country between Cape Bojador and India, and the fifth part of all the gains of the African trade, and this right he continued to enjoy till the end of his life.

The success which attended the later expeditions to Africa gave a new impulse to commerce, and a company was formed for the purpose of carrying on trade between Portugal and Africa in slaves and gold dust. Lanzaroti, Gilianez, and other friends of Prince Henry, were the leading men of this company, and there is no doubt that the prince himself had a full share in it. The first expedition dispatched by this company consisted of a fleet of six small vessels. They remained on the coast but a short time, and returned to Portugal with a cargo of two hundred slaves whom they had captured.

It is said that Prince Henry, though interested in the slave

trade, was heartily opposed to the lawless proceedings of his countrymen, and enacted severe laws against all kidnapping.

He not only enacted these laws, but dispatched Cadamosto, a man of renowned humanity, to the coast, for the double purpose of procuring him a cargo of slaves and gold dust, and enforcing the laws he had enacted against these iniquitous proceedings of his countrymen.

It is a mistaken notion that the African slave-trade had its origin in connection with the discovery of America. Even at this early period, when as yet America had not been discovered, and when the trade was exclusively in the hands of the Portuguese, it is estimated that the number of slaves annually taken to Portugal could not have been less than seven or eight hundred.

In 1461 the Portuguese erected a fort at Arguin, the first point on the coast which they attempted to fortify, and this, for a great many years afterward, continued to be the headquarters and central point of all their commercial enterprises on this part of the coast. About this time also the Cape de Verd Islands were added to the list of their discoveries.

In 1463 Prince Henry, the originator, and for nearly fifty years the main supporter, of all these enterprises, died, and the work of carrying them on fell into other hands. It is a remarkable circumstance, and one that strikingly illustrates the character of the age, that these discoveries, though followed up with the utmost zeal and energy for fifty years, had not reached beyond Sierra Leone at the death of the prince, scarcely a fifth of the distance between Portugal and India.

After the death of Henry, Alphonso was too much engrossed with domestic cares to give much attention to African discoveries. He committed the work to the hands of Fernando Gomez for the term of five years, with the understanding that he should extend these discoveries in that time five hundred miles, or at the rate of one hundred miles annu-

ally. Gomez proved himself worthy of this high and honorable trust.

In 1471 Juan de Santarem and Pedro Escobar reached Elmina, on the Gold Coast, and from the abundance of gold which they found there, they gave the place the name of "Oro de la Mina." In the same year, but we are not informed whether by the same persons, the islands of St. Thomas, Princes, and Annabon, in the Gulf of Benin, were all discovered. The year following, Fernando Po discovered the island of Fernando Po, and, on account of the beauty and exuberance of its natural scenery, he gave it the name of "Ilha Formosa;" but having died himself in the immediate vicinity, the island has ever borne the name of its discoverer. In the same year Cape St. Catherine, situated in  $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  south latitude, was reached, and this was the extent of the discoveries made in the life of Alphonso.

In 1481 John II. ascended the throne of Portugal, and one of the first acts of his administration was signalized by the erection of a large and magnificent fort and castle at Elmina. This fort, though it has long since passed into other hands, was one of the finest and strongest that was ever erected on the coast of Africa. About this time the Pope renewedly conferred upon the King of Portugal all the country between Portugal and India, and with it the title of "Lord of Guinea," of which the successive sovereigns of Portugal have always been proud, and have scarcely abandoned even at the present day.

Three years subsequent to the erection of the fort at Elmina another discovery was made by the Portuguese navigators, which, it was thought at the time, eclipsed all their previous ones. This was nothing less than the discovery of the River Kongo and a great Negro kingdom, of the same name, along its southern shores. This discovery was made by Diego Cam in the year 1484. When he entered this noble river, he was so much impressed with the broad expanse of its waters, and with the exaggerated reports which he received of

the wealth and the resources of the kingdom of Kongo, that he sailed away in great haste to report the discovery at home, taking with him several of the natives of the country, and leaving several of his own crew behind, but without giving himself time to verify the truth of what he had heard, or ascertain the real value of the discovery he had made. The representations which Cam and his associates made of this discovery on their arrival in Portugal, awakened the most enthusiastic interest, and the attention of the nation from that moment was directed almost entirely to the one great object of securing this invaluable acquisition to the Portuguese, and turning its great resources to the speediest and best possible account. Cam was allowed to remain at home but a short time. On his second expedition, he took with him the natives whom he had brought from the country, and was loaded with presents for the king and the chiefs of Kongo. This time he had an interview with the king, and entered into negotiations of the most friendly and cordial kind. Other expeditions were fitted out, large numbers of missionaries were sent out to convert the inhabitants of the country to the Christian faith, and no means were spared to bind this country to the Portuguese interest. But as we propose to give a more full account of the Portuguese operations in this part of Africa in a subsequent part of this work, we will not enter into farther details at present.

King John II. died in 1497, and was succeeded by his son Emanuel, who evinced quite as much zeal as any of his predecessors in pushing forward these wonderful discoveries. About this time the renowned Vasco de Gama doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and after touching successively at Port Natal, Mozambique, and Melinda, stretched across to India, and planted the Portuguese standard on the southern shores of Asia.

Thus in less than a century from the time when these adventures were commenced, the Portuguese had circumnavi-

gated the continent of Africa, had taken possession of all the important points both on her western and eastern shores, and had firmly intrenched themselves in India, while as yet all the great nations of Europe were indulging in the most profound indifference to all these wonderful exploits.

The attention of the nation was divided, of course, by these new and splendid additions to their territorial possessions; and yet we do not see that Western Africa shared any less attention than when it was their only foreign possession. Before the close of the fifteenth century they had erected forts at Arguin and Elmina, had established trading factories at Senegal, at Gambia, at Rio Grande, on the Gold Coast, in the Gulf of Benin, on the Kongo River, and had planted colonies at Madeira, at the Cape de Verd islands, and on the island of St. Thomas.

In the prosecution of these discoveries the Portuguese seem to have been influenced by three separate motives. The first and most influential was undoubtedly commercial gain; the second was the desire to propagate the Christian faith; and the third was the hope of discovering the renowned and somewhat mysterious "Prester John."

During the greater part of the sixteenth century the Portuguese were left in the quiet and undisturbed possession of all the territory they claimed. They had opportunity to prosecute these different objects which have just been mentioned, and they were not idle. They spared no pains nor expense in strengthening and fortifying the various settlements which they formed.

During the earlier part of the century they made themselves masters of all the country on the Senegal, the Gambia, the Rio Grande, the Benin, the whole of the kingdom of Kongo, and, if we may rely upon the statements of later French writers, they made themselves masters of the kingdom of Bambouk, and for a time had the entire control of all the gold region in that part of Senegambia.

Toward the close of the century the Province of Angola, in Southern Guinea, was added to their other acquisitions. Here they planted a colony which has continued in their possession ever since, and has always been one of the most important they have had on the coast.

From most of the points just mentioned they extended their commercial operations to a great distance in the interior, formed treaties of amity and commerce with all the petty chiefs of the country, and from some of these points on the sea-coast they protected their commerce by chains of forts, especially in the Kongo and Angola provinces, to the distance of three or four hundred miles in the interior.

Nor did they show less zeal in propagating the Catholic religion among the inhabitants of the country. Missionaries of every order in the Church of Rome, and in large numbers, were sent out to convert the natives to the Christian religion. Missions were established on the Senegal, on the Gold Coast, at Benin, on the islands of Princes and St. Thomas in the Kongo, and at Angola. Those established in Senegambia, on the Gold Coast, and at the Benin, were not of very long continuance, and led to no very important results. But those in Kongo and Angola, as also those on the islands, were kept up for more than two centuries, and, for the most of the time, on the largest and most extensive scale. Churches, cathedrals, monasteries, and colleges, were erected in great numbers; and one who surveys the ruins of these once beautiful buildings, especially those to be seen at the present day at St. Thomas and Princes, can not refrain from wondering where Portugal got the resources for carrying on such expensive enterprises.

Nor were they less zealous or persevering in the search after the renowned Prester John. This somewhat mysterious character, of whom the Portuguese had heard, was supposed to be at the head of a great Christian nation in Asia, as it was supposed at first, but afterward was thought to be

in Africa. Not finding him any where along the sea-coast of Western Africa, embassies were sent into the interior from Arguin, up the Senegal; from Elmina, and from Benin; but the invariable report was that they discovered none but Mohammedan nations. At Benin they heard of a great king in the heart of the country, who, it was thought, answered to the individual for whom they were in search. Repeated efforts were made to effect some communication with him from the Gulf of Benin; but failing in these, they consoled themselves with the hope that he would be more accessible from the eastern coast. The person of whom they heard at Benin, as it is now generally supposed, was the Sultan of Kano.

Unfortunately for humanity the attention of Portugal was soon diverted from these useful and comparatively harmless pursuits to others that have not only undermined her own strength, but have inflicted the heaviest curse upon that nation whom she had the honor of introducing to the knowledge of the civilized world. From the very beginning of their discoveries along the coast of Africa they manifested a strange and unnatural propensity to kidnap and enslave the natives of the country. As Europe, however, did not offer a very extensive market for this kind of merchandise, they were not tempted at first to engage very extensively in it. The discovery of America toward the close of the fifteenth century, and the annexation of Brazil to the Portuguese crown, opened an immense field for this kind of speculation, and the Portuguese traders plunged into it without let or hindrance. They were the first of all the nations of Europe to engage in this inhuman traffic, and the last, as all the world knows, to abandon it.

It was soon ascertained that the aborigines of the West Indies were utterly incapable of performing the kind of labor and drudgery which their new master expected of them. The idea was suggested, in consequence, that the hardier natives of Africa would answer the purpose better, and the

Portuguese traders were not slow to avail themselves of the advantages of this suggestion. It is said that a few African slaves were taken to the Island of St. Domingo from Portugal as early as 1503; and it is well known that Ferdinand granted formal leave to take them there a few years afterward. In 1517 Charles V. authorized a Flemish merchant to take four thousand African slaves to the four islands of St. Domingo, Porto Rico, Cuba, and Jamaica. In virtue of a bull of the Pope, a slave-market was opened in Lisbon; and as early as 1537, it is said that not less than ten or twelve thousand slaves were brought to this place, and transported from thence to the West Indies. This was denominated the "carrying trade;" and we need scarcely remind the reader that from the time it was first set in motion up to the present hour, it has been the object of engrossing attention to the Portuguese nation. And with this, too, may be dated the commencement of her own downfall.

If we can not but admire the energy and courage they displayed in bringing to the knowledge of the civilized world countries which were not known to exist, equally impossible would it be not to execrate the meanness which could induce them to sacrifice the inhabitants of those countries to the cupidity of the rest of the world, instead of fostering and protecting them. But we shall not trace their downward steps, much less attempt to portray the endless miseries that have thereby been inflicted upon the sons and daughters of Africa. Those who pretend to say that the African slave-trade has not been an immense injury, have very little conception either of the nature or the extent of the evils that have been endured by this ill-fated continent. God may, and no doubt will, overrule and convert it to good, but man must ever stand convicted of having inflicted upon that unhappy people the greatest calamity in his power.

From the time Portugal sold herself to this iniquitous business, she ceased to feel any interest in her local estab-

lishments in Africa (except so far as these could be made subservient to this one business), and her missionary operations were carried on afterward chiefly by Italians, and others not immersed in this iniquitous traffic.

The Portuguese have continued to exert a kind of influence on many parts of the coast, where they have continued to carry on the slave-trade, particularly in the neighborhood of the Rio Pongas, at the Gallinas, at Popo, Lagos, Cape Lopez, Loango, Kongo, Angola, and Benguela; but they have no actual possessions on the main land, at the present day, except the two last mentioned provinces. The Cape de Verd islands, and the islands of St. Thomas and Princes, in the Gulf of Benin, are still in their possession, but of little real value to the nation. They were deprived of all their possessions on the Gold Coast by the Dutch, in the seventeenth century; while those on the Senegal and Gambia were allowed to fall into decay from pure neglect.

The largest and most important of their present possessions is that of Loando St. Paul, the capital of Angola. Here there is a population of several hundred whites, as many thousand mulattoes, and a large native African population, but greatly drained and enfeebled by the slave-trade. The islands of St. Thomas and Princes, and especially the former, might have been made the garden of Africa. They were highly cultivated at one time, and were really of great value to the Portuguese crown. But of late years they have yielded little else than comparatively small quantities of coffee and cocoa, and have greatly declined from their former prosperity.

The population of St. Thomas is generally estimated at from ten thousand to twelve thousand, of whom a hundred or more are whites, one or two thousand of mixed blood, and the remainder blacks, of whom four-fifths, perhaps, are slaves. The population of Princes is something more than half that of St. Thomas, and of about the same proportion of the different hues of color.

## CHAPTER IV.

EARLY ENTERPRISES OF THE ENGLISH, FRENCH, AND DUTCH IN  
WESTERN AFRICA.

The Indifference, at first, of other European Nations at the Exploits of the Portuguese.—Captain Thomas Wyndham the first English Trader on the Coast.—Opposition on the part of the Portuguese.—Second English Expedition: its disastrous Termination.—John Lok.—William Towrson, and his Engagement with a Portuguese Fleet.—Second Engagement.—First Participation of the English in the Slave-trade.—African Company chartered by Queen Elizabeth.—Second Company chartered by King James I.—Successive Expeditions sent out to explore the Gambia.—The French embark in the Trade of Africa.—Discovery of America leads to an Extension of the Slave-trade.—Commercial Companies chartered by the English, Dutch, and French about the same time.—The Dutch take away the Portuguese Settlements, and attempt to drive all other Nations from the Coast.—War between England and Holland.—Great Impulse given to the Foreign Slave-trade.—Causes which led to a partial Decline of the Slave-trade.—The English propose to repair Injuries.

FOR a long time the English, French, and other nations of Europe were indifferent to the commercial enterprises carried on, with so much spirit and enthusiasm, by the Portuguese. The rich cargoes of gold, however, which began to be brought to Portugal from Africa, toward the close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, imparted a new aspect to the subject, and acted with talismanic power upon the cupidity of the commercial world. There were not wanting enterprising merchants, both in England and France, who would gladly have shared in these rich spoils, but were restrained for a long time by the bull of the Pope, which

conferred upon Portugal the exclusive right to the treasures which she had discovered.

It was not long, however, before the love of gain prevailed over all religious scruples. It is related that two Englishmen, John Tintam and William Fabian, fitted out an expedition to trade to Africa as early as 1481, but were restrained from carrying out their purpose in consequence of an embassy sent from John II. to Edward, king of England, warning him against the proceedings of his subjects, and reminding him that Africa was exclusively a Portuguese possession, both by right of discovery and in virtue of the Papal bull.

The first English vessel which is known to have gone to the coast of Africa was one fitted out and commanded by Captain Thomas Wyndham, about the middle of the sixteenth century. Previous to her sailing it was reported that she was destined to the Barbary States, but instead of going there, she found her way to the coast of Morocco. He made a second voyage the following year; and the first point of land made this time was the River Cestos, on the Grain Coast. Here he might have loaded his ship with Malaguetta pepper; but he continued his voyage to the Gold Coast, procured one hundred and fifty pounds' weight of gold dust, and returned with it to England.

He fell in with no Portuguese on either of these voyages; but the London merchants were duly warned, that if any of their people were taken on the coast of Africa they would be treated as pirates. But English enterprise and English thirst for gold had now been thoroughly aroused, and it required something more than mere threats to keep them out of this golden harvest.

An expedition of two "goodly ships" and one hundred and forty men was fitted out in 1553 by a company of London merchants, and placed under the joint command of Captain Wyndham and a Portuguese by the name of Pinteado. The latter once stood high with his own sovereign, and had been

in several of the expeditions to Africa, but had fallen into disgrace with his royal master, and had been expelled from his native land.

On account of his knowledge of the coast and the Portuguese operations there, it was thought he would be doubly valuable to this expedition. The party had scarcely put to sea, however, when a misunderstanding arose between the leaders, which led to the most disastrous consequences.

Wyndham seems to have been a very haughty and overbearing man, and not only treated his associate with the most marked contempt, but encouraged the crew to manifest the same disrespect toward him. It became a fixed principle with the English commander, from the beginning of the quarrel, always to act in direct opposition to any advice that Pinteado might give.

This expedition, as the former had done, touched at Rio Costos; they did not remain long here, however, but sped their way to the "golden land." Here they found the gold-trade very brisk, and they might, in a very short time, have disposed of all their cargo in exchange for it. But Wyndham, in opposition to the earnest remonstrance of his associate, determined to sail as far as Benin, and see what could be effected in the way of trade at that place. This proved a most disastrous measure.

By a series of mistakes, and by the needless exposure of himself and his crew in this river, one of the most unhealthy places on the coast, the fever was contracted, and among its first victims was Wyndham himself, and very soon after Pinteado. The expedition, after a short stay in this most unhealthy place, was so much reduced by sickness and death, that the survivors were compelled to sink one of their ships, and of one hundred and forty men who left England only about forty returned.

This disastrous termination of the expedition, caused, as it undoubtedly was, by mismanagement, did not produce the

slightest discouragement among the merchants of London who started the enterprise.

The year following another was fitted out on a larger scale, and placed under the direction of John Lok. This expedition touched successively at Madeira, Teneriffe, Barbas, and at River Cestos, where they commenced their trading operations. After an absence of several months they returned to England with a cargo of four hundred pounds of gold dust, two hundred and fifty elephants' teeth, and thirty-six butts of Guinea pepper.

William Towrson, an Englishman of great daring and courage, who, though possessed of some generous traits, was, nevertheless, little else than a freebooter, made a voyage to the coast of Africa in 1555, having two ships under his command. He had proceeded but a short way on his voyage when he fell in with a Portuguese caravel, which he captured, and might have destroyed. But being touched with sympathy for his captives, he purchased from them such articles of provision as he needed, and allowed them to proceed on their voyage.

He reached the Gold Coast in safety, and commenced his trading operations with the natives at Don John's town, a few miles to the west of Elmina, but was attacked and driven away by the Portuguese. He passed to the opposite side of the fortress of Elmina, and renewed his trading operations with the natives, in sight, and almost within reach of their guns. He was not long in completing his cargo of gold and ivory, and returned to England.

The year following he made a second voyage, having under his command two ships and a pinnace. When near the River Cestos, three sail were descried at a distance, and as they were supposed to be Portuguese, orders were given to clear the ships and prepare for action. They proved, however, to be French vessels, and Towrson, though not pleased to meet these new competitors in trade, accepted their propo-

sition, nevertheless, to unite their force, on the ground that the Portuguese would be regarded and treated as a common enemy; and it was not long before they were called upon to act in mutual defense. The combined fleet was attacked by five Portuguese men-of-war, and a sharp engagement ensued, but without any very decisive results to either party. The brunt of the battle fell upon the ship commanded by Towrson himself, for it seems that he was not vigorously sustained either by his own consort or the French vessels. The pinnace was so much damaged in the action that they were compelled to sink it. On rejoining his companions of the other English ship, he was assured that they had prayed most earnestly for his success, but in consequence of the unwieldy nature of their ship they were utterly unable to render him any effective assistance.

The conduct of the French was still more suspicious, but upon examination Towrson felt perfectly satisfied that their ships were totally unfit to have rendered any important aid.

The Portuguese disappeared after the engagement, and the party were allowed to complete their cargoes without farther molestation. The English vessels soon procured their usual cargoes of gold and ivory, and set out on their return voyage. As they passed Elmina they saw the vessels with which they had the rencounter riding at anchor before the walls of the fort, but no disposition was manifested, on their part, to renew hostilities. Soon after a fleet of tall sail came in sight, which proved to be a fresh squadron from Portugal. These gave chase to the Englishmen, but were unable to come up with them. One of them outsailed the others, and Towrson at one time determined to turn back and give battle; but no signals that he could make to his consort ships would induce them to come to his assistance. When near the Island of St. Michael he fell in with a French vessel of war, which made preparations to attack him as soon as they saw his crippled state. He was met, however, with so warm a reception that

he was glad to draw off, and let the English vessels proceed on their voyage.

The perils and hardships encountered in this voyage did not discourage either Towrson or his employers, and another expedition was fitted out the following year. He had not proceeded far on this voyage when he fell in with two Dantzic hulks, which he captured and plundered on the ground that they had French property. He is said, however, to have felt so much pity for the men he had in his power, that he restored them almost every thing he had at first taken, and allowed them to proceed. He had scarcely reached the coast when he encountered a Portuguese squadron of five vessels of war, with whom he maintained a long and hard-fought battle, but without any very decisive results to either party. He had scarcely repaired damages when he was brought into an engagement with a French squadron, and after a protracted struggle he succeeded in capturing one of their vessels, called the *Mullet*, on board of which he found eighty pounds of gold dust. After having rid himself of these European enemies, he proceeded to trade with the natives on the Gold Coast. In this, however he was greatly chagrined and disappointed. The natives, either through Portuguese instigation, or on account of some injury previously inflicted upon them by the English, refused to have any intercourse with him. This so irritated Towrson that he burned their towns, both at Moure and Chama—a measure, as some one remarks, not at all calculated to promote English interests on that part of the coast.

Up to this period the English had refrained from all participation in the slave-trade; and there is abundant reason to believe that the nation at large were utterly averse to this iniquitous proceeding, and were not a little scandalized at the shameless conduct of the Portuguese in this matter. Sir John Hawkins, however, having been informed that “negroes were good merchandise in Hispaniola, and that scores of them

might easily be obtained in Guinea," fitted out an expedition of three ships for the purpose of engaging in this traffic. On his first voyage he procured three hundred slaves, whom he took to Hispaniola and sold, and returned with the proceeds to England. This act was regarded by his countrymen as little else than piracy. Queen Elizabeth, it is said, was particularly indignant at his conduct, and reprimanded him in the severest terms. The offender expressed sorrow for what he had done, and promised never to do the like again. His penitence, however, was not very deep, and his promises of amendment were soon forgotten. In 1564 he made a second voyage, and in 1568 a third, which terminated quite as disastrously as he had been forewarned by his queen that it would.

Toward the close of the sixteenth century the general trade of Africa had become so extensive that it had engaged the attention both of the government and the commercial public. A patent was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Lords Leicester and Warwick, in 1585, to trade to the Barbary States for the term of twelve years. Three years after she granted another to a second company, to trade to the Senegal and the Gambia, for the term of ten years; and this may be regarded as the first instance in which the English government ever invaded the exclusive rights of the Portuguese to the trade of Africa. Portugal herself, at this time, had fallen into the hands of Spain, and all her possessions in Africa, India, and America, of course, experienced the same fate.

Under the direction of the last mentioned company three voyages were made to the country, one in 1589, another in 1590, and a third in 1591. The last was conducted by Richard Reynolds and Thomas Dassel, who afterward published an interesting account of their voyage. On their arrival at the Senegal, they found that the Portuguese had already been expelled from the country by the natives; but at the Gambia there still remained a large number of them, who were not a

little annoyed by the arrival of the English, and laid a plan for destroying the whole party, but it was discovered and frustrated. They found also that the French had been trading at these two rivers for the term of thirty or more years. They procured a valuable cargo of hides, gum, ivory, grains, ambergris, ostrich feathers, and gold dust, and returned to England.

During the early part of the seventeenth century a very general desire had been awakened in England to explore the interior of Africa, with the view of reaching the valuable gold mines that had been described by Leo Africanus and Edrisi.

Timbuctoo was represented as the great central mart around which revolved all the commerce of the interior, and it was supposed that the Gambia would afford the easiest and most direct means of access to it from the western coast.

A company was chartered by James I., in 1618, to trade to Africa, the chief and immediate object of which was to establish a line of forts along the banks of the Gambia, that might ultimately be extended to Timbuctoo. The first expedition fitted out by this company was placed under the command of George Thomson. He was instructed to ascend the river with his vessel as far as it was navigable, and was then to leave it in charge of a part of the crew, and with the remainder he was to take his boats and ascend the river as much farther as it was boatable.

According to instructions, he ascended the river as far as Kassar, where he left his vessel and proceeded in his boats.

He had not been absent long, however, when he heard that his vessel had been captured by the Portuguese and the crew put to death. He received this intelligence without being in the slightest degree discouraged, but, on the other hand, managed to get a letter to his employers in London, urging them not to abandon the undertaking.

No sooner were his employers informed of the fate of this

expedition than they fitted out another vessel and sent it to the relief of the captain. But this vessel arrived at the entrance of the river at a most unfavorable season of the year, and almost the whole party were taken off by disease. Thomson communicated information of this second disaster, but at the same time urged his employers in the most earnest terms to persevere in the enterprise, holding forth prospects of the most brilliant success. A third expedition, fitted out on a larger and more expensive scale than either of the previous ones, was placed under the direction of Captain Richard Jobson, a man worthy in all respects of the important task assigned him. He sailed from England in October, 1620, and arrived at the Gambia in February following, and was not a little grieved, on his arrival at the Gambia, to hear of the death of Thomson, whom he expected to have been of great service in his contemplated exploration. He traveled over pretty much the same ground that Thomson had, and soon after his return to England published an interesting account of his journey. The information he gave of the country was valuable, but as a commercial speculation the enterprise was a complete failure. The amount of trade in gold and other products of the country was not sufficient to defray the expense of the line of fortification which they at first proposed to establish, and the enterprise was entirely abandoned.

Up to this period, it is believed that the English, with the single exception of the case of Sir John Hawkins, had abstained from all participation in the slave-trade, and it is well known that the common sentiment of the nation at that time was strongly opposed to this practice. But we shall have a different story to relate when we resume our account of their operations in Africa.

There is reason to suppose that the French embarked in the African trade and very nearly at the same time as the English. We have no knowledge of their earlier voyages,

however, except such information as we find scattered over the journals of the English traders to that coast in the sixteenth century.

The first French vessels that ever visited the coast, it is probable, were those encountered by Towrson in 1556; and this agrees with the statement of Reynolds, who visited the Gambia in 1591, that he found, on his arrival at Senegambia, that the French had been trading there thirty or thirty-five years.\*

Very little is known of the operations of the French on the coast from the period just mentioned until 1626, except that, while the English were pushing their researches along the banks of the Gambia, with the hope of reaching the rich gold mines of the interior, the French were equally active in

\* A French writer, of the name of Villaud de Belfons, according to Labat, claims for the French the honor of having been the first explorers of the coast of Africa. He states that a company of adventurers from Dieppe sailed to the coast of Guinea as early as the year 1346, and formed commercial colonies at Cape Verd, at Rio Fresco, on the Grain Coast, and erected a castle at Elmina in 1383, just a century previous to the period when the Portuguese laid the foundation of theirs at that place. The writer farther affirms that they gave French names to all these places. Rio Fresco was known as the "Bay of France;" "Petit Dieppe" was the name of a settlement formed at the mouth of the St. John's, near Basa; "Sestro Paris" to the place on the Grain Coast now known as Grand Sestros. It is farther affirmed that large quantities of ivory and pepper were imported into France from these places; but in consequence of European wars about that time these settlements were abandoned, and allowed to fall into decay, nearly a hundred years before the Portuguese entered on their career of discovery.

This account of French discovery in Africa is not sustained by any contemporaneous writers, either French or Portuguese. The natives of Africa have no traditionary knowledge of any such visitors to their country; and what discredits the pretension still more is, that Azembuja, the man sent out by the Portuguese government to build the castle at Elmina, found no traces whatever of any fort or castle at that place.

extending theirs along the banks of the Senegal, and undoubtedly with the same object.

We have no knowledge of any Dutch vessel having visited the coast of Africa until about the close of the sixteenth century. It is somewhat singular that, just about the time when they succeeded in extricating themselves from the yoke of Spain, the Portuguese should have fallen into the same hands. This not only gave the Dutch an opportunity to indulge their thirst for commercial enterprise, but gave them an opportunity to retaliate upon their former oppressors, by making reprisals of the Portuguese foreign possessions, which were now regarded as belonging to Spain. One Dutch vessel is known to have made a voyage to the coast in 1595. In the early part of the seventeenth century they engaged in the trade of the country much more energetically and extensively than either the French or English. Goree was purchased from the king of the country, and various other points on the coast were occupied by them, with the view of engrossing as much of the trade of the country as possible, if not with the view of seizing all the settlements that had been formed on the coast, and expelling all other European nations.

Up to the beginning of the seventeenth century the trade in slaves was confined almost entirely to the Portuguese. The English, French, and Dutch, as yet, had nothing to do with it. But all of these nations were now acquiring colonial possessions in America; and it was not long before they came to the conclusion that the Portuguese and Spaniards had adopted the true policy of rendering their West India plantations valuable, by the introduction of African slaves. They found little or no difficulty in quieting the public conscience, by placing a phasis of humanity upon the iniquitous proceeding. The aborigines of Africa were living in the midst of the darkest heathenism, and it would be an act of humanity to transfer them to a different soil, where they might participate in the blessings of the Gospel. No sooner did the matter as-

sume this aspect, than the energies of all three of these nations, like pent-up waters, burst forth, and not only deluged Africa with the most frightful calamities, but had nigh swept away its entire population.

Commercial companies were chartered in Holland, England, and France, about the same time, for the purpose of carrying on this trade. The rights and immunities conferred upon these companies by their respective governments were on the broadest scale, and almost without limitation. They were utterly incompatible with the rights of each other, and led, as we shall see presently, to the most disgraceful squabbles among themselves, and unfortunately the shores of Africa became the theatre of these most violent strifes.

The Dutch led the way in this career of iniquity. The States General, in 1621, granted a charter to a company called the "West India Company," and conferred upon them the exclusive right to all the country which they could conquer between the tropic of Cancer and the Cape of Good Hope. Whatever powers the government may have meant to confer by this grant, it soon became evident that the company themselves construed it in its broadest sense; and they set themselves to work, not only to possess as much of the country as they could, but to expel all other Europeans from the coast.

Five years subsequently a similar company was chartered by the French government, for the same purpose, and with powers of equal extent. The first English company that was formed for the purpose of carrying on the slave-trade received its charter from Charles I., ten years subsequent to that of the Dutch, and five subsequent to that of the French.

As the Dutch company was the first organized in point of time, so it was also the first in the headlong energy with which it rushed into this new species of traffic. Indeed, it seems to have been the determination of all those employed by the company to act up to the very letter of their charter,

irrespective of the natural rights of the aborigines, on the one hand, and of European claims on the other.

Previous to the incorporation of this company, the Dutch had purchased the island of Goree from the king of Cape Verd, and had also wrested from the Portuguese several of their most valuable possessions on this part of the coast. These were transferred to the company, and they determined to follow up these conquests and deprive the Portuguese of all their African possessions. These possessions were coveted partly on account of their intrinsic value, but more, undoubtedly, for the facilities they furnished in carrying on the slave-trade. They found the Portuguese in the most favorable condition for the accomplishment of their lawless purposes. Their possessions were nominally the property of the Spanish government, and this gave the Dutch a sufficient pretext for seizing them, in retaliation of the wrongs they themselves had suffered at the hands of that government.

Having dispossessed the Portuguese of all their settlements and factories in Senegambia, they next turned their attention to those on the Gold Coast, which were much more valuable, but were better fortified than those which had already fallen into their hands. They erected a fort at Mouree, and established trading factories at a good many points on the Gold Coast, in the immediate vicinity of those that the Portuguese had sustained for many years. This was done with the view of intrenching themselves thoroughly in the country, and gaining over the natives to their interest before they commenced hostilities against the Portuguese. They found, however, that they could dispense with these preliminaries, and it was not long before they commenced operations. In 1637, Elmina, the strongest and most valuable of all the Portuguese possessions on this part of the coast, was stormed and carried, not, however, without a valorous resistance on the part of its legitimate owners. Six years after they seized Axim and the factories at Cora, Aldea del Tuerto, and Com-

mendo. Soon after, they wrested the islands of St. Thomas and Princes, in the Gulf of Benin, out of their hands, and took possession of all their settlements in the region of Koni-go and Angola. Having mastered all the Portuguese settlements in the country, they continued to strengthen themselves still farther by erecting forts and factories at Butri, Sama, Corso, and Cormentyn.

Soon after the completion of these conquests by the Dutch, the Portuguese emancipated themselves from the Spanish yoke. But, in order to have their independence acknowledged by the States General, they renounced all claim to their former possessions on the Gold Coast and Senegambia; but the islands in the Gulf of Benin, and all their possessions in Southern Guinea, were restored to them.

The Dutch, emboldened by their success against the Portuguese, next set to work to expel the English from the Gold Coast. This, however, they found to be a difficult task. The company's affairs, in consequence of the disturbed state of matters at home, had been greatly neglected, and all their possessions would easily have fallen into the hands of the Dutch if it had not been for the timely arrival of Admiral Homes. He not only repelled the aggressions of the Dutch, but took away from them some of their most valuable settlements.

As soon as intelligence of this reached Holland, Admiral Ruyter was sent out with a large naval force with the view of meeting Homes and retrieving their losses. Homes, however, had left the coast before the arrival of the Dutch admiral, who succeeded in recapturing most of the settlements that had been taken by him. These squabbles on the coast of Africa led to a formal declaration of war between England and Holland, at the close of which, in 1667, the English company were left in the possession of a single fort at Cape Coast. The resources of the English company were so much reduced at the same time that they were compelled

to surrender their charter to the government. In 1672 a new company was chartered, under the name of the "Royal African Company" of England, with ample powers to foster and protect the African trade. They entered upon the performance of their duties with no want of energy. They enlarged the fort at Cape Coast, rebuilt one that had been demolished at Anamaboe, and built new ones at Akra, Dixcove, Winnebah, Succundee, and Commendo, several of which were in the immediate neighborhood of others that were held by the Dutch. By these vigorous measures the English company placed themselves on an equal footing with the Dutch, while the Portuguese, the original discoverers and owners of the country, were entirely driven away from this part of the coast.

After the settlement of these quarrels the Dutch and English companies vied with each other in the energy and activity with which they carried on the African trade. The English company did not confine themselves to the Gold Coast alone, but acquired a footing in various other parts of the country, and soon became very extensively engaged both in the slave-trade and in other branches of commerce. They imported large numbers of slaves into the British West Indies, and were able, it is said, to trust planters to the amount sometimes of £100,000. At the same time they imported large quantities of ivory, beeswax, red-wood, and gold dust, into England.

Nor were the Dutch less active. Toward the close of the seventeenth century they formed a settlement on the Island of Corisco, on the south coast, with the view of extending their trading operations to that part of the coast; at the same time they imported large numbers of slaves to their West India possessions, and had a share, also, of the trade in ivory and gold dust.

During the long contest between the Dutch and the English for the mastery on the Gold Coast, the French com-

pany were quietly pursuing their commercial enterprises on the Senegal, and other parts of Senegambia. They formed a settlement near the mouth of the Senegal in 1626, called St. Louis, which has continued to be the head-quarters of all their commercial operations on that part of the coast from that to the present time. This company not only supplied all the slaves that were needed in their own West India settlements, but were extensively engaged in the "carrying trade" for the Spanish government. Indeed, during the greater part of the seventeenth century this trade was almost entirely engrossed by the French. This first company, however, soon became insolvent, and a second, third, and fourth were chartered in rapid succession, the last of which managed to keep afloat some fifteen or twenty years. They practiced the same kind of aggression upon the Dutch possessions, on this part of the coast, that the Dutch had previously practiced upon the Portuguese. Arguin and Goree were both seized by this company, and have continued in their hands ever since. Toward the end of the century they and the English became involved in the same kind of difficulties that the English and Dutch had on the Gold Coast, and with not very unlike results. In 1692 the English seized the French settlements, both at Goree and St. Louis, but they were retaken the year following, and the English settlement at Gambia was destroyed, by way of retaliation. It was rebuilt, but taken and retaken three times in three successive years, and for a long time afterward continued in a neglected and dilapidated condition.

At the commencement of the eighteenth century these rival companies were at peace with each other, and their affairs were in a flourishing condition. At this time, according to Barbot, the Royal African Company of England had as many as fifteen forts and trading factories on different parts of the coast, *viz.*, one at Gambia, another at Sherbro, and twelve or fourteen on the Gold Coast. The affairs of the Dutch com-

pany were in equally as prosperous a condition. They were under the direction of a man of the name of Bosman, who is not more distinguished for the energy and efficiency with which he conducted the affairs of the Dutch company than as the author of a most interesting book on the Gold Coast. Under his direction the company not only supplied their own American colonies with slaves, but furnished as many as eight thousand annually to the Spanish government. He estimates the amount of gold exported from the Gold Coast at the same period at eight hundred marks per annum, which M'Queen, in his Geographical Survey of Africa, estimates at £3,406,275; of which, he says, the Dutch got the largest share.

Other objects, however, began to engross the attention of the Dutch, and they gradually withdrew from the African trade, and allowed most of their settlements to fall into decay. At the present time they have only three forts, which are kept in good condition; one at Elmina, another at Akra, and a third at Axim.

The French Company carried on their operations with as much energy as either the English or Dutch had done. Sieur Brue was appointed Director-general of the French company in 1697, and he managed their affairs with quite as much energy and wisdom as Bosman did those of the Dutch. He not only placed their trading establishments near the mouth of the river upon a broad and flourishing footing, but ascended the river, in person, to the distance of six or eight hundred miles, and established a fort in the Gallam country, which has continued the centre of their commercial operations in that region to the present day. While engaged in superintending the erection of the fort here, he learned that the gold mines which supplied all the gold dust that had been purchased on the Senegal and Gambia were situated in the mountainous country of Bambouk; that the Portuguese had been in possession of them for a time, but,

in consequence of their oppressive measures toward the natives, they had been expelled from the country. Brue did every thing he could to induce the French government to conquer the country, and lay hold of these rich mines. He volunteered to undertake the conquest, if the government would only furnish him with twelve hundred troops and the necessary munitions of war. But the government prudently declined the enterprise. Brue continued in the service of the company twenty years, and contributed much not only to retrieve their affairs, but was the instrument in developing a large amount of commerce in the natural products of the country, especially in the gum-arabic, which has ever since continued to be an important article of commerce.

The only attempt, of which we have any knowledge, that the French ever made to acquire a footing on the Gold Coast, was about the year 1700. At that time they erected a small fort at the Assaini River. The Dutch tried to defeat the undertaking by exciting the natives of the country to cut them off; but in this they were unsuccessful. They did not, however, keep possession of this place for any considerable time. It was found to be unsuitable for extensive commercial operations; and as the natives of the country manifested an unwillingness to trade with them, it was abandoned.

For many years the French company had all the "carrying trade" for Spain. But their contract expired in 1713; and from that time their attention was turned to supplying their own colonies with slaves, and to commerce in the natural products of the country. At a later period their attention was directed to the exploration of the interior, in the hope of developing a larger trade in the natural products of the country. Between the years 1730-1774, explorations were successively made by Messrs. Levens, Pelaya, Legrand, and David, the results of whose discoveries and adventures are brought together by Goldberry. The same region of country was visited by Adamson, the celebrated

botanist, and although he did not penetrate so far into the interior as Sieur Brue, and some others, he has furnished more valuable information about the botany and the natural history of Senegambia than any other traveler that has visited that region of country. In the year 1785 Sauguiet visited the same region, and afterward published an account of his travels, but added nothing of consequence to the previous knowledge of the country.

During the war of the Revolution, England seized all the French settlements on the coast of Africa, but they were restored at the peace of 1815.

During the greater part of the eighteenth century England was the chief actor in that traffic in men which she now denounces so bitterly, and has expended so much to suppress. The contract for supplying the Spanish colonies with slaves was transferred from the French to the English company. An agreement was formed between the Spanish government and this company, well known as the "Assiento contract," by which the company was to have the exclusive right of supplying the Spanish colonies with slaves for the term of thirty years. During this period they bound themselves to furnish one hundred and forty-four thousand, or about four thousand eight hundred annually. They were at liberty to import as many more as they could dispose of; but they were bound by contract to furnish not less than this specified number. They bound themselves, besides, to pay the king of Spain two hundred thousand crowns, and thirty-three and a half crowns on every slave imported into the country. They were, moreover, required to pay the kings of Spain and England each one quarter share of all their profits. These terms were sufficiently stringent, but did not prevent the company from entering into it.

It can readily be seen that this trade became the engrossing business of the Royal African Company. It is estimated by Bandinel, who had the best means of investigating the

subject, that the number of slaves taken from the coast of Africa by this company between the years 1713 and 1733 was 15,000 annually, or 300,000 in all, about one half of whom were taken to the Spanish, and the remainder to the English colonies in America. Between 1733 and 1753 the average number exported annually was about 20,000, or 400,000 in the term of twenty years.

But notwithstanding this very large business, the company became involved in debt, and had to apply to Parliament for aid. But even with the aid which Parliament granted from time to time, they could not keep their business afloat, and were compelled to surrender their charter into the hands of government.

Another company was chartered in 1749, but without any of the exclusive rights which had been enjoyed by the previous one. They were to have the control of all the forts and other property belonging to the Royal African Company, but were not to interfere in any way with private adventurers who might engage in the trade. This opened a wide door for this traffic in man, and Edwards estimates the number of slaves taken from the coast in English vessels at about 41,000 annually. M'Pherson estimates the number taken from Africa in 1768, through all sources, at 97,000, of whom the English transported 60,000, the French 23,000, and the Dutch and Portuguese the remainder.

From 1760 to 1770 the trade of England began to decline, and no doubt in consequence of the difficulties that had arisen between her and her North American colonies. The affairs of the company became embarrassed, and they were compelled in turn to surrender their charter into the hands of government.

The slave-trade, though checked during the war between Great Britain and her North American colonies, was revived afterward, and carried on by various parties, to a greater extent than ever before. Bandinel states that the number ex-

ported from the coast in 1798 was not less than 100,000; of whom 55,000 were taken by the English, 25,000 by the Portuguese, and 15,000 by the Americans. These were the evil days of Africa, but the evil had reached its highest point. A feeling of indignation had arisen both in Great Britain and in the United States against this iniquitous business, and public sentiment has tended in the opposite direction, with more or less vigor, ever since.

The English have undoubtedly led the way in opposing and crushing this wicked practice. How much the British mind was affected by a change of interest in the matter, it is impossible to say. Those who were the movers of this opposing tide of feeling were undoubtedly men of the most humane character. To ascribe any other motives than those of the purest humanity and benevolence, would be manifest injustice. But how far they would have succeeded in giving a different direction to public sentiment, if their interest had not set in the same direction, would admit of a doubt.

When, however, public opinion had been thoroughly aroused to the injustice and inhumanity of the practice, a very general desire was awakened in the British mind to repair the injuries that had been inflicted on that ill-fated continent, and this feeling has continued with unabated interest to the present moment.

One of the first signs of a returning sense of justice and humanity was shown in the formation of the African Association in 1788. This association was formed of ninety persons of wealth and intelligence, among whom was Joseph Banks, one of its most active and efficient members. The object of this association was to send men of enterprise to explore the country, with the view of acquiring knowledge of the character of the people and the best means of introducing civilization among them. Under the auspices of this association, Ledyard, Lucas, Houghton, Mungo Park, Houseman, Nicholson, Buchart, and others, were sent forth to different

parts of the continent, but as their journals are before the world, we need not introduce them here.

The establishment of the colony of Sierra Leone about the same time, and the stationing of a squadron on the coast for the purpose of suppressing the slave-trade, are farther expressions of the same feeling in the country.





BATHURST, ENGLISH SETTLEMENT ON THE GAMBIA.

## CHAPTER V.

## SENEGAMBIA.

**Its Geographical Outlines.—Two Great Rivers, Senegal and Gambia.—Jalofs: their Country, Manners, Religion, etc.—Mandingoes: their Customs, etc.—Fulahs: their Character and Relation to the African Races.**

THE name of Senegambia is given to that portion of Western Africa which is watered by the two great rivers of Senegal and Gambia. It extends from the southern borders of the Great Desert to Cape Verga, in  $10^{\circ}$  north latitude, and interiorward to the distance of six or seven hundred miles. The face of the country, with the exception of a few bold headlands along the sea-coast, is generally flat and monotonous, and presents much less variety of natural scenery than either of the two Guineas.

The Senegal, which forms the northern boundary of Senegambia, is one of the finest rivers of Western Africa. It takes its rise in the Kong Mountains, not far from the source of the Niger, and after running a nearly due west course along the southern borders of the Desert, to the distance of eight or nine hundred miles, empties into the Atlantic between  $16^{\circ}$  and  $17^{\circ}$  of north latitude. The draught of water at the mouth of this otherwise noble river is not more than ten or twelve feet, so that none but the smaller sized vessels can enter it; but for these it is navigable to the distance of four or five hundred miles. The country along the banks of the river, beyond the immediate sea-coast region, is represented as exceedingly beautiful. Jannequin and other French travelers speak in glowing terms of the rich verdure along its banks, the majestic beauty of the forest trees, and

the dense and impenetrable jungle which met their view as they voyaged up the river. Adamson, the celebrated naturalist and botanist, found the country amazingly rich in objects of natural history and botany. He has given an interesting account of the gigantic Boaba, found along the banks of the Senegal, and unequaled in size by any tree in the world.

The Senegal is under the entire control of the French. They have two settlements on the river. The one near its mouth is called St. Louis, and is the largest and most important they have on any part of the coast. The other settlement is called the St. Joseph, in the Gallam country, nearly five hundred miles from the sea-coast. The Senegal is valuable to the French chiefly for the gum-arabic which it yields in large quantity. Besides this it exports hides, ostrich feathers, and gold dust.

The Gambia is also a noble river, and takes its rise in the same range of mountains with the Niger, but from the opposite side. It is twelve or fourteen miles wide at its mouth, and is six hundred miles long, according to Malte Brun, but eight hundred, according to Fox and others. It is navigable for the largest class of vessels to the distance of thirty-five or forty miles, and for ordinary merchant vessels, to M'Carthy's Island, about two hundred and fifty miles from the sea-coast.

There are a number of fine islands in this river: one near its mouth, called St. Mary's, where the English have their chief settlement, and another called M'Carthy's Island, where there is another English settlement, but not so large or important as the one at St. Mary's. The French, also, have a small trading settlement on this river, but of little real value to their African commerce.

To the distance of one hundred and fifty miles from the sea-coast the banks of the Gambia are lined with the well-known mangrove-tree, which imparts to it a monotonous and sombre aspect. Beyond this the country becomes broken,

and presents much greater variety of natural scenery. Travelers speak of the tall and graceful palm, the giant monkey bread-tree, the stately mahogany which grace its banks, and in some places present quite an imposing and picturesque scenery. They also speak of birds of the richest plumage, monkeys of many species and of almost countless numbers, and the beautiful antelope that may be seen grazing along its banks.

The Rio Grande is another river of some commercial importance, but not more than half the length of the Gambia. At its mouth it forms a large estuary, in which there are a number of islands, known as the Bisagos Islands. They were very valuable at one time for the facilities they afforded for carrying on the foreign slave-trade.

The principal native tribes found in Senegambia are the Jalofs, the Mandingoes, and the Fulahs.

The Jalofs occupy most of the delta formed by the Gambia and the Senegal. They occupy four provinces or kingdoms, but have one supreme chief, whom they denominate Barbi-Yalof, the emperor of the Jalofs. His residence is at a place called Hikarkor, somewhat central to the four dependent kingdoms.

The four provinces or kingdoms subject to his jurisdiction are Cajor, which formerly included Cape Verd and the island of Goree; Sin, a small state to the south of Cajor; Salem, situated on the northern borders of the Gambia, the capital of which is Cahon; and Brenk, which includes the residence of the emperor. The interior of their country has not been much visited by Europeans, but is said to abound in provisions, cattle, and poultry.

By some travelers the Jalofs are said to be the handsomest negroes in Africa. They have woolly hair, thick lips, and a glossy black complexion, but with tall and graceful forms. Goldberry describes them as mild, hospitable, generous, and trustworthy; and of their women he says, they are

handsome, and as attractive as black females can be. The Jalofs call themselves Mohammedans, and, if a punctilious observance of the rites of this religion entitle them to the appellation, they are undoubtedly what they represent themselves. But, like most other African tribes that have embraced the Mohammedan faith, they have done so without abandoning any of the rites of paganism, so that their present faith is a complete medley of Mohammedanism and paganism.

It is difficult to form a correct estimate of their population. Malte Brun estimates the population of the single province of Salem at three hundred thousand, and Walker estimates the whole population at one million. The government is despotic; but the power of life and death which the emperor exercises is limited to the punishment of a few acts, which it is no hardship for any one to abstain from, and which can add nothing to the authority of the emperor himself, except that it may contribute to keep up a superstitious regard for his character which he wishes to promote. As examples of this, no one except those belonging to the royal family can sleep under a certain kind of mosquito-net without exposing himself to the penalty of being sold as a slave. No one may appear in the presence of the emperor without prostrating himself, a custom which is no hardship to those who have practiced it all their lives. Notwithstanding this, the Jalofs are said to be a proud people. They boast of their antiquity and their superiority over other African families, and will not intermarry with them. Between them and their neighbors the Mandingoes there has always existed the strongest antipathy.

Among the Jalofs there is said to be a species of caste quite as marked as that of India. Besides the nobles, who are called the "good Jalofs," there are four other ranks or castes: the *tug*, or smiths; the *oudae*, who are tanners and sandal-makers; the *moul*, who are fishermen; and the *gae-*

*well*, who are musicians or bards. The "good Jalofs" will not intermarry with any of the other castes.

The *gaewell* are not permitted to live within the walls of their towns, to keep cattle, or drink sweet milk, and are refused interment, on the allegation that nothing will grow where one of their caste has been buried. Still, their services are often brought into requisition by the nobles, or "good Jalofs," who pay them liberally for chanting the praises of their ancestors on great public occasions. Besides the castes above mentioned there is another class, called Saobies, who are said to be much like the European gipsies in their customs, manners, and general character.

Certain portions of the Jalof people have never been induced to embrace the Mohammedan religion, but have remained steady adherents of paganism. These, as in almost every other portion of pagan Africa, believe in one Supreme Being, who, they suppose, is too far removed, or is too indifferent to feel much concern in the affairs of men—that, by some means or other, the government of the world has fallen into the hands of subordinate spirits, some of whom are good and some evil; and the only religious worship in which they ever engage is directed to these spirits, the object of which is to conciliate their favor or ward off their displeasure.

Fetichism, which consists in wearing charms, amulets, or *grisgris*, as they are called in the parlance of the country, is universally practiced by the Jalofs, whether pagan or Mohammedan. The belief in witchcraft is equally prevalent among them as in other portions of the country, and the same ordeals are resorted to to detect those who practice it; but we shall treat of this custom in a separate portion of this work.

The Jalofs are said to be very simple in their modes of living. Their houses are small, and, for the most part, of a conical shape. Every man, however, of respectability always has two houses—one in which he sits and sleeps, and

the other in which his cooking is done. The dress, both of men and women, consists of two square cloths, one of which is worn around the waist, and the other is thrown over the shoulders. They manufacture cloth of a better texture and of a broader web than most of the other tribes of the country. Their chief article of food is a dish called *kuskus*, made of pounded maize or millet, and milk.

Jalofs are to be met with at the St. Louis on the Senegal, at Goree, and at most of the European forts and trading factories on the Gambia; but they have little or no commercial intercourse with foreigners except through the agents of these factories. They have none of the wandering habits either of the Mandingoes or the Fulahs, and perhaps but little of their commercial enterprise.

The Mandingoes are more extensively known to the civilized world than the Jalofs. They range over a vastly greater extent of country, and are more intelligent and enterprising than any other people in Central or Western Africa. Their principal settlement is Manding, or Jalakonda, as it is sometimes called, situated not far from the source of the Niger, and about six hundred miles eastward from the sea-coast. They have extended themselves over the kingdoms of Bambouk, Bambara, and Wuli, and in smaller or larger groups over all the country between Jalakonda and the sea-coast. They may be found in small communities around all the European settlements on the Gambia, at Sierra Leone, and as far south as Cape Messurado. They are to be met with on the upper waters of the Senegal, and Captain Laing says they may be found as far as Tangiers, but this we apprehend is a mistake.

Taken altogether they are perhaps the most civilized, influential, and enterprising of all the tribes of Western Africa. Those of them I have met with at Sierra Leone, Monrovia, and other places on the coast, have very black complexions, but not glossy like that of the Jalofs; of tall and slender

forms, woolly hair, but with thinner lips and less flattened noses than most of the African tribes. Their dress consists of a three-cornered cotton cap of their own make, a pair of short Turkish trowsers, over which is worn a sort of blouse, or a large square cloth, and sandals. The men always carry a short sabre in a leather case suspended from the left shoulder, and a small leather bag or pouch in front, in which are scraps of paper with Arabic written on them, and are regarded as charms or amulets to protect them from harm. They seem to be naturally taciturn, but when accosted in a respectful manner, they can easily be drawn into conversation, and can give more information about the interior of the country than any other people to be found along the sea-coast.

They are Mohammedans, but, like the Jalofs, retain their pagan rites at the same time. They are more zealous in propagating the Mohammedan faith, however, than the Jalofs. Many of them read and write the Arabic with ease and elegance, and they establish schools wherever they go for the purpose of teaching the Arabic language and inculcating the principles of the Koran.

The writer remembers to have met one of these teachers some years ago near Cape Mount, where his pupils were taking their first lessons by making Arabic characters in the sand. When they locate temporarily in the neighborhood of a European settlement, they employ themselves in making sandals, bridles, whips, sheaths, and various other articles, out of leather of their own manufacture, and these they hawk about the streets. They are also extensively engaged in manufacturing amulets, which consist of scraps of Arabic writing sewed up in small leather pouches, which they sell to the pagan negroes at very high prices. The Mandingoes have distinctions or ranks in society as well as the Jalofs, but not in the same order. According to Laing, the priests or teachers of the Koran stand next to the king; the chiefs

come next to the priests, and after them the artisans, of which there are several grades. Next to the artisans come dependent freemen; next, domestic slaves who have been born in the country; and after them such slaves as have been taken in war, or have been made such for crimes. The priests and artisans may travel in any part of the country, even in times of war, without molestation. By the pagan nations they are regarded as sacred persons, and they spare no pains to keep up this superstitious regard for their own characters. Park speaks of the Mandingoes as "a very gentle race, cheerful in their disposition, inquisitive, credulous, simple-hearted, and fond of flattery." He speaks of having experienced much kindness from them in times of sickness and distress, and the great praise which he has bestowed on the women for their natural kindness is so well known as to have become a proverb.

Some of their social customs are very singular. The authority of the husband over his wife or wives is absolute, but seldom exercised with severity or harshness. If a married woman is suspected of being unfaithful to her husband, the aid of *Mumbo Jumbo* is put in requisition. This mysterious personage, so frightful to the whole race of African matrons, is a strong, athletic man, disguised in dry plantain leaves, and bearing a rod in his hand, which he uses on proper occasions with the most unsparing severity. When invoked by an injured husband, he appears about the outskirts of the village at dusk, and commences all sorts of pantomimes. After supper he ventures to the town hall, where he commences his antics, and every grown person, male or female, must be present, or subject themselves to the suspicion of having been kept away by a guilty conscience. The performance is kept up until midnight, when *Mumbo* suddenly springs with the agility of the tiger upon the offender, and chastises her most soundly, amidst the shouts and laughter of the multitude, in which the other wo-

men join more heartily than any body else, with the view, no doubt, of raising themselves above the suspicion of such infidelity.

Park speaks of the strong attachment which the Mandingoes always manifest for their mothers, and mentions, as an illustration of the fact, a proverbial saying that is in every man's mouth, "Strike me, but don't curse my mother." This feeling is not peculiar to the Mandingoes, but is equally characteristic of all the native tribes of Africa. An African every where will resent any thing said against his mother, however trivial, much quicker than any personal insult; and if there is any cause, according to his notions of honor and duty, that would justify him in shedding the blood of his fellow-man, or laying down his own life, it would be in defense of the honor of his mother. This strong feeling, so characteristic of the African race, probably grows out of the institution of polygamy, bad as this institution is in itself. The affections of the father are necessarily divided among the different branches of his household, while those of the children are concentrated more particularly on the mother, who not only provides for them, but must defend them in the litigations which constantly occur in families constituted on such principles.

Park says that mothers avail themselves of this state of things to train their children to speak the truth, and that there is nothing of which a Mandingo mother feels so proud as to be able to say that her son never utters falsehood. This statement, however, is so much at variance with what has been observed in all other parts of Africa, that its correctness may well be doubted. It is possible those of whom he speaks may be trained so as not to deceive their own mothers, but beyond this, it is questionable whether a single individual could be found in the country, whether Moham-medan or pagan, who had any special regard for the truth; and if Park had scrutinized the matter more closely, or re-

mained longer among these people, he would probably have come to a very different conclusion.

The children of the Mandingoes are regularly educated, but the extent of their education consists in learning to read and write a few passages from the Koran, and to recite prayers. They are apprenticed to the Maraboos for the term of three or four years, during which time they are required to perform certain menial duties, and the parents in the mean time must make the teacher occasional presents. If the parent is wealthy he can redeem his son from the Maraboo at the close of his studies only by paying a slave or an equivalent.

Among the Mandingoes, as in almost all African tribes, old age is greatly venerated, and in sickness they are always treated with marked kindness and attention. Their funeral ceremonies are always attended with loud lamentation. The grave is made in the floor of the house where the individual has lived, or under the shade of some favorite tree, and the place is always indicated by a rag attached to a pole and set up near the spot.

The Mandingoes are governed by petty chiefs; but all matters of importance are discussed and settled by a general council in the palaver house, where any man may appear and defend his own cause; and there is no place in the world where greater latitude and freedom of speech is enjoyed than in these general councils.

The Fulahs (Foulahs) are much the largest and most powerful of the three great families of Senegambia. They occupy three large districts in this part of Africa, viz., Futa-Torro, near the Senegal, Futa-Bondu, and Futa-Jallon, the capital of which is Timbu, to the northeast of Sierra Leone. They are not confined to this district, however, but have extended themselves into Soudan, and made themselves masters of several negro kingdoms on the Niger. In the interior regions of Africa they are of much lighter complexion than those of the maritime country, and are

known by the name of Fellatahs. Philologists, however, who have studied their character and language, pronounce them to be the same family; and the diversity of complexion is nothing more than what is seen in other African families where they have been as widely scattered as these are. Even in the different districts of Senegambia there is no little divergence from a common standard of complexion. Those living near the Senegal are the darkest, and in stature and general form are not unlike the Mandingoes of the same region. Those of Futa-Jallon differ very materially from the ordinary negro races, and can scarcely be classed in the same family. Their complexion is a brownish black, with hair soft and curly, foreheads good, lips thin, and their noses any thing but flat. In stature they are of the medium size, limbs delicate but well-formed, and in gait graceful and independent. The Fellatahs are still lighter, and in this respect bear a much closer resemblance to the Moors of the Great Desert than to the Fulahs of Senegambia.

The Fulahs have a tradition that they are the descendants of Phut, the son of Ham. But whether this tradition be true or not, it is a singular fact that they have prefixed this name to almost every district of any extent which they have ever occupied, as may be seen by reference to those in Senegambia. Whether they have any means of verifying this tradition, or through what branches of the African family they trace their descent, does not appear.

By some who have investigated the subject, it is supposed that they are a mixed race; but whether the elements are Negro and Arab, or Negro and Berber, is a mooted question, and not likely to be settled very soon.

The Fulahs, like the Mandingoes, are Mohammedans, and they show no less zeal in propagating the principles of their religion wherever they go. Many of them have a good knowledge of the Arabic, and have a remarkable acquaintance with the doctrines and principles of the Koran. In

some districts they follow a nomadic life, and in others they cultivate the soil for the means of subsistence.

They can accommodate themselves to almost any circumstances, and are really industrious and enterprising. Travelers who have visited them in the different districts in which they live, give very different accounts of their disposition and social habits; and there is as much diversity in their social character and habits as in their physical characteristics.

Major Gray speaks of them as having a "high degree of cunning, duplicity, selfishness, and avarice, to gratify which they are restrained neither by fear nor shame."

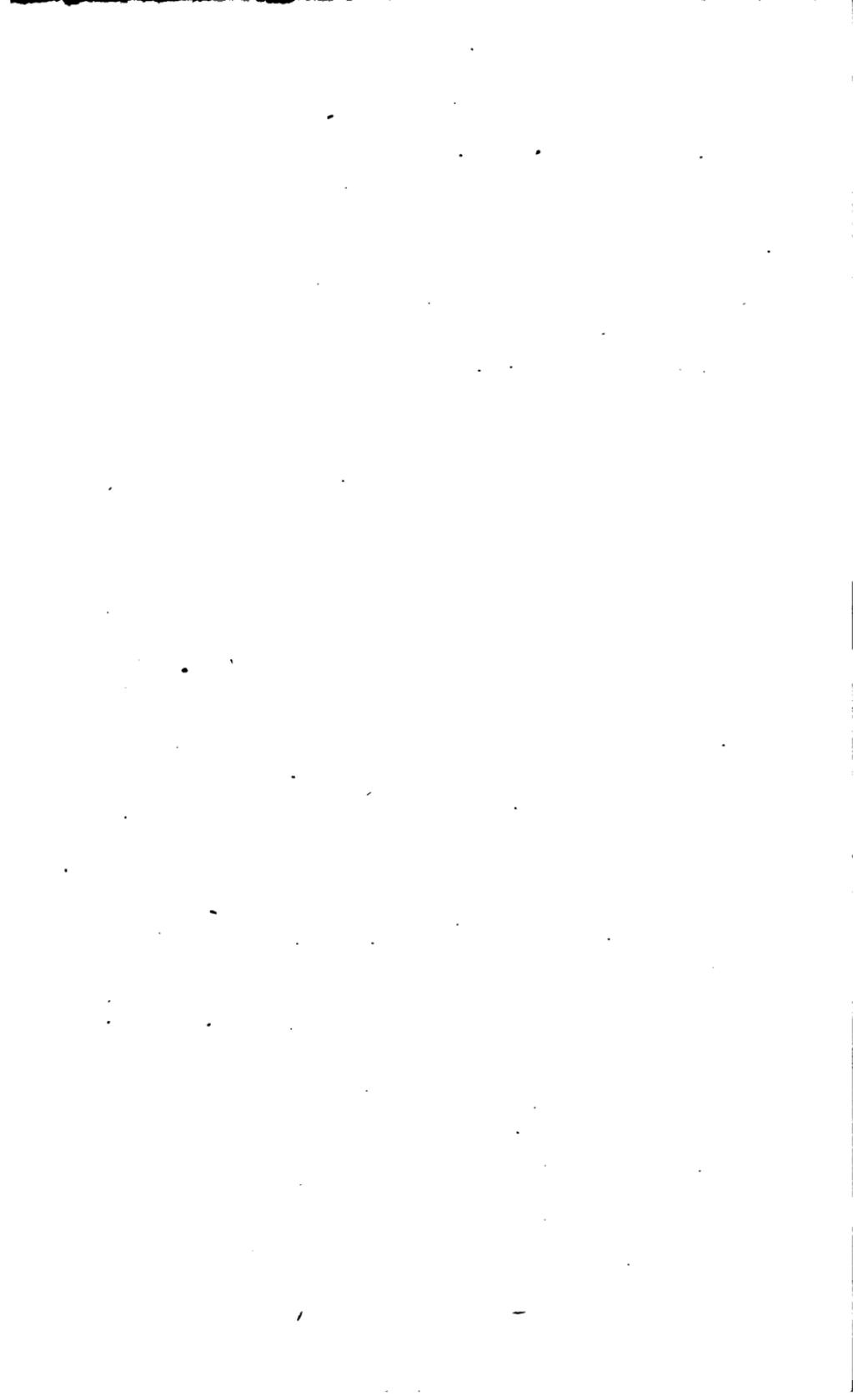
Goldberry, who was better acquainted with those in Futa-Torro, says, "The legitimate Fulahs are very fine men, robust and courageous; they have strong minds, and are reserved and prudent; they are intelligent and industrious, but, from their habitual commerce with the Moors of Zahara, they have become savage and cruel."

Mungo Park says of those of Futa-Bondu, "They are naturally of a mild and gentle disposition, but the uncharitable maxims of the Koran have made them less hospitable to strangers, and more reserved in their behavior than the Mandingoes."

Winterbottom, who traveled among them toward the close of the eighteenth century, speaks of them as peculiarly courteous and gentle.

The Fulahs have never participated in the foreign slave-trade, except in a few cases criminals have been disposed of in this way instead of being put to death. In other cases individuals of them have fallen into the hands of kidnappers, and in this way were brought to this country, or taken to the West Indies. One remarkable case of this kind was that of Ben Job Solomon, who was brought to Maryland by Captain Pyke, but was ransomed by Oglethorpe, and sent back to his own country, after having received a good education in England. Another notable case was that of Abdol Rahahman,

who was ransomed and sent to Liberia in 1838, after having been a slave in the United States for more than forty years. There is another still living in Wilmington, North Carolina, by the name of Moro, now eighty-five years of age. He has had opportunity to return to his country, but has always been averse to returning. He was expelled from his own country for crime, but found the Saviour here, and loves the country where he has found so inestimable a treasure.



# PART II.

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## CHAPTER I.

### NORTHERN GUINEA.

**Its Geographical Outlines and Divisions.—Inhabited by the Nigritian Race.—The Face of the Country.—Names given to different Portions of it.—Want of Harbors.—Form of Government.**

**NORTHERN GUINEA\*** is the largest of the three principal divisions of Western Africa. It extends from Cape Verga, 10° north latitude, to the Kameruns Mountains, in the Gulf of Benin, and lies entirely between the Atlantic Ocean on one side, and the Kong Mountains on the other. It does not extend over more than five or six degrees of latitude, but its whole length is more than fifteen hundred miles. The Atlantic forms its southern and western boundary, while the Kong Mountains bound it on the north and east, and separate it from the great kingdoms of Soudan, or Central Northern Africa. It has an area of something like half a million

\* The term Guinea is not known to the inhabitants of the country, except so far as they have borrowed it from Europeans. According to Barbot, it is derived from Genahoa, the name of a province to the north of Senegal, and being the first district inhabited by the Negro or Ethiopian race discovered by the Portuguese, the name was indefinitely applied to all the country inhabited by this people, and was thus extended over more than four-fifths of the whole coast. It was afterward applied, in a more restricted sense, to the Gold Coast, on account of its furnishing for a time a larger number of slaves for the foreign market than all other parts of the country together.

of square miles, and a population that has been variously estimated from eight to twelve millions.

The inhabitants of the country belong to what is known as the Nigritian branch of the African race, and are so called from their having descended from the great families of the valley of the Niger. They are distinguished from the inhabitants of Senegambia not only in professing the pagan, instead of Mohammedan religion, but in possessing more of the physical characteristics of the true negro. They are inferior, also, in civilization. They differ again from the inhabitants of Southern Guinea, who are known as the Ethiopian family, and are so called from their supposed descent from the ancient nations of the Nile—not so much in complexion, features, and other physical characteristics, as in their mental character, their customs and manners, their religious notions, and their social arrangements, all of which indicate a radical difference between these two great branches of the African race.

During the period which immediately followed the first discovery of the country by the Portuguese, names were given to different portions of Northern Guinea according to the articles of produce which were exported in the largest quantities. Since then commerce has undergone many changes, and these terms would not be as applicable now as they were formerly. But as they indicated the geographical outline of the country inhabited by different tribes and families, as well as their commerce, these distinctions are still proper, and may be used with great convenience. The first of these, following their geographical order, is the coast of Sierra Leone, which extends from Cape Verga to Cape Mount; second, the Grain Coast, or, as it is more modernly termed, the Liberian Coast, extends from Cape Mount to the Bay of St. Andrew's,\* and was so called on account of the

\* Most geographers make the Grain Coast to extend only to Grewe, ten miles east of Cape Palmas. But all the inhabitants between Cape

“Malaguette pepper,” or “Guinea grains,” which was exported from this district. The Ivory Coast, extending from St. Andrew’s to the Asaini River, is the third division. The Gold Coast extends from the Asaini to the River Volta, and includes, besides the Fantis, and other small tribes along the sea-coast, the more powerful kingdom of Ashanti. The Slave Coast extends from the Volta to Cape Lagos, and includes the Popos, Badagrians, and other small tribes along the sea-coast, and the great military despotism of Dehomi, in the interior. The Coast of Benin includes the delta of the Niger on the sea-coast, and the kingdom of Yoruba in the interior, which has become well known, of late years, for the missionary achievements of Abeokuta and neighboring places.

The European and American settlements, which are to be found on this part of the coast at the present day, are the British colony at Sierra Leone; the Liberian settlements on the Grain Coast; one small French settlement at Grand Bassam, and another at Asaini, on the Ivory Coast; the British forts at Dix Cove, at Cape Coast, at Anamabo, and Akra; and the Dutch forts at Axime, at Butre, at Elmina, and Akra, on the Gold Coast; two small posts recently established at Badagry and Lagos by the English, on the Slave Coast; and a small English settlement on the Island of Fernando Po, near the Coast of Benin.\* As we shall give a more detailed account of these settlements in a subsequent part of this work, we pass them by for the present without farther notice.

The coast of Northern Guinea presents great variety of natural scenery, and is every where characterized by the

Palmas and St. Andrew’s belong to the great Kru or Mepe family, between Cape Messurado and Cape Palmas; and their country, therefore, should be included in the same geographical division.

\* Fernando Po belongs to the Spanish government, but the English occupy it, and use it for important commercial purposes.

richest and most exuberant vegetation. A stranger feels almost oppressed by the rich and dense verdure which crowds upon his vision from every spot upon which the eye rests, and he can scarcely realize that a country can be tenanted by human beings, where there is so much that is primitive in appearance and unbroken in its general outlines.

Sierra Leone, Cape Mount, and Cape Messurado are bold headlands or promontories, which never fail to make a strong impression on the minds of those who have not been accustomed to the exuberant richness of tropical scenery. Between Cape Messurado and Cape Palmas the face of the country is more regular, presenting to the voyager one uniform line of dark verdure, with here and there a giant forest tree rising above the ordinary level of vegetation, and serving the mariner as a landmark to some native village, which he could not otherwise find.

On nearer approach to Cape Palmas, the country becomes higher, is more open, and gives indubitable signs of a larger population and a higher state of cultivation. Native villages may be seen dotting the broad fields which stretch back from the sea-board, on the sides and summits of high hills, and in still greater numbers along the very margin of the water. Not infrequently they cover some projecting cape, and may be seen at great distance from sea.

The coast of Drewin, to the east of Cape Palmas, rises up abruptly from the water's edge, and forms high table-land of vast extent, and of the very richest aspect. The first impression that would be made upon the mind of the voyager is, that it must be totally uninhabited; but the multitudes of healthy, robust natives who come pouring forth in their canoes from the little recesses in the sides of the hills to meet and welcome the trading ship, give a much higher idea of the population and resources of the country, than would be inferred from the scanty signs of human habitations seen from the deck of the ship. From St. Andrew's to Cape

Apollonia the coast is low and level, and presents very little to interest the eye, except the rich and extensive groves of cocoa-nuts, which completely embower and almost conceal from view the large native villages scattered along the beach.

The Gold Coast presents every variety of hill and dale, covered with the richest greensward, and adorned with almost every variety of the palm and palmetto. But the mariner, as he approaches the equatorial regions, is greatly impressed by the rich, varied, and unsurpassed magnificence of the mountains of St. Thomas, Fernando Po, and the Kameruns. This whole line of coast is sadly deficient in bays, harbors, and navigable rivers. Between Sierra Leone and the Gulf of Benin there is not a single harbor or indentation of any kind large enough to shelter vessels from the open swell of the ocean. The rivers too, though numerous, are not large enough to be navigated. They have their rise in the Kong Mountains; and as these are nowhere more than two hundred or two hundred and fifty miles from the sea-coast, these rivers are little else than mountain streams. This must ever prove a serious hindrance to the development of the commercial resources of the country. In consequence of the want of these channels of communication with the interior, the maritime tribes have little or no knowledge of the interior nations; and no produce is brought to the sea-coast except in canoes and upon the heads and shoulders of men. Their commercial operations are still farther embarrassed by the difficulty of conveying produce through the surf to vessels, which seldom anchor at less than a mile from the shore. The surf is often very heavy, and at most places can be crossed only by canoes, and not by these always without risk of life and property.

The inhabitants of Northern Guinea are not all to be placed on one common level. They possess many traits of character in common, and, compared with the civilized nations of

the world, there are none of them that can claim a higher grade than that of a barbarous or semi-civilized people. Among themselves, however, there are important differences, which are not to be overlooked in the sketch of the country which we are giving. Between Sierra Leone and Cape Lah-u—a distance of seven or eight hundred miles—there is no very marked or essential difference in their general character or condition. They live in circular huts with peaked roofs, not well lighted or ventilated, but strongly built, and quite sufficient to protect them alike from the overpowering heat of the day, and the chilly damps of night. They wear no clothing except a loose cloth around their bodies, and this, with a large proportion of the population, is scarcely sufficient for the purposes of decency. They are active and industrious, and are becoming every year more extensively engaged both in agriculture and commerce. On the Gold and Slave Coasts a different and higher grade of civilization prevails. Here the houses are constructed with clay walls, of quadrangular form, and frequently two and three stories high, and, when whitewashed, which is not uncommon, present quite an air of civilization. They wear more clothing, cultivate the soil more extensively, and have a greater variety of mechanic arts. Physically, however, the great Fanti nations are inferior to the Kru family.

There are no extended governments in any part of Northern Guinea, with the exception of the military despotisms of Ashanti and Dehomi, and these are not larger than the second or third rate kingdoms of Europe. The people, as a general thing, live in small independent communities, varying in population from one or two to fifteen or twenty thousand. The form of government every where is monarchy, but in reality has much more of the popular and patriarchal than of the monarchic element. There are two sets of influences constantly operating upon the social and political condition of the country. The tendency of one is to unite the people into

large and powerful bodies, and the other to break them up into innumerable petty clans, without power or influence. Motives of self-defense, the reputation of being a great and powerful people, the desire for plunder and aggression would lead to the former of these results; while the want of mutual respect and confidence in the honesty and capacity of each other, the aggressions upon the property and rights of individuals by despots or lawless mobs, one or the other of which is sure to arise in every large community; the want of moral restraints, without which no protective laws are of avail; the petty ambition which is felt by individuals to be at the head of a community; the fear of witchcraft, and various other motives operate to disintegrate the masses, and form them into innumerable small independent principalities. The latter of these classes of motives have preponderated for a long time, and have brought about the present state of things.

We propose to give a brief sketch of the inhabitants of each of the principal districts of Northern Guinea, but will dwell mainly upon the Kru or Mena, and the Fanti or Ashanti families, which may be regarded as representing the whole. In treating of these two leading families, we shall give a more full and detailed account of many things that have been little more than mentioned in this introductory chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

## SIERRA LEONE COAST.

The Timanis.—Susus.—Veys.—The Invention of written System by the Veys.—Other smaller Tribes on the Sierra Leone Coast.

THE three leading families on the coast of Sierra Leone are the Timanis, the Susus, and the Veys. The first of these surround the British colony of Sierra Leone on all sides. The Susus have their principal settlements near the head-waters of the Rio Pongas, and are at some distance from the sea-coast. The Veys occupy all the country about the Gallinas and Cape Mount, and extend back into the country to the distance of fifty or a hundred miles. In a social, civil, and physical point of view, there are no very marked differences in these families; but in order to carry out our plan, a brief sketch of each will be given.

*Timanis.*—According to Major Laing, the country occupied by this family is ninety-five miles in length and fifty in breadth. It is divided into four districts, each of which is governed by a chief, who styles himself a king. Formerly they occupied a district of country much farther in the interior, but some years ago forced their way to the sea-coast, and took possession of the country which once belonged to the Bullom people. Major Laing speaks of them in any other than flattering terms. He says: "They are depraved, licentious, indolent, and avaricious." But this is no more than might be said of every heathen tribe on the face of the earth. Wherever the restraints of the Gospel are wanting, indolence, avarice, and licentiousness are invariable characteristics of fallen man. Their excessive knavery, of which he speaks, may be ascribed, in part, to their participation in

the foreign slave-trade, which has never failed to impart a deeper tinge of wickedness to the character of all those who have been drawn into it.

They cultivate the soil to some extent, have small herds of domestic animals, and are engaged to a greater or less extent in barter with the English colonists of Sierra Leone. They may be seen in large numbers about the streets of Freetown, wearing a large square cotton cloth thrown around their persons. They are strong and healthy in appearance, but have a much less intellectual cast of countenance than the Mandingoes and Fulahs, who may also be seen in the same place. Like all other pagan tribes in Africa, they are much addicted to the use of fetiches, worship evil spirits, administer the red-wood ordeal, and have secret societies; but as we propose to treat of all these in another portion of the work, we pass them for the present.

*Susus.*—The Susus are a larger and more powerful family than the Timanis, but they are farther off from Sierra Leone, and are not so well known to the European residents. Their country is near the head-waters of the Rio Pongas, and, according to Hartwig, an agent of the Church Missionary Society, who visited that region, first in 1805, and again in the year following, is about one hundred English miles in circumference.

A large portion of the Susus have embraced the Mohammedan faith, but without laying aside any of the essential characteristics of paganism. Their country is hilly, but interspersed with swamps, in which they cultivate large quantities of rice. The soil is said to be good. Yams, cassava, ground-nuts, Indian corn, and other vegetable products are raised in large quantities, a considerable portion of which, especially the two last mentioned articles, find their way to the Sierra Leone market. At certain seasons they manufacture salt, and exchange it with the Mandingoes for gold, ivory, and beeswax, which is again bartered for English

merchandise, with which they purchase slaves. They are exceedingly ambitious of having domestic slaves; and it is said to be no uncommon thing for a single individual to own as many as a thousand, and this raises the master at once to the rank of a prince. Slaves are regarded in a very different light here, as in most other parts of Africa, from what they are in civilized countries. They are never subjected to any thing like steady, or hard labor, and are regarded more in the light of dependents than slaves. Polygamy prevails here also, as it does in almost every other portion of the continent of Africa.

The Susus are said to be more industrious than the Mandingoes. Their religious notions are not essentially different from other pagan communities. They acknowledge one Supreme Being, but all their religious worship is directed to evil spirits. They make a distinction, however, between these evil spirits, one class of whom are regarded in the light of the *demonia*, and the other *diaboli*, a distinction which many of the other tribes of Africa do not make.

They are represented as a kind-hearted and hospitable people, but exceedingly fond of strong drink, and are greatly addicted to intemperance. Efforts were made to introduce the Gospel among them in the early part of the present century, by the agents of the Church Missionary Society, but without any important results.

All of these tribes in the vicinity of Sierra Leone will soon be brought under the influence of Mohammedanism, if more vigorous efforts are not made to impart to them the light of the Gospel. The Mandingoes are zealous promoters of the Mohammedan faith, and they spare no pains to bring the pagan races over to the same belief. The missionary societies have long been engaged in promoting the cause of education in Sierra Leone, and it is hoped that they will be enabled before long to scatter their agents in every direction among these tribes.





*The Veys.*—This family, though not numerous or powerful, have recently invented an alphabet for writing their own language, and are enjoying the blessings of a written system, for which they are entirely indebted to their own ingenuity and enterprise. This is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable achievements of this or any other age, and is itself enough to silence forever the cavils and sneers of those who think so contemptuously of the intellectual endowments of the African race. The characters used in this system are all new, and were invented by the people themselves within the last twenty years. The idea of communicating thoughts in writing was probably suggested by the use of Arabic among the Mandingoes, and from the practice of white men who occasionally visit their country for the purpose of trade. But it is very evident that they borrowed none of their written characters from either of these sources; nor did they, it is believed, receive any assistance whatever from any one in perfecting this wonderful invention. It was commenced about twenty years ago, and the writer, who visited their country about that time, found that they could even then communicate some thoughts with the aid of this new alphabet; and some account of the discovery was published in the *Missionary Herald* for July of 1834. Since then they have continued to labor at it, and have brought it to a state of sufficient perfection for all practical purposes. The agents of the Church Missionary Society have taken it up, and metallic types have been cast in London, with which several little books have been printed for the use of the people, so that they are now enjoying the rich fruits of their own enterprise, and have fairly won for themselves a reputation which no race of men on the face of the earth ought to despise.

The Veys occupy all the country along the sea-board from Galinas to Cape Mount. It is not known how numerous they are, but they probably do not exceed fifty or one hundred thousand. They live in small huts like most of the in-

habitants of this region of country, and have no clothing except a broad square cloth thrown over their bodies, covering one arm and shoulder, and leaving the other exposed. In stature they are about the ordinary height, of slender but graceful figures, with very dark complexions, but large and well-formed heads. They are mild, and indisposed to war, but like all other native tribes who have been extensively engaged in the slave-trade, are characterized by insincerity and cunning, and have all the lower propensities of human nature disproportionably developed.

The invention of this new system of writing undoubtedly forms a marked period in their national history, and we lament that no greater efforts are made to diffuse the blessing of the Christian religion through this channel, which has been opened up in so remarkable a manner. At an early period in the history of the colony of Liberia, a school was formed among this people by Lott Carey, but was discontinued after his death.

The whole tribe have recently been brought within the jurisdiction of Liberia, and it is hoped that by the joint influence of the missionaries and Christian emigrants from this country, they may be brought within the Christian fold, and partake of all the rich blessings of the Gospel.

Besides these three leading families, there are several other smaller ones which should be noticed in order to make this sketch of the inhabitants of the Sierra Leone coast complete. Among these may be mentioned the Bissagoes, the Bulloms, the Deys, and the Gola people. The two former are to be found in the immediate vicinity of Sierra Leone. But for some causes with which we are not fully acquainted, they have been greatly diminished, and have lost their influence and power as leading tribes. Not unlike this has been the fate of the Deys and the Golas. The Deys once occupied all the country around Cape Messurado, and according to the representations of Ashmun and others, they were not only

numerous, but were formidable in arms, and more than once came very near exterminating the colony of Liberia. But they have passed away; what has become of them is not easy to say. Some of them have undoubtedly been destroyed in their wars with the colonists; others have been crowded back upon the interior tribes, who received and treated them as enemies. Many of them were captured and sold to the slave factories, which were continued in active operation, almost in sight of Monrovia, for many years after the establishment of the colony at that place. The friends and directors of the colonization enterprise, and especially the governments of Liberia and Sierra Leone, ought to see to it that the rights and the interests of the native tribes are effectually protected; otherwise the same results will follow here which have almost invariably attended the juxtaposition of civilized and uncivilized men elsewhere.

The country of the Golas lies to the east of Monrovia, and at the distance of a hundred miles or more from the sea-coast. They are not numerous, are less powerful than they were twenty years ago, and the only circumstance which has given them any notoriety is that their chief, Boatswain, took part with the American colony when it was very defenseless, and protected it from the violence of the Deys and other tribes who had conspired to effect its ruin. Boatswain had himself served several years on board of an English man-of-war when a lad, and had learned to speak the English language with ease. This gave him great influence with his own countrymen, and enabled him to protect the colonists at a time of great extremity. Since his death, which occurred twelve or fifteen years ago, his people have become greatly diminished.

## CHAPTER III.

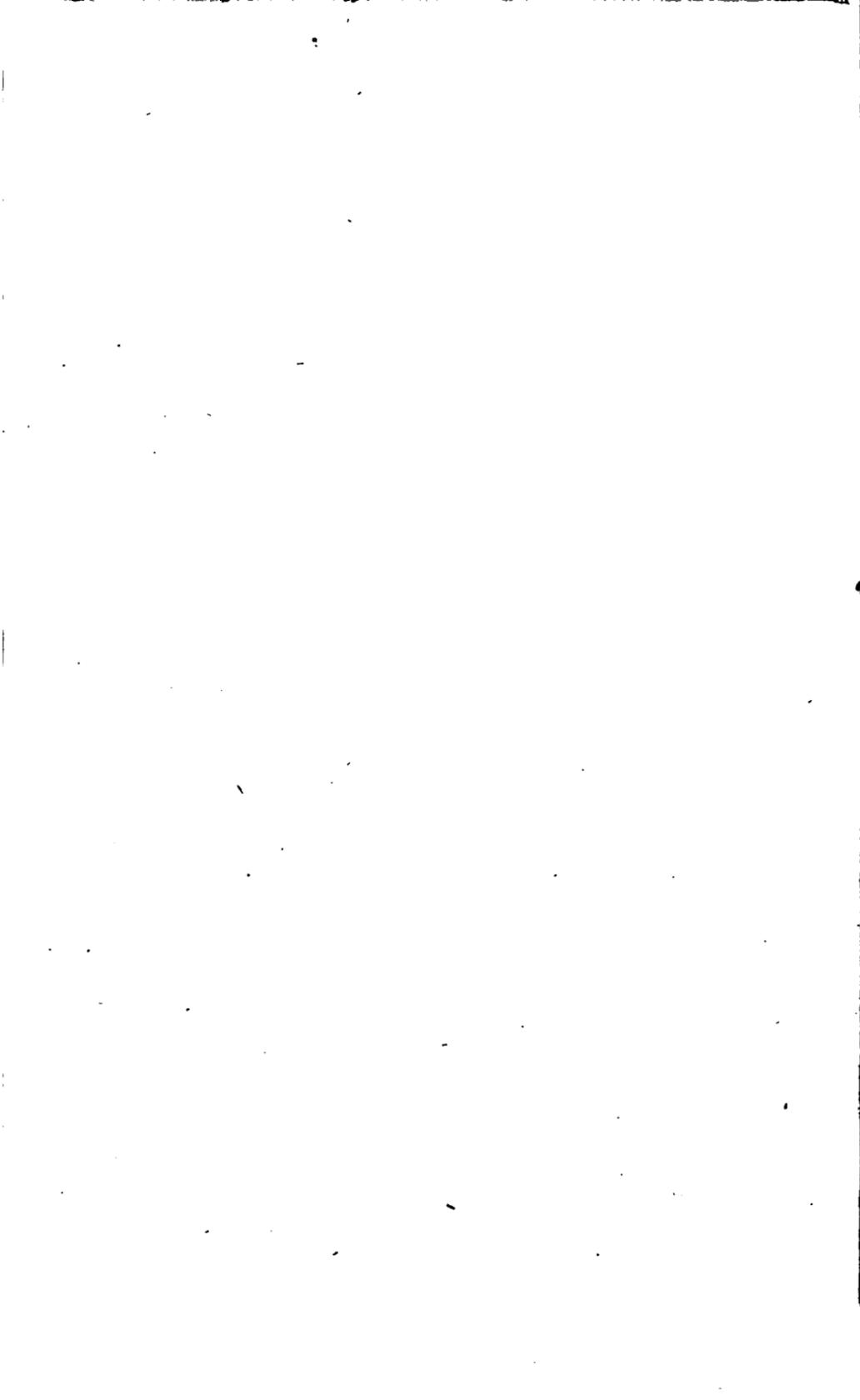
## GRAIN COAST.

Original Inhabitants.—The Physical Character of the Country.—Different Families.—Peculiar Customs.—Style of Building.—Agriculture.

By most of the early geographers, as was mentioned in a preceding chapter, the Grain Coast has been described as extending from Cape Messurado to Grewe, a point on the sea-coast, ten miles east of Cape Palmas. But if regard be had to the distribution of the inhabitants, the boundary should be extended to St. Andrew's, about one hundred and twenty miles east of this point.

Of late years this part of the country has become better known as the Liberian or Kru Coast. The inhabitants, though differing from each other in some minor points, belong, nevertheless, to one general family. They were known two hundred years ago as the Mena or Manou family, and were said to be united under one general government, the chief or king of whom was called Mandou; but whether this was the name of one distinguished individual or the general term for king is not known. It is said they emigrated to this part of the coast from a region to the northeast of Sierra Leone, and it is possible they may have been driven in this direction by some of the more powerful nations of Soudan. The present inhabitants recognize the term Mena as applicable to themselves as a people, but they have no traditional knowledge of the fact that the whole country was once united under one general government.

More recently they have become known as the Kru peo-





XEU TOWN, NEAR CAPE PALMAR.

ple. What the origin of this name is, is not certainly known.\* It is not used among themselves, except as borrowed from Europeans, and for many years it was applied to the inhabitants of the Kru country proper, a district of twenty or thirty miles in length, and about midway from Cape Messurado and Cape Palmas. But of late years it has been applied indiscriminately to all the inhabitants of this region of country.

The voyager along the coast can scarcely fail to be struck with the change in the general aspect of things when he reaches the Grain Coast, especially if the first point of contact should be to the eastward of Basa. On the previous part of his voyage, he has sailed along a portion of the coast that is characterized by deep bays and high promontories; and interiorward his eye has ranged over extensive districts of level country intersected by high ranges of mountains. The only intercourse he has had with the aboriginal inhabitants has been at the European settlements of Senegal, Goree, Gambia, and Sierra Leone, and with the colored emigrants from the United States at Cape Messurado. At all of these places he has witnessed strange and incongruous sights—the flowing together, as it were, of the waters of civilization and barbarism. The white man (rendered whiter still by the fever of Africa) and the African of the darkest hue are seen in constant intercourse; the civilized African, with an intelligent countenance and clean attire, transacting business with a sable brother from the “bush,” who has not clothing enough to hide his nakedness; the stately European dwelling surrounded on all sides by grass-covered huts; the sound of strange and unintelligible languages, and various other things, all of which are well calculated to make a strong impression upon his mind. Still there is enough to remind

\* This term may have been borrowed from the term Carow, which was applied by the early geographers to one large tribe on this part of the coast.



him that he is not yet entirely beyond the pale of civilization. But on his arrival on the Kru Coast, he feels that he has struck the very heart of barbarism itself.

The face of the country, though characterized by no very bold features, is nevertheless very varied, and presents great variety of natural scenery. In some places it spreads out into extended plains, dotted here and there with clumps of palms and palmettos, and at other points becomes broken, and presents hills and valleys of great variety and beauty. The picture becomes more imposing by the great number of native villages which begin to reveal themselves in every direction. Nor is the voyager long left in doubt by whom they are tenanted. Long before the ship has reached her anchorage she is thronged with canoes, and her decks are crowded with natives who have clambered up her sides from every possible point. These are the Krumen, and the beautiful country before you is theirs. If the stranger is surprised at their scanty covering and other indubitable tokens of savage state, he is still more so by their hale, healthy, and robust frames; their cheerful and animated countenances; and the manly and independent bearing which is evinced in all their actions. There is not a more singular and interesting race of men any where on the continent of Africa, and as the writer has spent seven years among them, and made himself acquainted with their language, he will feel justified in giving a more minute account of their character, habits, and customs, than has been given of other tribes and families that have been brought under consideration.

The inhabitants of the Grain Coast may properly be divided into six distinct families, all belonging to one common stock, but differing from each other in many minor points.

The first of these are the Basa people, who are to be found about the mouth of the St. John's River, and along its banks to the distance of forty or fifty miles. In consequence of being contiguous to the tribes of Messurado and Sierra Leone,

they have adopted the rite of circumcision, and some other customs, which would seem to ally them more closely to these than to the great Kru family to the east of them. Their language, however, has strong affinities for the Kru dialect, and they belong, beyond all doubt, to the Mena.

The Fishmen—so called from their habits of fishing—are the next in geographical order. They extend along the coast from the St. John's to the Kru country proper. Some of the settlements to the east of the Kru country have also been designated by this name. They do not differ materially from the Kru people proper, except that they are poorer, and have much less knowledge of the customs of civilized life. Some portions of the Fishmen, especially those in the vicinity of New Cestos, were much engaged in the foreign slave-trade until within a few years past, and in this way have acquired many refinements in vice which are unknown to those who have never participated in this ruinous and self-destroying practice. They have recently been involved in war with the Liberians, and, it is said, they displayed any thing but a want of courage.

The Kru people proper occupy a district of country to the eastward of the American settlement at Sinou, of twenty-five or thirty miles square. Their principal settlements on the sea-board are *Settra Kru*, *Kru Settra*, *Nana Kru*, and *King Willie's Town*, each of which contains a population of several thousands. They were the first of all the inhabitants of the Grain Coast to engage as laborers on board of ships. Of late years they may be found, in greater or less numbers, at almost every European settlement on the coast; and sometimes they find their way, as sailors, to London, Liverpool, New York, and other foreign ports. Three-fourths of the male population of the Kru country speak imperfect, but intelligible English, and they have more knowledge of the customs and habits of civilized man than any other people in Western Africa. Of late years they have abandoned, in

some measure, the circular huts which prevail every where else on this part of the coast, and now build quadrangular houses, that are raised on posts several feet above the ground. A variety of articles of furniture, of European or American manufacture, may also be seen in almost all of their houses. Unfortunately, however, their moral and social improvement has not kept pace with these signs of external improvement. It is easy for them to affect a much higher standard of civilization and refinement than they possess, and a transient observer is very liable to form a much more favorable opinion of them than their true character would justify.

The Grebo people, living on either side of Cape Palmas, if we include among them the Grand Sestros people, to whom they are closely related both by blood and language, are the largest of all the families on this part of the coast. Their intercourse with the American settlement at Cape Palmas, the instructions which their children have been receiving in the mission schools of late years, and their participation in the service of foreign ships, have placed them on a footing of equality, in point of general intelligence, with the Kru people proper. They are poorer, however, and do not conform as readily to the habits of civilized life as might be expected.

The Beribi and St. Andrew's people, to the eastward of Cape Palmas, do not differ essentially from each other, but somewhat from the Grebo people and other tribes to the west of Cape Palmas. In former years they had the reputation of being exceedingly savage, and foreigners could not trade with them without being constantly on their guard against treacherous outbreaks. Of late years they have established a better reputation, and their country is becoming quite important for its trade in cam-wood, palm-oil, rice, and live stock. The natives of St. Andrew's and Drewin are men of the largest and most athletic frames of any to be found on the coast. Their complexion is of the darkest hue,

and the habit of filing their teeth gives them quite the air of savages. Their country has the appearance of health and the greatest fertility; and when its resources are more fully developed, it will probably become one of the richest districts in Africa.

This whole race, whom we shall denominate the Kru people, have less general intelligence than the Fulahs and Mandingoes of Senegambia, and less wealth and fewer arts than the inhabitants of the Gold Coast, but they are men of nobler physical forms and more real energy of character than either. It would be difficult to find better specimens of muscular development, men of more manly and independent carriage, or more real grace of manner, any where in the world. No one ever comes in contact with them, for the first time, without being struck with their open, frank countenances, their robust and well-proportioned forms, and their independent bearing, even when they have but the scantiest covering for their bodies. Their complexion varies from the darkest shade of the negro to that of the true mulatto. Their features are comparatively regular; and, though partaking of all the characteristics of the true negro, they are by no means strongly marked in their general outline or development. The most marked deficiency is in the formation of their heads, which are narrow and peaked, and do not indicate a very high order of intellectual endowment. Experience, however, has shown that they are as capable of intellectual improvement as any other race of men.

Of late years they have become the coolies of Western Africa. There are comparatively few of them who do not now serve an apprenticeship of several years on board of foreign vessels, and thus acquire some knowledge of the habits of civilized life, as well as a smattering of the English language. They are taken on board of ships, from twelve to twenty years of age, by their parents or other connections, and engage to serve as long as the vessel remains on the coast, which may

be from three to eighteen months, or even longer. A part of his wages—which seldom exceeds two dollars per month—is paid to the father in advance. This is all that is secured to the family connections in case of his death, or in case he is left on some other part of the coast, for what he receives in payment at a distance from home is sure to be stolen or squandered. When the vessel has completed her trade, the Krumen are placed on board of some other vessel going to the Kru Coast, if there should happen to be one, and if none, they are put ashore at the first convenient place, and they must shift for themselves as best they can. Very frequently they embark on a second, third, or fourth voyage, and are thus kept afloat for three or four years together. It is not often that they can keep their earnings, which usually consist of cotton cloths, guns, cutlasses, etc., without loss, in these transfers from ship to ship; and not infrequently they get home, after an absence of three or four years, with scarcely as many months' pay—sometimes with scarcely any thing at all. If he is set down on shore any where more than fifteen or twenty miles from his native home, he is sure to be plundered of all he has, in retaliation for some aggression of the kind on the part of his own people. Should he reach home, however, with a large stock of goods, he meets with a most hearty and noisy reception on the part of his friends. Guns are fired, dances are started, and his ears are almost deafened by shouts of his own praises. A sheep, goat, or bullock, according to the amount of merchandise he has brought home, is killed, and a great family feast is prepared. For several days he is paraded about the streets in his best attire, and in various other ways is made to feel himself to be a much more important personage than he had ever dreamed himself to be. In the course of a few days a family council, including his father (if he has one), brothers, uncles, and cousins, is held for the purpose of dividing the booty, or of appropriating it to some object in which the family have a

common interest. This is seldom ever done without a boisterous quarrel, and not infrequently leads to a fight or two before the matter is fully settled. If the adventurer secures for himself one or two handsome cloths and a blue cap, a cotton handkerchief or two for his mother or favorite sister, he has all he wants. The rest, except a few articles appropriated by individual members, goes into a sort of common stock, which can not be disposed of for any particular purpose without the consent of the leading members of the family. The young man who has accumulated this money receives a wife, whom the family negotiates for immediately, if it has not already been done; and he feels that he has taken the first step toward a standing of respectability among his countrymen. In the course of a few months he is prepared for another voyage; and returns home again after another round of similar adventures, and perhaps with about the same results, and is rewarded with a second wife. This may be kept up until he is forty-five or fifty years of age, when he settles down permanently at home in the midst of his wives, and is ever after regarded as one of the fortunate men of his age. He not only has the wives he has earned by honest labor, but he may by this time have inherited as many more by the death of a brother or uncle; and has the prospect—the highest ambition of an African—of leaving behind him, when he dies, many wives and a great name.

The style of building is pretty nearly uniform throughout the Kru country. Their houses are little else than circular huts, with peaked roofs, varying from twelve to thirty feet in diameter, and from twelve to twenty in height. The body of the house is seldom more than five or six feet high, over which the peaked roof is fitted on like a cap, the edges of which extend several feet beyond the walls, and thus protect the body of the house from the sun and rain. The lower part of the house, which is usually a single room, is used for

the three-fold purpose of a kitchen, parlor, and sleeping-room. In some of the larger and more genteel houses a small room is partitioned off for a sleeping-apartment. The attic, or upper part of the house, is used as a granary. They have no chimneys. Fires are made on the floor, and the smoke passes through the thatched roof as it best can. The floors are made of clay, raised ten or twelve inches above the surface of the ground, and are so thoroughly beaten down as to be almost as hard as mason-work. Sometimes they are paved, especially near the door-way, with palm-nuts, which acquire in the course of time almost a metallic lustre. Their furniture is very simple. A few earthen pots of their own manufacture, in which they keep their



KRU HOUSES.

drinking water; a few iron pots, a few wooden bowls, a half dozen plates, and one or two wash-basins suspended around the walls, more for ornament than for use; one or two mats to sleep on, and a block of wood for a pillow; a few low wooden stools, and perhaps one or two pine chests to serve as wardrobes, constitute the entire furniture of the generality of their houses. In a few of the houses of the wealthier classes there is usually a greater display of plates, wash-basins, and pine chests. The houses are huddled together without order or arrangement, and so closely, that the projection of one roof frequently overlaps the other. The size of their villages is variable. Some do not cover more than an acre of ground, and others ten or twelve, and number from forty or fifty to a thousand or fifteen hundred houses to the village. In the centre of every village there is always a large house, of a square or oblong form, called the "Palaver House," where the people meet, from time to time, to discuss all matters of public interest.

The natives of the Kru country cultivate the soil to some considerable extent. Their farms are generally two or three miles distant from the villages, and are made at this distance to keep them out of the reach of their cattle and other domestic animals. The chief articles of agricultural produce are rice and cassava. Nearer to the villages they have inclosed gardens, in which they raise small quantities of plantains, bananas, corn, peas, beans, and a few other vegetables. The staple articles of food, however, are rice and the cassava root. The latter is raised entirely for their own consumption, and is taken from the ground as it is wanted for immediate use. Rice is raised both for their own use and exportation. The mode of cultivating the rice is very simple. A piece of fresh land is selected, and, about one month or six weeks before the commencement of the periodical rains, the trees, underbrush, and grass are cut down, and permitted to remain on the ground until they become perfectly dry. At the first intima-

tion of a coming shower, fire is set to this superincumbent mass of dried vegetation, and in the course of one or two hours every thing, except a few of the larger trunks, is reduced to ashes, presenting the appearance of a fall of snow. The ground is scarcely allowed to cool before the seed is deposited in the soil, which is done by simply scratching the surface of the ground with a little iron instrument, and depositing the seed without covering it up. It sprouts immediately after the first shower of rain, and grows so rapidly that it ordinarily needs very little weeding. When it is necessary to remove the grass, it is always pulled out with the hand. As soon as the rice begins to head it is assailed by myriads of rice-birds, and must be guarded with the utmost care for several weeks, or it would be completely destroyed. This is done by stationing boys in different parts of the field, who keep up a constant screaming, throw stones, shake dry bushes, beat old brass pans, and employ every thing they can think of to frighten away these pertinacious intruders. Sometimes they have a kind of net-work of cords extending over the field, by which they can shake dry bushes or little bells at a dozen or more points.

In four months from the time of planting the rice is ready to be harvested. The only reaping instrument used is a small blade, not larger than that of a pocket-knife, with which they cut each head of rice separately. It is tied up in snug, neat bundles, of about a hundred pounds, and carried home on their heads. It is a singular and very pleasant sight to see a long train of one or two hundred men trotting home, single file, with these large bundles of rice on their heads, screaming and shouting as they go. The party always become highly excited, and are on a full run by the time they reach the village, screaming and yelling at the very top of their voices. The rice is suspended to the rafters in the upper part of the house, and is not taken down until it is ready to be used. The smoke which is constantly passing through

the roof keeps it perfectly dry, and protects it from insects. The chaff is removed in a small wooden mortar, and this is always the work of the women.

The "cassava" is a farinaceous root that is cultivated in the West Indies and South America as well as in Africa, and as an article of food is more valuable than either the yam or sweet potato. It is the root of a shrub the leaves of which resemble somewhat those of the cotton plant, but are more elongated, have a smoother surface, and are of a deeper green. If left to grow several years, it attains to the height and size of the peach-tree, but the root loses its bulbous shape, acquires a fibrous texture, and is no longer fit for use. The Portuguese make a coarse kind of farina from it, which is prepared in various ways for use.

There are several species of this plant, one of which is poisonous, and can not be used without having been soaked in fresh water for a week or ten days. That found on the Kru coast is perfectly harmless, and may be used even in a raw state without danger. When boiled or roasted, the taste is not unlike the bread-fruit. The root has a rough, dark-brown peeling, but when this is removed it is a pure white. The mode of cultivating is more simple than even that of rice. The stem is broken into pieces of six or eight inches, and laid on the ground without being covered. They soon begin to send down roots, and a new stock shoots upward and grows very rapidly.

## CHAPTER IV.

## GRAIN COAST.

Polygamy. — Its Influence upon Society. — Marriage Relation: how formed. — Parental Relation. — Attachment of Children to their Mothers. — Why the Krumen have never participated in the Slave-trade.

POLYGAMY is a favorite institution here as it is in every other part of Africa. In their estimation it lies at the very foundation of all social order, and society would scarcely be worth preserving without it. The highest aspiration to which an African ever rises, is to have a large number of wives. His happiness, his reputation, his influence, his position in society, all depend upon this. The consequence is, that the so-called wives are little better than slaves. They have no other purpose in life than to administer to the wants and gratify the passions of their lords, who are masters and owners rather than husbands. It is not a little singular, however, that the females upon whom the burden of this degrading institution mainly rests, are quite as much interested in its continuance as the men themselves. A woman would infinitely prefer to be one of a dozen wives of a respectable man, than to be the sole representative of a man who had not force of character to raise himself above the one-woman level. That such a state of feeling should exist in the mind of a heathen woman is not surprising. She has never seen any other state of society; nor has she had any moral or intellectual training that would render such a position revolting to her better feelings. On the contrary, such is the degradation of her moral character, that she would greatly prefer the wider margin of licentious indulgence that she would enjoy as one of a dozen wives, than the closer in-

spection to which she would be subjected as the only wife of her household.

The wife is always purchased; and as this is done, in the great majority of cases, when she is but a child, her wishes, as a matter of course, are never consulted in this most important affair of her whole life. The first overture must be made to the mother. Her consent is to be won by small presents, such as beads, plates, dried fish, or a few leaves of tobacco. When this is accomplished the way is prepared for opening negotiations with the father and his family, who are the real owners of the child. The main question to be settled, and indeed the only one about which there is much negotiation, is whether the applicant is able to pay the dowry, and will be likely to do so without giving much trouble. The character of the man, his position in society, his family connections, or circumstances in life, are seldom taken into the account. The price of a wife is usually three cows, a goat or a sheep, and a few articles of crockery-ware or brass rods, the whole of which would scarcely exceed twenty dollars. The goat and the smaller articles go to the mother's family, and the cows belong to the family of the father, which pass out of their hands without much delay in payment for a wife for some other member of the family. Bullocks may be seen passing from village to village, almost every day, in fulfillment of these matrimonial arrangements. It is a very inconvenient medium of exchange, but the only one they have, and habit of long standing has reconciled them to it. If a man pays down the whole dowry at the time, he may take the child home at once, and place her under the care of his head wife or some favorite sister. If he is not able to do this, she remains with her own mother until the payment is completed, which may not be until she has attained to womanhood. In cases, however, where the negotiation has been completed, the husband-expectant places a string of beads on the neck of the child as evidence of her betrothment.

The woman is always bargained away for life. If her husband dies, she becomes the wife of a brother or some other connection, and is considered just as transferable as any other property. In case there should be a number of claimants, some regard would probably be had to her preferences; but she would not be allowed to disengage herself altogether from the family. A Christian mind can scarcely realize how such regulations could be endured even by a heathen people. But such is their insensibility and deep degradation, that even these unnatural requisitions are not regarded as a special hardship. If a woman is maltreated by her husband, she may run away and go back to her family, where she may be retained; but in all such cases they must restore twice as much as they received for her in the first instance, and hence it is the policy of the family to discountenance all such elopements. If the husband is convicted of treating her unjustly or cruelly he may be mulcted, and be brought under engagement for better conduct in future. A woman is always expected to retain a stronger attachment to her blood relations than to her husband and his connections; and in case of hostilities with the town to which she belongs, she is watched very narrowly, and not infrequently flies to her father's family and remains there until the strife is over. Her children, on the other hand, however strong their attachment to their mother, are expected to be more closely identified with the father's than the mother's family.

A man of respectability is always expected to provide a separate house for each one of his wives. The houses of the same man are always contiguous to each other, and not infrequently are surrounded by a palisade fence to separate them from the other houses of the village. Each woman is mistress of her own household, and is not liable to be interfered with by any of her co-wives. She provides for herself, her children, and entertains her husband as often as he favors her with his company. If he has a large number of

wives he can bestow but a moderate portion of his time upon any one. If it is necessary for him to watch his wives, they in turn are not less jealous of any superabundant attentions that he might confer upon any one of their own number. The chief business of his domestic life is to adjust these petty jealousies, and, to a still greater extent, the quarrels and strifes which are hourly springing up among the children of the different branches of the same household. To meet all these cases aright requires more than Job's patience and Solomon's wisdom. One would think that such annoyances would cure them of their love of polygamy, but such is not the case. Habit has inured them to this kind of endurance, and they see, or fancy they see, much more serious difficulties connected with the habits of civilized life. What is a man to do in case of the sickness or absence of his wife, if he has only one? who are to provide for his guests? what is he to do in case his only wife is angry or out of humor with him? These and similar difficulties spring up in his mind whenever the subject is mentioned, and such is their magnitude in his eyes, that he would submit to ten times as many annoyances rather than give up this favorite practice, or expose himself to the hazards of a different system. Nothing short of Christianity can ever reconcile them to any change in their habits in this respect; and until they are brought under its power, we can expect to see very little improvement in their social condition.

One of the most revolting facts connected with the marriage relation is that the husband, in case of the death of a wife, is not infrequently suspected of having been the cause of it. The charge of witchcraft is almost invariably preferred against him or some of his connections, and he seldom escapes without paying a pretty large fine. Unnatural as this practice is, it is not without its uses in a community where moral restraints are unknown. The apprehension of being fined, and consequently branded as a cruel man, restrains

him from abusing his wife when no other motive would, and makes him use every means to preserve her life as long as possible.

The African race are not entirely without natural affection. Heathenism and the slave-trade have done much to destroy this feeling, but they have not eradicated it from their hearts. It still remains there, and can never be entirely uprooted. Nothing but the genial influence of Christianity is wanting to develop this and other elements of excellence in the African race, and make them one of the most amiable and affectionate people on the face of the earth. Among the Kru people this trait of character shines forth amidst all the absurdities and unnatural restraints to which, in their heathenish darkness, they have subjected themselves. It shows itself in every relation of life to greater advantage than that of the marriage connection, which, in reality, is little else than that of master and slave. The parental relation is very strong. Men of large and robust frames, whose countenances indicate any thing but the milder graces of humanity, may be seen bearing about in their coarse, brawny arms, tender infants, and bestowing upon them the most lavish expressions of overflowing affection. Brothers and sisters are bound together by the strongest cords of natural affection. But the strongest of all the natural ties are those between the mother and her children. Whatever other estimate we may form of the African, we may not doubt his love for his mother. Her name, whether dead or alive, is always on his lips and in his heart. She is the first being he thinks of when awaking from his slumbers, and the last he remembers when closing his eyes in sleep. To her he confides secrets which he would reveal to no other human being on the face of the earth. He cares for no one else in times of sickness. She alone must prepare his food, administer his medicines, perform his ablutions, and spread his mat for him. He flies to her in the hour of distress; for he

well knows, if all the rest of the world turn against him, she will be steadfast in her love, whether he is right or wrong.

If there is any cause that justifies a man in using violence toward one of his fellow-men, it would be to resent an insult offered to his mother. More fights are occasioned among boys by hearing something said in disparagement of their mothers, than by all other causes together. It is a common saying among them, if a man's mother and his wife are both on the point of being drowned, and he can save only one of them, he must save his mother, and for the avowed reason, if the wife is lost he may marry another, but he could never find a second mother.

This strong and characteristic love for the mother is greatly strengthened by the peculiar state of society existing among them. The attention and the affections of the father are necessarily divided among several families of children. He is called upon to act as umpire in the little feuds that are constantly arising among the children of the different mothers of the same household, and in every case must decide against one or both of the parties. They hear charges of partiality preferred against the father by their mothers, and in many cases they are induced to question whether their fathers feel any interest in them at all. Any feelings of filial affection which they may have for their fathers are generally developed at a more advanced period of life, when they can appreciate their position better, and when, in their intercourse with out-door society, they have more frequent need of the father's than the mother's intervention.

The mother, on the other hand, secures the earliest bud-dings of the child's affection. She provides for all his wants, is his constant companion and protector, and in all his petty squabbles with other children she is always his friend and partisan.

Nothing like steady or systematic government is maintained over children by either parent. They grow up, for

the most part, without any restraints except those imposed by the necessities of society. A truant boy is afraid of his parents only when they are under the influence of angry feelings. If he can escape in the moment of passion, he is sure to go clear, for they never punish except under such circumstances.

Various kinds of expedients are employed to keep children in due subjection. Hobgoblin stories are detailed to them in the most frightful colors. Charms, or fetiches, are bound around their necks, and they are made to believe that they will inflict immediate death for every trespass. One of the most common and terrible kinds of punishment inflicted upon disobedient boys is to rub red pepper in their eyes. Their screams and yells under the operation are savage beyond description, and it is a wonder that their sight is not entirely destroyed. I have never known, however, a case where any permanent injury was inflicted in this way. Adult offenders are sometimes subjected to a still severer punishment. They are made fast in the roof of the house and thoroughly smoked with pepper. The lungs, in this case, are the chief seat of distress, and violent coughing and sneezing is continued until the strength of the man is well-nigh exhausted. I have never heard of a case of death, however, produced by this torture; but it is probable that serious injury is inflicted in many cases, though not obvious at the time.

The Kru people, with the exception of those about Basa, have never been engaged in the foreign slave-trade; nor is there any domestic slavery among them, except to a very limited extent. How they came to escape the blighting effects of this pernicious traffic, it is not easy to understand. They were as much exposed to the temptation of participating in it as any other people on the sea-coast. But they never engaged in it to any considerable extent. It has been alleged that they were so serviceable to vessels trading on the coast, in the character of laborers, that it was by com-

mon consent of foreigners that they were not to be sold as slaves. But this is no solution of the matter. There may have been a few foreigners whose interest would have led them to this line of policy; but there were multitudes of others who went there that had no other interest in the country beyond the procuring of slaves, and there were no Africans that would have been more marketable abroad than the Krumen themselves. It is much more probable that the sturdy, independent character of the people themselves made this traffic impossible. But while they had no disposition to see this business carried on in their own country, they had no scruples about engaging as laborers on board of ships that were employed in it. The marks which they wear on their faces, shoulders, and arms, were intended to designate themselves as freemen, and this, no doubt, has prevented them, in many cases, from being made slaves in foreign ports.

## CHAPTER V.

## GRAIN COAST.

Products of the Country.—Palm-oil: how manufactured.—Cam-wood. Malaguette Pepper.—Articles of Food, and the Mode of preparing it.—Domestic Habits of the Kru Women.—Their Dress.—Ornaments.

THE principal articles of commerce on this part of the coast are palm-oil, cam-wood, Malaguette pepper, or Guinea grains, as it is sometimes called, rice, and small quantities of ivory. Palm-oil is the most important of these, and is increasing in quantity every year. Twenty-five or thirty years ago, where scarcely a gallon was produced for sale, now hundreds of tons are annually exported, and the capabilities of the soil for its production has scarcely any limit. The oil when fresh is of a transparent orange color, and is extensively used in this country, and in England and France, in the manufacture of the finer kinds of soap, in candles of an excellent quality, by the apothecary for various purposes, and on the more delicate parts of steam machinery. The palm-tree yields a large number of burs in clusters; each bur is filled with small oval nuts, black when unripe, but of a beautiful red when ready to be gathered. The nut proper is inclosed in a pulp, from which the oil is expressed in the most simple manner. The nuts being boiled and bruised in a mortar, are thrown in a trough of clean water, and stirred for some time, when the oil rising to the surface is skimmed off, and placed in earthen jars for use. The kernel, being very hard, is seldom used by the natives, except in seasons of great scarcity of food. A machine has been invented in one of the European settlements for crushing it,

and an oil of fine quality, and in large quantities, has been produced. Frenchmen use it in making their best pomatum. This, then, promises to be one of the largest branches of trade in the world, as the tree grows without cultivation, and yields fruit for fifty years or more. The tree itself, a beautiful growth, with its tuft of fringe-like leaves, is a striking feature in African scenery, extending, as it does, over a belt of a hundred miles, along the whole coast from Senegal to Benguela.

Cam-wood produces a beautiful blood-red dye. This tree is not found so extensively as the palm, and is confined to certain localities, not being seen in large quantities near the sea-coast. The wood is brought to Monrovia and Basa, and is sometimes purchased at Butre and St. Andrew's, but not often at the intermediate places. It is valued in the American market at from \$50 to \$85 per ton.

Rice is not often taken to foreign ports, but is much used on board ships of all nations for Krumen and others, and may be considered the staff of life in all the European and American settlements. Its growth is confined to the country lying between the Gambia and St. Andrew's.

The Malaguetta pepper, or Guinea grain, is what gives this part of the coast the name it bears. The grain is of a brown color, of irregular shape, and pungent to the taste. The growth is singular. A stem, not unlike the broom-corn, shoots up to the height of eight or ten feet, and near the root of this a shorter stock is seen, which, in the fruit-bearing seasons, blossoms and bears a red pod that contains the pepper, inclosed in an acid pulp, very pleasant to the taste, and eaten with perfect safety. When taken from the pod the grains are dried in the sun or before a fire. The demand for this article in the European market has been very variable. In former years it was taken to England in large quantities, and used in the manufacture of malt liquors.

but was afterward interdicted because it was thought to be poisonous.

This can be explained by the fact that there is a poisonous species which grows abundantly in the country, and which the natives sometimes mix with the genuine without the liability of detection. The genuine Malaguette is an important article in the materia medica of the native doctor, being used both as a stomachic and external irritant.

A small quantity of ivory is found here, but it is not of the best quality; and gold dust is sometimes offered to the trader, but it is probably brought from Cape Lahu, and not the interior.

The food of the Kru people consists of but few articles, and these are prepared in the most simple manner. Rice and cassava are the vegetables most used. Beef, mutton, fowls, fish, shell-fish, and game of almost every kind, from the leopard to the wood-rat, is used, but in comparatively small quantities. Any man who can have a bowl of rice and palm-oil placed before him twice in the day, would be called a good liver. Meat is generally served in the form of soup, but it is so highly seasoned with pepper as to defy the palates of civilized men. The women pride themselves upon their skill in boiling rice, and there is no question that they carry the art to the highest perfection. When the meal is ready they do not call in the aid of a neatly-spread table, or knives or forks, or even spoons to tempt the appetite, but seated on the floor around a large wooden bowl of white rice, a woman pours over it the fresh fragrant palm-oil, and each man thrusts his hand into the dish, and taking up a quantity of the mixture, rolls it in a hard ball, then throwing his head back, and opening his mouth to its greatest extent, stores away the precious morsel with little or no mastication. They have no regular hours for their meals to be served, the men calling upon one or the other of their wives to prepare something whenever they feel the cravings of hunger, and

the women and children eating at such times as may best suit them. The hands are washed, and the mouth rinsed with great care after each meal; even the children, when away from their mothers, seldom omit it. They assign this practice as the reason why they, as a general thing, have good teeth, and preserve them to old age. This is not only a practice with the Kru people, but all along the coast. Although when food is placed before them they can devour it in large quantities, and many times during the day, it is almost incredible how many hours they can be engaged in paddling canoes under a burning sun, or walking weary miles in the forest without tasting a mouthful of any thing, except, perhaps, a draught of water from the little stream that runs by the side of their path. When a man, or a party of men go to a neighboring village, they are sure to have lodgings and food provided for them during their stay, and no remuneration is asked or expected, knowing that the same kindness will be extended to them should business or pleasure call them to return the visit. But the hospitality of the Krumen, like all other African tribes, is marred when brought in contact with white men. In their desire to possess themselves of articles of European manufacture, with the possession of which the white man is always identified, their cupidity gets the ascendancy of their hospitality, and they expect, and not infrequently betray a desire to receive more than an equivalent for the sheep or fowl that they "gave" the foreign guest that tarries with them for a night.

Like other branches of the human family, the Africans are fond of strong drink, and, when they have the means, are much addicted to intemperance. They greatly prefer the distilled liquors of Europe or America to any thing they can prepare themselves, and New England rum always commands a high premium. The only intoxicating drink of their own production is the palm-wine. This is merely the sap of the palm-tree, obtained by tapping it under the

leaves, and suspending a calabash to catch the liquor as it flows, or by cutting the tree down, and taking the sap at the upper end of the trunk, where an orifice is made, from which it continues to flow for several days in succession. The wine is of a pale whitish color, of a sweet but peculiar taste when fresh, but when fermentation commences it acquires a bitter taste, and is about as strong as hard cider. The natural bitterness is so agreeable to the drinkers, that they increase it by putting in a root, which adds also, I suspect, to the exhilarating qualities of the beverage. It must be taken in very large quantities to produce drunkenness, and the effects are so distressing that it is not of frequent occurrence. Palm-wine is usually brought out after the principal meal. The large earthen jar that contains it is placed in the midst of the company, and the tuft of leaves that has covered the mouth of the vessel to prevent the escape of the liquor, in consequence of its rapid fermentation, is removed by the woman in whose house it has been kept, and who is required to take the first and last draught, to convince the guests that she has not been dealing in poison or witchcraft. This she does cheerfully, as a proof of entire innocence, and a shield against suspicion in case any one of the party should become suddenly ill. After this ceremony, which is called "taking off the fetich," is over, a young man, who is supposed to be acquainted with the different individuals who compose the party, dips up the wine with a mug, and presents it to each individual in succession, always, however, beginning with the host as a farther precaution against all foul play. If there is a man of special and acknowledged importance, he is served two or three times, according to his rank, each time the cup-bearer passes around. Often, instead of having it brought to the house, large parties repair to the wood where the wine is made, and spend the entire afternoon in drinking and frolicking, often ending in quarreling and fighting. Distilled liquors seem to have a different ef-

fect upon them. It stupefies rather than excites, and under its influence the African is more apt to steal away and sit moodily for hours and doze until the effects of the potation have passed. He can not indulge for any length of time in these excesses. His constitution will not endure the steady use of intoxicating drinks for a considerable length of time, and a drunkard of this race seldom attains to old age.

The Kru people, as a general thing, are cleanly in their persons and houses. All classes perform daily ablution with hot water, and the adults often twice in the day. After the thorough application of water and a coarse towel made of grass-cloth, they rub a small quantity of oil over their entire person, which imparts a bright and healthful appearance to the skin, and is no doubt greatly promotive of their general health. This care of their bodies, with the little clothing they wear, prevents in a great measure those distressing odors which are so characteristic of the race when a due regard to cleanliness is wanting. Their houses are small, and, though poorly lighted and ventilated, are almost always neat, the Kru matron priding herself on her well-swept floor, and the order in which her earthen pots filled with pure water are arranged, and her wood cut and piled around her humble dwelling. Long before the sun is above the horizon may be heard the jingle of the little bells worn as ornaments around the ankle of these thrifty housewives, as they hasten in merry bands to the spring, to fill their pitchers while the water is yet cool. And during the whole of the day they may be seen engaged in pounding rice in mortars, or in preparing it as food for their lords, when they arouse from their slumbers or come in and express a wish to partake of it. They attend carefully, too, to the wants of their children, washing and oiling their persons, braiding their hair, and giving them food at any hour, day or night, that they may ask for it. The mats that are spread at night on the floor for the family to sleep on are carefully rolled up in the morning, and put

away; so that it may with truth be said of them, that they have a place for every thing and every thing in its place. They make ornaments of every thing; even the wash-basins, bowls, and plates that they procure from ships, soon have a hole pierced in the edge, and are suspended against the wall to proclaim the wealth of the inmate. Their simple cooking is usually done in the presence of the family, and with so much care and regard to cleanliness, that the most fastidious would not hesitate to partake of it. If a white man is to be entertained, a pine chest is brought out to be used as a table, and covered with a cotton cloth—whether white or colored it matters not—and a plate, knife and fork, and spoon is provided for his use, if the village can furnish either of these articles. He is not, however, allowed to touch the food that is placed before him until the lady of the house, she who has prepared it, has taken with her fingers a small portion from each dish and eaten it in his presence, which is equivalent to an oath that she has put no ingredient in the food that would harm him. In addition to their domestic duties, the Kru women do much work on the farm also, each wife having her distinct field of rice, cassava, ground-nuts, etc., to attend to; and she is very ambitious that it should be large and carefully weeded, so as to make a large return for labor bestowed. The women are robust and strong, and are capable of carrying immensely heavy burdens on their heads. Every evening they may be seen trudging home with large water-pots, or a bundle of wood of a hundred pounds' weight on their heads, and perhaps a sleeping child slung to their backs. They can in this way walk for miles, without ever raising the hand to steady or adjust these heavy burdens. This is all that can be said in their favor. They know nothing of womanly delicacy, regard themselves as little better than beasts of burden, and are much below the men in general intelligence.

The engagements of the men are more varied, and while it

is true that they do not perform as much hard labor as the women, they are by no means indolent. They usually spend six weeks or two months in preparing the farm for planting, and as much in the season of harvesting. On board ships, where their services are always needed, they are active, and make strong and able oarsmen. They are always in demand at the trading establishments, where they are active and obliging, if treated with justice and kindness; but sullen, obstinate, and perverse if imposed upon. On all parts of the Kru coast the people wear but little clothing. A cotton cloth, two yards long and a half yard wide, tied around the waist, is the general dress of the men; and the women have even less. A few of the wealthier classes have a large square cloth thrown over the shoulder, and descending to the knee. Hats are also worn by this class; and where a cloth coat or a seaman's jacket can be had, it is greatly prized, and much used in damp or chilly weather.

Both men and women wear beads on their necks, and coarse iron rings around their legs and ankles. The women use, in addition, brass and copper rings on their arms, and generally as many as they can carry. But the men prefer broad ivory rings, on which some friendly sailor has carved their names in large letters. There is a blue bead brought from the Gold Coast, called the popo bead, which is in high repute with the Kru people. They are esteemed of more value than gold, and the man who can display two or more of these on his own, or the neck of his favorite wife, is quite a nabob. The teeth of the tiger, when strung together, are also used as a great ornament, and when on those parts of the coast where these animals abound, the Kruman will barter any thing he has for the teeth, to take home as gifts to his wives or sisters.

## CHAPTER VI.

## GRAIN COAST.

Government.—Gnekbade.—Sedibo.—Kedibo.—Deyábo.—Deliberative Assemblies.—Specimens of Natural Oratory.—Division of the Community into Families.—No Revenues.—Trade: the Mode of conducting it.

In contemplating the moral and intellectual character of the Krumen, their social and civil condition, their religious belief and superstitious practices, we find very little to entitle them to any higher rank than that of rude and uncultivated savages. It is true they are sociable in their habits and feelings, and when taken into the employment of white men—which is one of the highest objects of their ambition—they can be trained to habits of industry, and made useful in almost every department of domestic labor. But they seldom take with them to their native homes, or retain for any length of time, any of the civilized habits they have acquired during their sojourn among strangers. They soon lose all traces of civilization, except a smattering of the English language, which they not infrequently retain through life.

They have no knowledge of the theory of government, and show very little desire or capacity for forming themselves into extended political organizations. The largest body of men to be found on this part of the coast united under the same government would scarcely exceed ten or twelve thousand.

The ostensible form of government among them is monarchy. Hence every village or cluster of small villages has its king, its prince, its governor, dukes, etc. But these terms have undoubtedly been borrowed from European nations, and are not the proper indices of any corresponding offices among

themselves. The prevailing form of government, if this term may properly be used, is a much nearer approximation to a pure democracy than any other type of government of which we have any knowledge.

The body politic is composed of three classes of persons, which together comprise almost the entire adult male population. The first and most prominent of these are the *Gnekbade*, or old men, who occupy about the same position in the community as the Jewish elders did in the Israelitish commonwealth. Their influence is always very considerable, and in most cases, especially if they are united among themselves, their authority is seldom contravened. In their deliberative assemblies, or "palavers," as they are better known in African parlance, their authority is equal to that of a senate. They have two presiding officers, one of whom is called *Bodio*, and the other *Worabank*. The former exercises the functions of a high-priest, and is regarded as protector of the whole nation. He lives in a house provided for him by the people, and takes care of the national fetiches. He enjoys some immunities in virtue of his office, but is subject to certain restrictions which more than counterbalance his privileges. His house is a sanctum to which culprits may betake themselves without the danger of being removed by any one except by the bodio himself. His office entitles him to a choice bit of every animal that is killed, and the community must see to it that he does not suffer from the want of food. On the other hand, he is responsible, in name at least, for the health of the community, the productiveness of the soil, for an abundance of fish in the sea and rivers, and is blamed if ships do not visit their coast frequently enough to keep them supplied with tobacco. If the country should be subjected to prolonged distress from any of these or similar causes, the bodio is liable to be deposed from office, and be dealt with like any private member of the community. His badge of office is an iron ring worn around the ankle, which is regarded with as much

eneration as the most ancient crown in Europe, and the incumbent suffers as deep disgrace by its removal as any monarch in Europe would by being deprived of his crown. The worabanh exercises no special authority except in times of war, and then he is a sort of generalissimo. The office is an honorable one, and no one is ever installed in it unless he has given some undoubted proof of bravery.

The second, and altogether the most powerful class in the body politic, are the *Sedibo*, or soldiery. They comprise the great mass of the middle-aged men. No one can be received into their ranks without the payment of a fee, which is usually a cow. The sedibo form the strength, and are really the bulwark of the nation. They fight all their battles, protect the property of the nation, and are the strong arm upon which the people lean in times of danger. But as a body they are exceedingly rapacious and overbearing, and the community to which they belong pays roundly for their protection.

In times of war they lay their hands upon any man's property that comes within their reach; and if any one has the temerity to complain or remonstrate, he is charged with insolence, and suffers four-fold in consequence. Being a member of the body does not shield any one from their rapacity, for when they have nobody else to plunder, they prey upon the members of their own order; and there are but few individuals in the community, whether belonging to the sedibo or not, who have not had their entire property confiscated once or more in their lives, and, in the great majority of cases, upon no other charge than that of being insolent.

Connected with the sedibo are two officers, one of whom is called the *Ibadio*, and the other *Tibawah*. Neither of these, however, occupies any very prominent place in the eyes of the community; nor do they perform any important functions, except certain rites and ceremonies connected with their own order.

The third class are the young men, who are called the *Kedibo*. They are not influential or powerful, and can scarcely be looked upon in any other light, as a body, than as a stepping-stone to that of the soldiery.

The *Deydibo*, or doctors, form a fourth class, but they have very little to do with the general affairs of the country, and seldom take any part in their deliberative assemblies.

It is difficult to say on what principles these classes were originally formed, but probably by the sympathy that naturally draws persons of the same ages and circumstances together.

In all cases where any object of public interest is to be discussed, or law to be enacted, the three first classes, just described, are present, and take part in the discussion. The members of the *kedibo* seldom speak, however, unless the subject of discussion has special reference to their own body, or some individual member of it.

Their deliberative assemblies are generally held in the palaver house, or in the open air, and are conducted with propriety and decorum, unless something specially exciting should arise in the course of their deliberations. The party who are interested, and who are expected to have a voice in the proceedings of the meeting, form themselves into a circle, which varies in size according to the interest that is felt and the number who are present. Much ceremony is observed in relation to the arrangement of the different classes who form the body politic, and the place occupied by the officers of these different grades. Every man brings his own stool, and knows what place he is to occupy in the circle without being told. The discussion is generally opened by some one appointed for the purpose, and this is done with as much gravity as in any of the assemblies of civilized men. The speaker takes his stand in the centre of the circle, with a long staff in his hand, and says, "bateo" (listen), to which the people reply, "bate" (we do listen). He then states the

object for which the assembly has been convened, asks their counsel and advice, and then throws down the staff to be used by the speakers in succession, and goes back to his seat. Some one (generally the younger members speak first) rises up, adjusts his cloth, as if he were about to perform an important duty, takes up the long staff, and makes a harangue. The staff is turned to good account by tracing on the ground certain marks to indicate the different points in the speech, and great emphasis is imparted to an argument sometimes by bringing it heavily upon the ground. At the conclusion it is thrown down violently on the ground to express strong emotion or fixed determination; but if the speaker should be in a gentler mood, it is quietly handed to the next person ready to take the floor. The use of the staff prevents more than one person from speaking at the same time, and it might add to the decorum of more august bodies if a similar usage were adopted. When all the members of the *sedibo*, who may be regarded as the popular body, have spoken, the members of the *gnekbade*, who may be regarded as the senate, commence the discussion, and give the results of their more matured judgments. All questions are settled by the popular voice, and this is generally known and understood without the formality of a vote. Sometimes the *gnekbade* and the *sedibo* take opposite sides of the question, and in such cases, if strong feeling has been awakened, the latter, being the more powerful party, generally carry their point, but it is done with as little show of disrespect for the old men as possible.

Some of the best specimens of oratory may be heard in these African assemblies. Their popular speakers show almost as much skill in the use of happy illustrations, striking analogies, pointed argument, historical details, biting irony, as any set of public speakers in the world; and for ease, grace, and naturalness of manner, they are perhaps unsurpassed. The audience usually express their assent by a sort

of grunt, which rises in tone and frequency in proportion as the speaker becomes animated, and not infrequently swells out into a tremendous shout, and thus terminates the discussion in accordance with the views of the speaker. He has said exactly what was in the heart of the assembly, and they have no more to say or hear on the subject.

Matters judicial as well as legislative are settled in these popular assemblies. The sedibo are intrusted with the execution of all decrees. Some of the less important are intrusted to the kedibo, but the weightier ones they execute themselves. And not only do they execute all laws enacted in the popular assemblies, but they enact and execute others that have been originated among themselves. They are in reality the governing body, and their authority is exercised in many cases with unsparing oppression. They not only confiscate the property of others, but that of the members of their own order for the most frivolous cause. Any one who is more fortunate than the rest of his fellow-men in heaping up property, becomes an object of envy, and for the charge of arrogance—"too much sass"—of which he may or may not have been guilty, his property is confiscated, and he is reduced to the common level, if not sunk some degrees below it.

Another important class in all these communities is the deyâbo, a set of professional men who combine the medical and priestly office in the same person. They are numerous and influential, but have nothing to do, strictly speaking, with the political or general affairs of the country. They attend the sick and administer medicines, which usually consist of decoctions of herbs or roots, and external applications. A doctor is expected to give his undivided attention to one patient at a time, and is paid only in cases of successful treatment. If the case is a serious one, he is expected to deposit with the family, as a security for his good behavior and faithful discharge of duty, a bundle of hair that was shorn

from his head at the time he was inaugurated into office, and without which he could have no skill in his profession whatever. But his office pertains to spiritual as well as material things. He professes to hold intercourse with demons, and sometimes has communications from God. If a case of sickness falls into his hands that will not yield to the ordinary remedies, a consultation is held with demons, and the man is restored through supernatural aid, or it is ascertained that he is bewitched, and a different process must be instituted before he can be relieved. No one can be received into this conclave without spending two years or more of discipleship with some eminent member of the fraternity. During this period he must accompany his preceptor in all his journeyings, perform a variety of menial services, is prohibited from shaving his head, and must not wash his face or allow water to be applied to any part of his body, unless perchance he fall into a stream, or is overtaken by a shower of rain, when he is at liberty to get off as much of the dirt of his body as possible.

When his studies are completed, comes the great feat of shaving the head, which is nothing less than induction into office. It is an occasion of interest to the community at large, and to his immediate family it is specially so. He is not subject to a formal examination by a board of trustees, but is required to evince his proficiency in a different way. The head of a chicken is secretly deposited in one of a number of earthen jars provided for the occasion, and he is required to go and point out the one in which it is secreted. If he does this promptly, it is conclusive proof of his qualification to be a doctor, and is the occasion of unbounded exultation on the part of his friends. His head is then shorn, and the hair is carefully folded up and kept as an indispensable means of success, and is pawned sometimes for his faithfulness, as mentioned above. The doctor's badge of office is a monkey's skin, which he carries in the form of a roll wher-

ever he goes, and of which he is quite as proud as his white brother is of his sheep-skin diploma.

In many parts of Africa this class of men have great influence and power over their countrymen; but less, perhaps, among the Krumen than among others. These people, in consequence of their constant intercourse with civilized men, seem to have lost confidence in the extravagant pretensions of their doctors. They are permitted to live in quietness in the community, and those who are disposed to invoke their aid are at liberty to do so. But they have little to do in public affairs, except to find out those who have been suspected of witchcraft. They are a designing set of men, however, and are the authors of more mischief than any other class of men whatever. The most lucrative part of their calling is the manufacture and sale of fetiches, or charms. For these they can always command a good price if they can only persuade the purchaser that they possess the virtues for which they are recommended; and all that is necessary to enable a man to do a good business in this line is to get his reputation up, and one or two successful hits is always sufficient for this. If one or two fetiches which he has made are reported to have accomplished the object for which they were recommended, the reputation of the doctor is established, and soon he has more applications than he can well attend to.

There is another feature in the constitution of society here which must not be overlooked. It is the division of the community into families, and of this quite as much is made as among the Israelites. Among the Grebos, who live in the immediate vicinity of Cape Palmas, the number of families is twelve, and these have been kept distinct from time immemorial. Connected with each of these there is a head man, who is generally the oldest male member of the family. The property of all the members of the family, with the exception of a few articles of comparatively little value, is held as a common stock, and can not be disposed of without the

concurrence of its leading members. The head man is the representative of his own family in all public assemblies, and he is responsible to the public for the good behavior of all its members. If one of the younger members is guilty of any misdemeanor short of capital crime, the head man of the family is brought to trial, and he must pay from the family stock any fine that may be imposed on account of the misdemeanor. This, as may readily be seen, indirectly countenances the perpetration of crimes by the younger members of society, and the only check which can be imposed upon it is the interest of the family. This is plied in all its force, and has contributed very essentially, no doubt, not only to restrain vicious conduct, but to promote at the same time that clannish or tribal feeling for which the African race are so much distinguished. The predominant feeling of the uncultivated African is selfishness. Next to this is his love of family, and to betray its interest, no matter under what circumstances, is an offense of the gravest character. Toward the community in which he lives he is conscious of entertaining no feelings of special interest, except when their rights as a community are invaded; then he is ready to make common cause against their enemies. It may naturally be thought that the investment of the property of individuals in one common stock would restrain individual enterprise; undoubtedly it does, but not to the full extent, perhaps, that might be thought. In the disbursement of this property, which is chiefly in the purchase of wives, some regard is usually had to the proportionate amount contributed by different individuals. So, likewise, in their discussions relating to all such matters, it is natural that one who has contributed largely to this common fund, and thereby sustained the respectability of the family, would have a more weighty voice than one who has been little else than a drone.

All judicial cases are settled by the people in their collect-

tive capacity. Sometimes witnesses are examined, and it is always under an imprecation that is equivalent to an oath. No little shrewdness is displayed by those who undertake to catechise the witness, and the truth is brought out sometimes by a process which would never occur to any one who was not thoroughly versed in African character. In the majority of cases, however, much more reliance is placed upon certain tests to evolve the truth than the testimony of men. Conscious of their own want of candor and honesty, it is but natural that very little confidence is felt in the veracity of others. Among these tests of guilt or innocence, especially in cases pertaining to witchcraft, by far the most common is the "red-wood ordeal," but of this we shall speak more fully under another head. Another test, quite often used, but applied only to crimes of less aggravated nature, especially adultery and theft, is the "hot-oil ordeal." The suspected person is required to plunge his naked hand into a pot of boiling oil. If he does this without pain, it is evidence of his innocence; but if he suffers pain, and, of course, it can not be concealed, he is guilty. How the hand is ever put into boiling oil without pain, is not very easy to be explained. The probability is that some external application is made which prevents acute pain.

Capital punishment is seldom inflicted, and only in cases of murder or witchcraft. In the latter case, the suspected person is subjected to the "red-wood ordeal;" and if his life is destroyed through the effects of this, the people consider themselves exempt from all responsibility, either as to his condemnation or execution. In case of murder about which there is no doubt, the criminal is either beaten to death or is drowned. But the most common of all punishments are fines; and these are applied to all sorts of offenses. Adultery and theft, perhaps, are the most frequent causes of crimination and recrimination, but may always be settled by fine. In all cases, however, where the accuser fails to establish a charge, he is subjected to the punishment that would

have fallen upon the accused if he had been found guilty. Some things are regarded and treated as criminal among Africans that would not be so regarded among civilized men: giving information against an offender, where the person himself is not personally interested, pride, contemptuous remarks about others, are so regarded. On the other hand, some things that are looked upon by civilized men as very aggravated crimes, are regarded as very trivial in the eyes of Africans.

The Kru people have no idea of the appropriation of land by individuals except for temporary purposes. It is regarded as common property, and any man may use as much of it as he chooses, but he can not sell any. The only exclusive right which any one has is that of occupancy. If a man reclaims a piece of land from its primitive woods, it is considered his and his descendants' as long as they choose to use it, but it can not be transferred like other property. The people, by common consent, may sell any portion of it to a stranger, for the purpose of erecting a trading factory, for a garden, or a farm; but in their minds this transaction, even when subjected to the formality of a written contract, amounts to little more than a general consent to the stranger living among them and enjoying all the rights of citizenship; and with the expectation that the land will revert to themselves, as a matter of course, should he die or leave their country. In some cases, when they have transferred a portion or the whole of their territory to a foreign jurisdiction, it is not probable that they have had a correct apprehension of the nature of the transaction, whatever pains may have been taken to make them understand it; and they never do comprehend it fully until the contract is carried into execution, in connection with their own observation and experience.

No taxes are imposed, and no revenues are collected by these petty governments. All public works—which seldom consist of any thing more than cleaning their streets, opening a path, cutting down a jungle that may harbor wild animals

too near their doors, or erecting a rude temporary bridge over a small stream—are performed by a general turn-out of the townspeople. Their only revenues are the presents (“dashes,” in African parlance) which are made to the king and head men by the captains of vessels who visit their country for the purpose of trade. The aggregate presents made by a single vessel at any one of these towns seldom exceed twenty or thirty dollars; and this is paid in rum, tobacco, cotton cloth, powder, etc., of which the king (who is generally the representative of the largest and strongest family in the town) receives the largest share, and the remainder is divided among the head men, who represent the principal families. A stranger is very apt to receive an exaggerated idea of the authority of the so-called king of the country, and often reposes more confidence in his promises of protection and assistance, in prosecuting his trade, than either his own character or his authority over his people would justify. To do a safe business among them, the trader must remember that they are a heathen people, without moral principle; and he must not trust individuals with property under the impression that he can invoke the civil authorities in cases where his debtors prove faithless.

Their mercantile affairs have not as yet been reduced to any thing like system. The produce of the country is not concentrated in the hands of a few responsible merchants, from whom it may be purchased in large quantities, but every man brings his own pot of oil, bundle of dye-wood, or tooth of ivory aboard, and barter it away himself. Their increased trade, however, and more frequent intercourse with civilized men, are putting this traffic on a different, and better footing. Vessels can complete their cargoes now in one half of the time, and with far less trouble and vexation than they could twenty or thirty years ago; and there is reason to believe that still greater improvements will be effected in the next twenty years.

## CHAPTER VII.

## IVORY COAST.

Its Geographical Outlines.—Principal Native Settlements.—Its Trade in Palm-oil and Gold Dust.

THIS part of the coast, according to most writers on Africa, extends from Cape Palmas to Cape Appolonia. But as these boundaries include the Beribi and St. Andrew's people, who evidently belong to the great Kru family to the west of Cape Palmas, it is more natural to make the town of Frisco the western limit of the Ivory Coast. It received its name, doubtless, from the large quantity of ivory which the earlier voyagers found here.

There never have been any European settlements on this part of the coast, except one founded by the French on the Asaini River about the middle of the eighteenth century, which was continued only for a few years. About ten years ago this settlement was renewed by the same people, and another was established at the same time at Grand Bassam. The want of harbors has been the main cause of the absence of civilized settlements in this region of country. Notwithstanding this, foreign vessels have always maintained much commercial intercourse with the inhabitants, and many of them, especially those about Cape Lahu, speak intelligible English, and are friendly and civil in their intercourse with foreigners.

This part of the coast presents very little variety or beauty of natural scenery. It is low, flat, and monotonous in its general aspect, and presents very little to attract the eye, except the rich cocoa-nut groves, which extend for miles along the sea-beach, and embosom many of their largest towns. One

of the most remarkable features in the geography of the country is a long, narrow lagoon, extending very nearly the whole length of this part of the coast, and separated from the ocean by a mere bed of sand, seldom more than half a mile wide. It forms a sort of reservoir, or back-water, for the many streams which come down to this part of the coast from the Kong Mountains. The two main outlets to this lagoon are at Cape Lahu and Grand Bassam. The current at either of these places is too strong to allow sailing vessels to enter, but of late years the French have employed a small steamer to tow their trading ships over the bar at Grand Bassam, and in this way they have engrossed a great deal of the palm-oil that used to be carried through the surf to vessels lying at anchor in the open roadstead.

The prevalence of a very heavy surf along the whole of this coast has always operated as a most serious hindrance to the development of its commercial resources, and it is very doubtful whether it can ever be remedied. At certain states of the tide, it is very difficult to launch a canoe without its being capsized once or more, and sometimes it is impossible to get it through the surf under any circumstances. The natives guard against losses from accidents of this kind by putting up their gold dust (when that is the article they wish to barter) in small, tight, wooden boxes, made fast to their persons. They are such expert swimmers that they care very little about being overturned, for they can always reach the shore, even with a considerable weight attached to their bodies. When palm-oil is to be carried off, it is always put into strong kegs or barrels, which will float in case of accident, while teeth of ivory are always fastened to cork-wood to prevent their sinking.

It is quite an exciting scene to see a large canoe launched, especially when the surf is heavy and threatening. It is brought down to the edge of the water, where a dozen or fifteen men arrange themselves on either side, each one hold-

ing the side of the canoe with one hand, and carrying a paddle in the other. At a given signal it is hurried into the water, the men swimming by the side and guiding its course, until the first heavy swell is passed, when they throw themselves into it, and paddle with all their might until they get beyond the outer swell. If they get swamped, as is frequently the case, they throw themselves into the water, take hold of the canoe and shove it from side to side until the water is thrown out, when they get into it again and gather up their effects floating about on the water.

There are five principal settlements on the Ivory Coast, *viz.*, at Frisco, Cape Lahu, Jack-a-Jacks, Grand Bassam, and at the Asaini River. There are a large number of intermediate towns, where vessels anchor for the purpose of trade, but none of any considerable importance.

Frisco is important chiefly for its live stock. Pigs, goats, and fowls can always be had here, and at moderate prices.

Cape Lahu is the largest and most important of these settlements. It is situated immediately on the sea-coast, and extends a mile or more along the sea-beach, on either side of a river of the same name. It is embosomed in a thick and rich grove of cocoa-nut trees, and from the anchorage has the appearance of being surrounded by a palisade wall. The parties on the opposite sides of the river have been at variance for many years past, and these walls are intended to prevent surprisals at night, the most common mode of carrying on warfare in this part of the world. The style of building here is better and more substantial than that on the Kru coast, but still their houses are little else than thatched huts. The people are milder in their character, more courteous in their manners, and have little or none of the rude and obtrusive forwardness of the Krumen. In stature they are about the medium African size, and are well-formed. Their complexion does not differ from the general standards of the country. They take pleasure in having their hair braided in a

great variety of ways; and the wife, whose duty it is to perform this kind of service for her husband, prides herself upon her skill in this more than in any thing else. The population of Cape Lahu has been variously estimated, but, judging from the size and appearance of their towns, it probably does not exceed twelve or fifteen thousand.

Formerly the only articles of commerce offered here were gold dust and ivory. The quantity of both of these articles, however, when compared with the amount of trade offered at most other places along the coast, was very considerable. These, however, have been lost sight of in a great measure, in consequence of the very great traffic in palm-oil which has arisen here in the last twenty years. The Lahu River is navigable for boats and canoes to the very foot of the Kong Mountains, where it takes its rise; and as there are large tribes settled along its banks, who are every day becoming more extensively engaged in the manufacture of palm-oil, there is every reason to believe that this will become one of the most important marts on the whole coast.

It is greatly to be regretted that no effort has ever been made to introduce the blessings of Christianity among this people. The only serious difficulty in carrying on missionary operations here is that of effecting a landing, and this ought not to be regarded as an insuperable obstacle. The people are peaceable, and would no doubt be civil and kind to missionaries. What the comparative health of the place would be, can not be predicted with confidence until an experiment has been made. But judging from the healthful appearance of the natives, as well as the general aspect of the country, there is reason to believe that white men would live here as well as at any other point in Northern Guinea. A missionary located at Cape Lahu would not only find a large population immediately around him, but, by means of the river and lagoon, would have easy access to a very large population both on the sea-coast and the interior.

Jack-a-Jacks is situated to the eastward of Cape Lahu, and at the distance of thirty or forty miles. The population here is larger, perhaps, than that of Cape Lahu, but more scattered. In language, features, and general appearance they are very much like the Cape Lahu people, but have less knowledge of the habits of civilized life. Their trade consists almost entirely in palm-oil, but this is very considerable. Of late years there are seldom seen less than four or five merchant vessels at anchor at this place receiving their cargoes of oil. A vessel seldom completes its cargo in less than six months, owing to the slow process of manufacturing the oil and the difficulty of getting it off to the ships in rough weather. They receive in barter for their oil guns, powder, tobacco, cotton fabrics, iron bars, copper pans, and rum. Formerly oil could be purchased here very cheaply, but competition, of late years, has raised it to its full value; and no one can make an advantageous trade without a good deal of dexterity, and a pretty thorough knowledge of native character.

Grand Bassam has long been known as one of the most important gold marts on the whole coast, and the natives here, through whose hands all this trade passes, are equally well known for their poverty-stricken looks and for their tricks in trade. The French, greatly to their annoyance, have recently established a stockade fort at the mouth of the river, and no doubt with the view of engrossing the trade. In consequence, the people have several times been embroiled with their foreign rulers, and are now very much scattered, so that the original state of things is very much changed.

The French hold this place not only on account of the gold trade, but for the facilities it affords for towing their trading vessels into the Lagoon. By this means they have taken away a very large share of the palm-oil which was formerly carried through the surf to English and other ves-

sels anchored in the open sea. Whether they will conciliate the natives so far as to get their confidence and trade, remains to be seen.

The gold sold at Grand Bassam is brought from the kingdom of Ashanti and other neighboring states. There are so many outlets for this traffic, however, that no certain calculation can be made in relation to it. If any dissatisfaction is felt about the price that is paid, or the manner in which trade is conducted at one point, it takes a different direction to the coast; so that European merchants must be well acquainted with their character, and resort to a variety of means of humoring them, or they will not be apt to do a very large business.

The French have also formed a small settlement at Assini, but the people seem to feel no more partiality for them than they did when they had a settlement here nearly a hundred years ago; so that there is no very great probability that this station will be retained for any considerable length of time. The Asaini people do not differ materially from those of Grand Bassam. Unfortunately there is no better understanding between these two communities, than there is between them and their foreign rulers.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## GOLD COAST.

Its Geographical Outlines.—Natural Scenery.—European Forts.—Difficult landing.—Canoes.—European Residents.—Cape Coast the Burial-place of Mrs. Maclean.—Native Tribes.—System of Slavery and Pawning.

If other portions of Western Africa, over which we have already traveled, have their peculiar characteristics of climate, natural scenery, and social life, the Gold Coast has its characteristics not less peculiar or distinctive.

Between the highlands of Cape Appollonia, which forms its western boundary, and the River Volta, which forms its eastern, there is as much richness and variety of natural scenery as can be found in the same compass in any other part of the world whatever. High ridges rising up gently from the water's edge, and stretching back indefinitely into the country; hills of variable size, and of every conceivable form and outline; verdant fields with graceful undulations, and more or less extended, reveal themselves in succession; and the eye seldom tires in contemplating their varied outlines, or in beholding the graceful palms and beautiful umbrella-trees which are scattered in every direction over the surrounding country.

The general aspect of the towns and villages which spring up along this part of the coast is not less striking or varied. We find no more circular huts, such as were seen on the Grain Coast, nor low flat-roofed houses, almost concealed from view by the palisade walls around them, as on the Ivory Coast, but comparatively large quadrangular houses of clay walls, and sometimes two or three stories high. The ap-

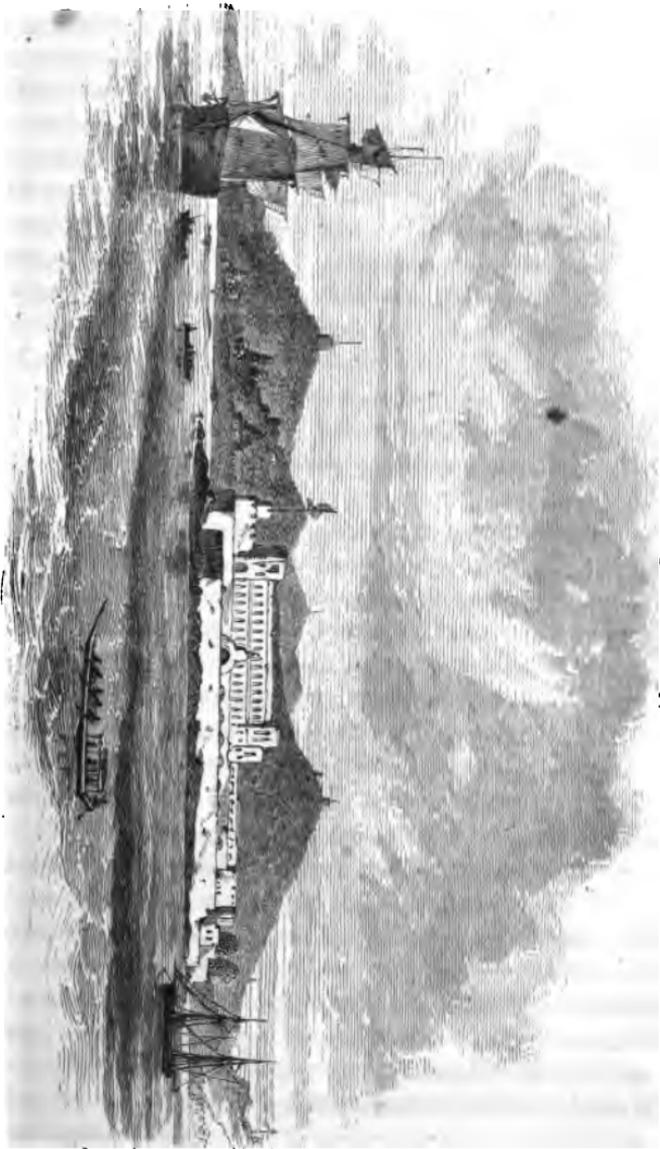
pearance of these towns is rendered still more imposing by the presence of large European forts in their immediate vicinity. Some of these forts would not compare disadvantageously with the larger and better class of fortifications in many parts of the civilized world, and some of them are rendered still more imposing by the high and commanding castles which they inclose.

The whole of this coast, which is something more than two hundred miles in length, was, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, almost literally lined with European forts. The writer knows of twenty-five, which is an average of one for every eight miles. They were constructed for the purpose of facilitating and defending the trade, both in slaves and gold dust. The first ever erected was at Elmina, and by the Portuguese, toward the close of the fifteenth century, which continued in their possession until the year 1637, when it was wrested from them by the Dutch, in whose hands it has remained ever since. Three of the twenty-five forts above mentioned were erected by the Danes, two by the Prussians, and the remainder by the Dutch and English; and all, with the exception of those at Dix Cove, Anamabo, and Akra, in the seventeenth century. Since the abolition of the slave-trade the greater part of them have been abandoned, and are now in a dilapidated state. Eleven only are kept in repair, and are garrisoned by black soldiers with white officers. Of these, four belong to the Dutch, and seven to the English. Those belonging to the Dutch, with the exception of that at Elmina, which is one of the finest and strongest on the coast, are little more at the present time than trading factories, and are of but little real value to the government of Holland. The English forts are better located with reference to trade; and in consequence of being kept in a better and more efficient condition, they give the English the decided ascendancy on this part of the coast. Their largest and most important fort is that of Cape Coast. It is the residence of the Gov-

ernor General, and may be regarded as the commercial centre of this part of the country. It was owned by the Danes in the first instance, and was sold to the Dutch, from whom it was taken by Admiral Homes in the seventeenth century, and has continued in the hands of the English ever since. It was enlarged and strengthened by the "Royal African Company," and has always been kept in a good and efficient condition. It covers several acres of ground; its walls are twenty feet or more high, and are mounted with more than a hundred guns. The castle rises up in its centre, is four stories high, and furnishes ample accommodations for the governor and his suite, and for most of the public officers. The garrison is composed of black soldiers from the West Indies, or natives of the country, but is officered by Englishmen. The forts at Dix Cove, Anamabo, and Akra, are smaller, and were erected about the close of the seventeenth or beginning of the eighteenth century. Until within a few years past the three forts at Akra, all very near to each other, were owned by the Dutch, Danes, and English respectively. A few years since the one belonging to the Danes was transferred by purchase to the English, and as the Dutch have but little trade or influence here, the country may be regarded as virtually under the control of the English.

After the abolition of the slave-trade there was very little commerce on this part of the coast, except in ivory and gold dust. The palm-oil trade has been opened here, however, in the course of the last twenty years, and promises to be more important than both of the other two branches of commerce united.

The general commerce of the country is greatly obstructed here, however, as it is on the Ivory and Grain Coasts, by the want of harbors and safe landing-places. Vessels have not only to lie out in the open sea while discharging and receiving their cargoes, but boats and canoes, through which this alone can be effected, can not pass over the surf at



CAPE COAST CASTLE.



many states of the tide without the constant liability of being capsized and losing whatever they may be freighted with.

The canoes used in transporting passengers and freight from the anchorage to the shore are three or four feet wide, with flat bottoms, and vary in length from twenty or thirty to fifty or sixty feet, and are paddled by a number of men corresponding to their size. The fore end of the canoe has a bulwark of boards high enough to protect the passengers from getting wet in case the sea breaks over the bow. The canoe-men show no little tact in getting the canoe through a heavy surf. There is always a regular rise and fall in the successive waves which roll in upon the shore, by noticing which, the oarsmen know exactly when to dash ahead, so as to get the lull which is sure to intervene between the fall and the rise of the waves.

The trade of the country is concentrated at the forts, and almost the whole of it passes through the hands of a few foreign residents. None but the most trivial duties are imposed either upon the imports or exports, and the trade is consequently free to all nations. The English have the largest share, the Americans the next, and the Dutch and French together have perhaps one-fourth of the whole. Of late years the Ashantis, who control the gold trade, have manifested a disposition to receive nothing in exchange for their gold dust but rum, tobacco, and gunpowder; and as these articles are furnished more reasonably by Americans than any other people, it is not improbable that they may ere long engross the principal part of this trade. New England rum is in special demand, and, unfortunately, it is furnished without stint. It would be well for those who declaim so loudly against the oppressions of the African race, to see to it that there is not going out from among themselves the elements of far greater mischief to that race than has ever been inflicted upon them by slavery.

The English government does not exercise positive author-

ity over any part of the country, except the communities immediately around their forts. They exercise, however, a sort of constructive jurisdiction over the whole sea-coast region, and to some extent over the settlements in the interior. All litigated cases that arise among the different communities, and especially such as will be likely to lead to hostilities, are referred to the commandants of the forts, and their decisions are seldom resisted. In all other matters the natives enact and execute their own laws without reference to foreign jurisdiction.

The number of European residents on the Gold Coast probably does not exceed one hundred, most of whom are government officers or merchants. The number of missionaries is comparatively small, all of whom, with the exception of a single clergyman of the Church of England, who acts as chaplain to the garrison at Cape Coast, are connected with the Wesleyan Missionary Society. The houses of the foreign residents are generally large, handsome, and well adapted to a tropical climate. They are usually two stories high, with flat roofs, and surrounded with verandas, and altogether present quite an Eastern aspect. Most of the resident merchants and government officers live in handsome style, and are proverbial for their hospitality. In former years, when trade was free and profits large, they lived in great luxury, and were lamentably addicted to intemperance. There has been decided improvement in both of these respects of late years, and the consequence is, that there has been less mortality and much more real thrift. Very few whites go to any part of Africa with the view of making it their permanent home, but many acquire a fondness for the kind of life which they have to lead here, and not infrequently lose all relish for the homes of their youth. The number of white females on this part of the coast is very small. As a general thing they suffer more from the climate than the other sex, and having less to engage their minds, they seldom become suffi-

ciently interested in the country as to be willing to make it their home. This remark does not apply to the wives of missionaries, for they find enough to engage both their hearts and heads at all times, and they become interested in the country for their work's sake. It is not uncommon for European residents to form connections with native women of mixed blood, of whom there are many about these forts, and in the course of time find themselves surrounded with large families of mulatto children. Before a connection of this kind can be formed with a family pretending to respectability, the merchant, or whoever he may be, binds himself to make provision for the support of the *consort* (as this temporary wife is called) and her children, in case he leaves the country; and these engagements, as a general thing, are scrupulously and honorably fulfilled.

Cape Coast Castle has acquired some modern notoriety from having been the temporary residence and burial-place of Mrs. Maclean, the distinguished poetess and novelist. A great outcry was made in England about the time of her death, and not a few insinuations were made that it was brought about by unfair means. I visited the place a few weeks after this melancholy occurrence, and from the impressions which I received from the principal residents, as well as the favorable opinion which I then formed, and ever after entertained of the honorable and high-minded character of Governor Maclean himself, I have never entertained any other idea of these rumors than that they were most ungenerous, and utterly unfounded. Both he and his distinguished partner now lie side by side under the cold sod of this African fort, with nothing to indicate the spot but a plain marble slab, with a Latin epitaph, inserted on the front of the inner wall of the fort, opposite the place where they lie.

The principal native families on the Gold Coast are the Ahanta, Fanti, and Akra. Interspersed among these are a few smaller tribes, who are more or less nearly related to

these larger families. The Achantas live in the neighborhood of Dix Cove, the Fantis about Cape Coast and Elmina, and the Akra people occupy all the country about the forts of Akra. These three tribes occupy a strip of sea-coast country of thirty or forty miles wide. Between them and the Kong Mountains is the great kingdom of Ashanti, of which we shall treat in the next chapter.

These tribes along the sea-coast which have just been mentioned, differ very essentially in their habits, character, and social circumstances from the natives of the Grain and Ivory Coasts. In complexion they are quite as black as those on the Ivory Coast, but I do not remember ever to have seen among them any individuals of a lighter shade of color, as is common among the Krumen. They have not the fine muscular development, the manly, independent gait, or the open, frank countenance of the Krumen; but they have more of a mechanical turn, are surrounded with more of the comforts of life, and live in much better houses. Schools have been kept up at Cape Coast for thirty years or more, and a very considerable proportion of the adult population, in consequence, are able to read and write; but as they have been taught entirely in the English language, which only a very small number of them understand, their acquirements have been of very limited benefit.

Those of them who combined a knowledge of the language with the art of reading and writing it, derive much more solid advantages from their education; and among these there are many whose attainments in learning and general intelligence, not only entitle them to the respect and esteem of all good men, but are such as utterly to refute the arguments of those who contend that the African race have little or no capacity for intellectual improvement. Persons of this latter class are extensively engaged in commerce, are employed as clerks in government offices, as teachers, and in various other callings of a similar nature; and in all these

departments they exhibit quite as much skill and efficiency as any other class of persons whatever.

The Fantis show a good deal of mechanical skill, especially in the construction of musical instruments, iron implements, and gold ornaments. They also manufacture a good article of cotton fabric on a very simple loom of their own invention; and they become very good carpenters and blacksmiths, wherever they have had the opportunity to acquire a knowledge of these arts. They cultivate a much larger number and variety of vegetables than the Krumen, and have, in consequence, a more liberal bill of fare for their tables. Indian corn and yams are the staple articles of vegetable food. Ground nuts, of several varieties, peas, beans, Guinea corn, pumpkins, and sweet potatoes, are cultivated and used as food. They have sheep, goats, and poultry, but very few cows. They depend upon fish, however, of which they have an abundance for their own food, while they dispose of most of their live stock to vessels or resident whites.

These sea-coast tribes would long since have been brought under the dominion of the King of Ashanti, if it had not been for the protection thrown over them by the European forts. At one time the King of Ashanti conceived the idea of reducing the forts themselves, and came very near succeeding, though it would not have been possible for them to have withstood a regular assault from an English force afterward.

Slavery prevails here to a very great extent, and probably had its origin in the foreign slave-trade. Most of those in that condition at the present time have become such by a general system of *pauning*. A man pawns his child, or some other relative, for an advance of merchandise, and if by some unfortunate turn in business he is unable to meet his engagement, the individual pawned becomes a virtual slave, and must remain such until the debt is paid. Sometimes a man *pawns* himself for money, and if by any means

he is unable to discharge his obligations, he becomes a virtual slave, though he expects to be called by the milder and less humiliating term of *pawn*. Under this specious pretext the slave-trade was carried on to a very considerable extent by European residents, until within a few years past, when an effectual stop was put to it by the Government of England. Merchants needed laborers about their establishments, and the easiest and cheapest mode of procuring them was to advance a small amount of goods to a man of bad reputation for pay, taking a son or some other family connection as a pawn, who virtually becomes the property of the merchant in case of the failure or bankruptcy of his natural guardian. The liability to fall into a condition of servitude is not so frightful here, however, as it is where there is a higher appreciation of personal liberty; nor does the same odium attach to the term slave that it does among civilized men. The African sees very little difference between the authority exercised over him by one whom he acknowledges as his master and the petty tyranny which is exercised by most African chiefs over their subjects; and so long as he is worked moderately, and treated kindly, he has but little cause for dissatisfaction, and not infrequently by his own choice places himself in this condition.

## CHAPTER IX.

## ASHANTI.

**Its Size.—Its Kings and their Conquests.—First War with the British Troops.—Second Invasion of Fanti.—Third Invasion.—Treaty formed between the British Government and the King of Ashanti.—Treaty violated.—War in which Sir Charles M'Carthy was killed.—Ashantis subdued, and Peace established.**

BETWEEN the country of the Fantis and the Kong Mountains lies the renowned kingdom of Ashanti. In the days of its greatest prosperity it extended over an area of two hundred and fifty or three hundred miles square. Originally it formed but a small district of country, but was gradually enlarged by the conquests of its successive kings until it attained the dimensions just mentioned. Osai Tutu is one of the most renowned of her kings. He and his successors during the eighteenth century added to Ashanti proper the kingdoms of Buntuku (sometimes called Gaman) and Denkera to the northwest, Sarem to the north, and Axim and Warsaw to the south. Inta and Dagumba, on the opposite side of the Volta, to the northeast, were at one time regarded as tributaries to Ashanti, but they were scarcely considered as forming an integral part of that kingdom at any time.

It is not certainly known from what particular district of country the Ashantis originally came, or at what time they first got possession of the country where they now live. They and the Fantis were undoubtedly from the same stock. Their languages are essentially the same, the only difference being in the pronunciation of a dozen or fifteen words. Their physical characteristics are also the same, with the exception that the Fantis have a more intelligent cast of countenance,

which may readily be accounted for by the fact that they have had more intercourse with the civilized world, and have long since abandoned many of the savage and atrocious practices which are still continued among the Ashantis.

It is probable that both originally lived in the great valley lying between the Kong Mountains and the head waters of the Niger, and were expelled from that region by the Moors and Mohammedan negroes. The Fantis, it is probable, were the first to cross the mountains, but continued to retire before the more powerful Ashantis until they reached the sea-coast, where they were compelled to come to a stand. With the aid they have received from the European forts, they have been enabled to maintain their independence against the Ashantis; and what has always been a great annoyance to the latter, they have been compelled to employ the Fantis as the medium of communication with Europeans.

Of all the nations of Western Africa, Ashanti is almost the only one that has a history, and this does not reach farther back than the beginning of the eighteenth century. This was the period of the great Osai Tutu. At that time the Ashantis had no other implements of war than the bow and arrow, and spear. They became acquainted with fire-arms at a later period.

The reign of Osai Tutu is distinguished for his wars with the King of Denkera, whose kingdom he invaded, and, after two desperate battles, in which his adversary was killed and the whole of his army routed, he not only found himself master of the country, but acquired an immense booty by his victories. The body of the King of Denkera was stripped of its flesh, and the bones were taken to Kumasi and used as fetiches. The King of Axim had united his forces to those of the King of Denkera in this war with the Ashantis, and is said to have lost an immense number of his soldiers. Osai Tutu followed him up, and compelled him to a third engagement, in which his army was well-nigh extirpated. He was

compelled to sue for peace, which was granted on the condition of his becoming a tributary to the King of Ashanti, and paying four thousand ounces of gold to defray the expenses of the war. This fine was not paid, and Osai Tutu set out the second time to chastise him for his faithlessness. This, however, proved a disastrous undertaking. He allowed himself to be separated from the main army, and was killed by a party in ambuscade, who also captured his courtiers and wives, amounting in all to two or three hundred persons. The army of Osai Tutu took terrible revenge upon the inhabitants of Kromanti, who were the perpetrators of this deed; and though they never recovered the body of their sovereign, they got back most of the prisoners and took a large number of their enemies, who were sacrificed at Kumasi to the manes of their king. Osai Tutu was greatly venerated both as a good and great man. Much confusion ensued upon his death, and it was a long time before a successor was appointed, during which period most of the tributary states renounced their allegiance to the government of Ashanti, and once more declared themselves free and independent.

Osai Apoko was finally installed as king in the place of his brother. He soon gave proof of his energy by reducing all the revolted provinces to subjection. He reconquered Asin, Axim, and Denkera, and pursued the King of Gaman to the Kong Mountains, where he defeated him after a desperate battle. At a later period of his reign a conspiracy was formed against him among his own people, which he quelled by a resort to arms. He died in 1742, and was succeeded by Osai Akwasi, his brother.

The reign of this monarch is distinguished by the wars he waged with the King of Dehomi. At this period the kingdom of Dehomi had become almost as large and powerful as the kingdom of Ashanti, and, indeed, was the only rival that Ashanti had in all this region of country. The king of the latter instigated the provinces of Akim, Kwaku, and

Bourony to revolt against the authority of Ashanti, and united his force with theirs to establish their independence. This united army was signally defeated by Osai Akwasi in a pitched battle near the Volta. Elated with this success, Akwasi marched his army across the Volta, and carried the war into the heart of the enemy's country. Here, however, he experienced as signal a defeat as he had inflicted on the opposite side of the river. Some of his most intrepid caboceers were killed, and their manes had to be appeased, on the return of the king to Kumasi, by the sacrifice of a very large number of human victims. Osai Akwasi died soon after of a wound he had received in one of his battles, and was succeeded in 1752 by his nephew, Osai Kudjoh.

The three preceding kings had been brothers, and the crown now descended to another generation. Before Osai Kudjoh had got fairly seated on his throne, most of the provinces were once more in open revolt. Osai Kudjoh was in no way behind his uncles in military prowess. In a very short time the revolted provinces were reduced to subjection, and were compelled to pay heavy tribute. Several new provinces were added to his domain, and, it is said, he might have pushed his conquest even to Cape Palmas, if he had been so disposed. His fame spread far and wide, and even the King of Dehomi sent an embassy to congratulate him upon his victories, and to establish a friendly alliance between the two kingdoms. Toward the close of his reign, when he was overtaken by the infirmities of age, he had the mortification to see a good many of the provinces which he had once held in perfect subjection in open rebellion. He was also insulted in the grossest manner, and an army was called out to chastise these insolent insurgents, but before it was ready to take the field the king died.

He was succeeded by his grandson, Osai Kwamina, in 1781, who solemnly vowed that he would not enter the walls of his palace, until he had obtained the heads of Akom-

brah and Afosu, the leaders of the rebellion. And in this he was perfectly successful. The heads of these two rebel chiefs, it is said, may still be seen among the trophies preserved in Kumasi. His reign terminated ingloriously, however, as he was deposed by his own people, and it is said for favoring the introduction of Mohammedanism into the country.

Osai Apoko, the second of this name, was appointed successor to the deposed king, and ascended the throne in 1797. He had no sooner assumed the reins of government, however, than the kings of Gaman and Kongo united their armies for the purpose of restoring the deposed king. The united army was sustained by a large body of cavalry, and, in the first engagement, the new king was signally defeated. Another engagement followed, in which the King of Ashanti was entirely victorious. The Moslems who happened to be in Kumasi at the time were compelled to join the army, and fight against their co-religionists. A large number of Moslem prisoners were also taken, and had to be ransomed at a very large sum.

Osai Apoko died of a lingering sickness not long after this victory, and was succeeded by his brother, Osai Tutu Kwamina, about the beginning of the nineteenth century.

This sovereign is supposed not to have been more than seventeen years of age when he assumed the reins of government; but he soon displayed energy, sagacity, and bravery far beyond his years. In the course of a few years he extended the bounds of his kingdoms quite beyond what they had been in the reign of any of his predecessors. He had not been on the throne long before he set out to fight the Mohammedan chiefs of Ghofan and Ghobago, who had invaded the territory of Banna, one of the tributary provinces of Ashanti, and burned their capital. An engagement took place at Kaha, when the united Moslem army was completely routed, and an immense number of prisoners were taken. The King of Ghofan was made prisoner, and died in the

Ashanti camp of the effects of the wounds he had received in the battle.

This decisive battle added two more tributary provinces to the kingdom of Ashanti, and is one of the very few cases known in which a pagan tribe have subjugated a Mohammedan people.

The martial prowess of this youthful king was rendered still more illustrious by subjugating the kingdom of Gaman, and consolidating his power throughout all the tributary provinces.

But the fame of Ashanti was now destined to extend in a different direction, and to be displayed on a new theatre. Two of the tributary chiefs of Asim, Apontu and Chibbu, having offended their chief, took refuge in the country of the Fantis, who promised to defend them to the extent of their power. The king sent the Fantis a friendly message, requesting them to deliver up his offending subjects. They not only refused to do this, but put his messengers to death in a most ignominious manner. The king marched his army into the Fanti country, gave battle to the united army of Fanti and Asim, and entirely defeated them, and once more offered terms of peace to his revolted provinces. The terms were favorably received by Chibbu and Apontu, and the king, for a time, had reason to suppose that they were preparing to make a formal submission, when their true object was to gain time to prepare for another engagement. The messengers of the Ashanti king were put to death the second time, which led him to take "the great oath" that he would never return to his capital from the war he was about to undertake, without the heads of these two revolted chiefs.

He entered the Fanti country at the head of his army, and commenced a work of desolation which scarcely has any parallel in the annals of history. Towns were destroyed; men, women, and children were indiscriminately murdered; provisions of every kind were destroyed, and nothing was

left that could be of any possible value to the country. The Fantis and their allies retired before them to the large seaport towns, imagining that the Ashantis would not have the hardihood to come within the range of the guns of the European forts. But in this they miscalculated. The two rebel chiefs took refuge at the fort of Anamabo, with the expectation that the English would defend them. But the King of Ashanti followed them with an unfaltering step to the very gates of the fort, cut the inhabitants of the village to pieces by hundreds and thousands under the very eyes of the English governor, assailed the fort itself, notwithstanding the devastations its battery was making in their own ranks, and would probably have forced their way in, had it not been for the approach of night. Every preparation was made for blowing up the walls of the fort, and the king would probably have seated himself in the governor's chair in the course of a few hours, as he had vowed to do, if a flag of truce had not been lowered from the fort.

The offending chiefs had escaped to the town of Cape Coast, and as the King of Ashanti refused to go to Cape Coast to settle the matter, the governor, Colonel Torrane, had to go to the Ashanti camp for the purpose of an adjustment. One of the offenders escaped during the pending of these negotiations, but the other was delivered up and subjected to the most cruel tortures on the return of the army to Kumasi. It was estimated that not less than twelve thousand persons were killed in the engagement at Anamabo.

This engagement took place in 1807. Four years subsequent to this the King of Ashanti sent an army to Elmina to defend the inhabitants of that place from an attack by the Fantis. Several engagements took place between the opposing parties, but with no marked results like those which attended the war in 1801.

In 1817 the Fanti country was invaded the third time. The Ashanti army marched up to the outskirts of the town

of Cape Coast, and reduced the people to such great straits for food that the English authorities deemed it prudent to pay the fine imposed upon the people by the king; whereupon the Ashanti army withdrew, leaving the impression upon the minds of the Fantis that their authority was not to be resisted.

These repeated incursions into the Fanti country interrupted the trade of the European merchants, and caused them no little annoyance and perplexity. The plan was, therefore, suggested of sending an embassy to the court of Ashanti, with the view of negotiating a treaty between them and the English that would place the relations of the two countries on a better footing. The Ashantis seemed never to have entertained any very hostile feelings toward the English. On the contrary, it was their wish and their interest to maintain a friendly feeling. Without their presence they would have no market for their gold, and no means of procuring such articles of European manufacture as they needed. But the Fantis, presuming upon the protection of their European neighbors, became insupportably insolent, and it was to chastise them that the King of Ashanti turned his face so frequently to the sea-coast. The English could not, of course, stand by and see these conflicts going on without being affected by them; and it was with the view of bringing these differences to a permanent settlement that this mission was projected. The embassy consisted of Mr. James, the governor of the fort at Akra, Mr. Bowdich, the nephew of the governor-in-chief at Cape Coast, Mr. Hutchinson, and Surgeon Teddlie. They were kindly received by the king; but some misunderstanding having arisen, Mr. James was recalled, and Mr. Bowdich was placed at the head of the embassy. A treaty was formed, by which it was stipulated that the four ounces of gold that were paid monthly by the English to the Fantis, as a kind of rent for the ground occupied by the fort, should be transferred to the King of Ashanti, being his by right of conquest; and that Mr. Hutchinson should remain

at Kumasi, as British Resident, to see that this and the other terms of the treaty be carried into effect.

On the arrival of the intelligence in England of the formation of this treaty, Mr. Dupuis was appointed Consul of His Majesty's Government to the Court of Ashanti, for the purpose of keeping up friendly relations between the two countries, enlarging their commercial relations, and of inducing the King of Ashanti to allow the provinces farther in the interior to have direct commercial intercourse with the British forts.

On his arrival at Cape Coast, Mr. Dupuis learned that the King of Ashanti was engaged in war with the kingdom of Gaman, that Mr. Hutchinson had returned to Cape Coast, and that his own appointment was regarded in any other than a favorable light by the local authorities.

About the same time intelligence was received that the King of Ashanti had been defeated in the Gaman war, which led to unrestrained exultation and rejoicing on the part of the Fantis. These demonstrations of joy, if not directly countenanced by the English authorities, went unrebuked, which proved to be a source of great irritation to the King of Ashanti, especially as the English had made themselves somewhat responsible for the good behavior of the Fantis around them. Other indignities were offered by the Fantis, which the governor refused to notice, though his attention had been specially called to the subject by the messengers of the king. Matters now assumed a most threatening aspect, and the sea-coast was menaced with a more terrible war than any that had preceded.

Mr. Dupuis, who had heretofore been thwarted in every possible way by the local authorities, was now permitted to set out on his embassy. He was kindly received; and, after a prolonged negotiation, a treaty was formed that would have been equally advantageous and honorable to both parties if it had been carried out. Among other things, it was

stipulated that the authority of the Ashanti king over the Fantis should be acknowledged by the British authorities, except that the Fantis immediately around the forts might avail themselves of English law, but without interfering with the tribute which was exacted of them by his majesty.

On the return of Dupuis to the coast, the treaty was virtually set aside by the local authorities, and the commander of the British squadron having sided with the latter, refused to send the commissioners of Ashanti to England, though they had accompanied Dupuis to the coast for this purpose. In view of these unjustifiable proceedings on the part of the local authorities, Dupuis sent word to the king to remember his oath, and refrain from hostilities until the pleasure of the British government was made known, and proceeded himself by the first vessel to England.

About this time the charter of the African Company was abolished by an Act of Parliament, and all its forts and other possessions were transferred to the crown.

Sir Charles M'Carthy, who had been Governor of Sierra Leone for some time, and had discharged his duties with entire satisfaction to the British government, was now appointed Governor General of the British possessions on the Gold Coast. He arrived at Cape Coast in March, 1822, and found the country in a most unsettled condition.

The ambassador sent by the king to Cape Coast, having waited two months beyond the time appointed by Mr. Dupuis to hear from the British government, was withdrawn, and the place was virtually placed under blockade. Had Sir Charles been thoroughly informed in relation to the actual state of the country, as well as the nature of the treaties that had been successively formed with the king by Bowdich and Dupuis, he would probably have resolved upon a more pacific course than the one which he projected. But he was misled by the Fantis, who were elated at the prospect of being emancipated from Ashanti domination. M'Carthy

was hailed as their deliverer, and his name was resounded along the whole line of the sea-coast. The King of Ashanti looked upon this faithlessness on the part of the English, and insulting exultation on the part of the Fantis, with sullen silence. He withdrew his forces from the sea-coast, and commenced his preparations for war on a large scale, but with the utmost secrecy.

The first open act of hostility on the part of the Ashantis was the seizure of a negro sergeant in the British service, who was carried off and put to death. This led to hostilities on both sides. Sir Charles M'Carthy having heard that the king was on his way to Cape Coast, at the head of his army, determined to meet him and give him battle, without allowing him to devastate the country, as he had done in former wars. He seems to have undervalued the strength and bravery of his enemies, and crossed the River Prah with such an army of sea-coast natives as he could bring together, without waiting for a reinforcement of regular troops, under Major Chisholm, which might have given an entirely different turn to the engagement which proved so disastrous soon after.

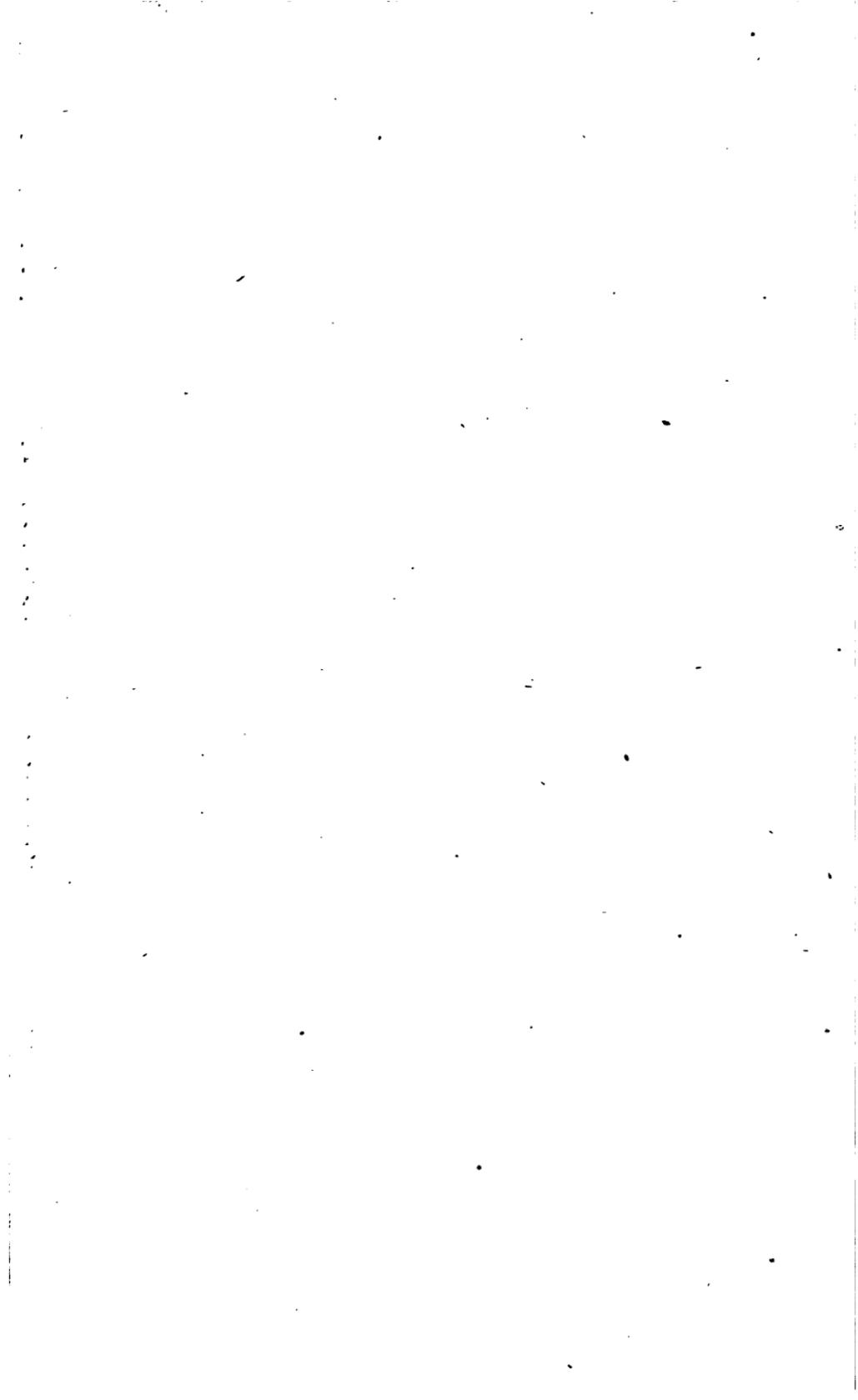
On the following day, 21st January, 1824, the war-horns of the Ashantis were heard, and very soon after a regular engagement ensued across a narrow stream of water. A heavy fire was kept up during the greater part of the day, when the ammunition of Sir Charles began to be exhausted. The Ashantis attempted to force their way across the stream, but were repelled by the bayonet. In the mean time, however, a party who had crossed the river higher up, with the view of cutting off the governor's retreat, came up, and attacking his party both in the rear and flank, literally cut them to pieces. Sir Charles himself had received several wounds, and seeing all was lost on his side, retreated to that part of the field where the King of Denkera and his people were still bravely resisting the enemy. An attempt was made to check

the Ashantis by bringing a field-piece to bear upon the thickest part of their army, but without the slightest effect. They pressed forward like a resistless torrent, and the Denkerans were compelled to give way. Sir Charles and his officers attempted to retreat, but they were met by a party of Ashantis and were instantly killed. Mr. Williams, the secretary of Sir Charles, was taken prisoner, but his life was spared. He remained a prisoner for some time in Ashanti, and was locked up every night in a room with the heads of Sir Charles and his other companions in the war; but whether this was intended as a punishment, or was done through a superstitious feeling, is not certainly known. It is said—and, if true, it is a frightful illustration of the savage disposition of the Ashantis—that the heart of Sir Charles was devoured by the chiefs of the army, and with the idea of imbibing his courage. His flesh was dried and parceled out among the lower class of officers for the same purpose, and his bones were kept in Kumasi for a long time afterward as national fetiches. Captain Raydon, of the Cape Coast militia, was sacrificed to the town fetich. Major Chisholm and Captain Laing, both belonging to Sir Charles's staff, not being able to reach the scene of action in time, as soon as they heard of the defeat and death of the governor, retreated to Cape Coast Castle as rapidly as possible, with the view of placing that in a state of defense. The allied army, of whom there were not less than thirty thousand, were so completely dismayed by this defeat that they could not be induced to make another stand against the enemy. But instead of following up the advantage they had gained, the Ashantis showed a willingness to renew a friendly alliance with the English, and their overtures for peace were made through the Dutch governor of Elmina.

Captain Ricketts, the acting governor of Cape Coast, met the Ashanti deputies at Elmina, who assured him that their king had no disposition to carry on hostilities with the En-

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glish. His only demand was that they would surrender his rebel chiefs, and especially Kudjoh Chibbu, the vice-king of Denkera. As a proof of their sincerity they delivered up Secretary Williams, and suspended all hostilities during the negotiations.

Kudjoh Chibbu took no part in these negotiations; but remembering the fate of his friend, Chibbu Asin, felt there was no security for himself except in the execution of a very bold measure. Accordingly, without waiting the termination of the negotiations going on at Elmina, he crossed the Prah at the head of a considerable army, and attacked the Ashantis in their own quarters. The English finding the courage of their allies restored, followed up this bold stroke. But they were again compelled to retreat, and this brought the Ashanti army to the very gates of Cape Coast fort.

In this crisis, however, Colonel Southerland arrived with a reinforcement of English troops, and every preparation was made to attack the Ashanti army before the king, who was known to be on his way from Kumasi, should arrive. A desperate battle was fought, but with no very decided advantage to either party. The native allies being unwilling to follow up the engagement, Colonel Southerland withdrew his forces to the fort. About the same time the newly-made king of Ashanti arrived with a reinforcement of fresh troops, but his skill and bravery had to be tried before his own people could feel confidence in him, or follow him with the same enthusiasm they had his predecessor.

Osai Ockoto, the new king, gave the first proof of his daring in sending a most insolent message to the English governor, and marching his army up in full view of the fort. Every effort was made to put the place in a state of defense. All the marines of the vessels of war and sailors of merchant-vessels that happened to be lying in the roads at the time, were landed. A large native force was brought together, and very soon an engagement ensued. Both parties fought

with desperate bravery, and without cessation, until night put an end to the conflict. The engagement was to have been renewed the next morning, but the Ashanti army was suffering so severely from dysentery and small-pox, that the king found it necessary to withdraw. The people of Cape Coast were suffering from the same causes; and had it not been for the timely supply of rice from England, more of them would have been cut off by disease and starvation than in their wars. This was the first time the Ashantis ever entertained the idea that there was another nation in the world as strong as themselves; and their pride, no doubt, was greatly humbled in these latter rencontres.

Several other engagements took place between the English and the Ashantis, but the use of grape-shot and rockets on the part of the former soon turned the scales against the Ashantis, and thoroughly convinced them that they could not contend with European soldiers. Sir Neill Campbell, who succeeded General Turner as governor, on his arrival at Cape Coast sent for Kudjoh Chibbu and other allied chiefs, and after acknowledging their bravery, and thanking them for their hearty co-operation, informed them that he had come with peremptory orders from the home government to put an end to the war, if it could be honorably done. But the native chiefs were anxious to reduce the king of Ashanti to still greater straits, and objected to all overtures of peace, until they found that the English governor was inflexibly determined upon it. The king of Ashanti was required to deposit four thousand ounces of gold (about \$72,000) at Cape Coast, to purchase ammunition for the allied army in case he should provoke hostilities again; and that two of the royal family, who were named, should be sent to Cape Coast as hostages.

The king, however, was never fully brought into these measures until 1831, when he sent down to Cape Coast his own son, Kwanta Missah, and Ansah, the son of the late

king, his brother, with six hundred ounces of gold, to be lodged there as security for his own good behavior;\* and by this act virtually renounced his claim to the sovereignty over the countries of the allied chiefs.

By this war all the maritime country, and the kingdoms of Denkera and Warsaw, in the interior, were lost to the Ashanti country. But notwithstanding these reverses and losses, they still continue to be a wealthy, warlike, and powerful people, perhaps as much so as any negro kingdom in Western Africa.

\* Both of these young men were afterward taken to England and educated there, and are now living in Ashanti, and one as a missionary.

## CHAPTER X.

## ASHANTI.

Strictures on the War between the Ashantis and the English.—The Government an absolute Despotism.—Caboceers allowed to make a Display of their Wealth once in their Lives.—The King's Revenues.—His Gold Ornaments.—Slavery and its Relations.—The King's Wives.—The King's Sister.—Population.—Agricultural Products.—Manufactures.—Gold Mines.—Human Sacrifices.

In the preceding chapter we have confined ourselves to the mere historical outlines of the kingdom of Ashanti. In the present chapter we will look more narrowly at the internal character of the country, its government, social institutions, commerce, population, and its comparative importance among other African nations.

From the sketch already given our readers will readily infer that the Ashantis are a barbarous people, even among the barbarous nations of Africa. They would never have been known to the civilized world except for the abundance of their gold, the extent of their kingdom, and the savage warfare which they waged against the English soldiery on the Gold Coast. The victories which they obtained over the Fantis, in the first instance, and afterward over the English and Fantis united, are to be ascribed to their overwhelming numbers, and the savage violence with which they carried on the war, rather than to good discipline or any thing like thorough military skill. They have no military science whatever. Their army consists of large bodies of troops, the great majority of them slaves or dependents, brought together by the caboceers for the common defense of the country. The king is regarded as the commander-in-chief of the

army, and not infrequently leads in their engagements. Among the caboceers there are grades or ranks; but these distinctions are better understood in the capital than on the battle-field. Had Sir Charles M'Carthy been sustained by a well-disciplined army one-tenth as large as that of the Ashantis, and been well supplied with ammunition, the result of the engagement in which he lost his life would have been altogether different. It must not be thought, however, that the Ashantis are wanting in bravery. They gave many proofs of their courage; and there were not a few occasions when they fought even with desperation. It is reported that many of the caboceers, after their last defeat by the English, were so much mortified and chagrined that they blew themselves up in the sight of the English army by applying matches to kegs of powder on which they were seated. Perhaps the fear of being degraded or put to death by the king, on their return to the capital, had as much to do with these acts of desperation as any thing else.

The government of Ashanti is one of the most complete and barbarous despotisms in the world. We know of none to be compared with it, in its darker features, unless it is the neighboring kingdom of Dehomi. The king exercises absolute authority, not only over the property and the lives of the common people, but equally over the caboceers, who are the nobles of the country. His will is the law of the land, and whoever disregards or resists that, even in the most trifling matter, is guilty of high treason, and is liable to be adjudged to death. He keeps up a complete system of espionage over the whole country; and not a word is uttered, or the slightest action performed, if it implies, even remotely, any censure of what the king has done, that is not faithfully reported. No one is ever summoned to the royal presence, however conscious he may be of his innocence, who does not go tremblingly—not knowing whether he is to be honored, or to hear the sentence of imprisonment or death pronounced

against him. He may have been misrepresented to the king, and must now bear the penalty of a calumnious accusation. It may be that his blood is wanted to water the grave of some member of the royal family, or it may be to receive some munificent present, or to be raised to some distinguished honor dictated by the caprice of the king.

It is not to be supposed that the king himself is quite easy while he exercises such arbitrary and capricious authority over the lives and property of his subjects. It is the nature of cruelty to beget cowardice, and the king is as much afraid of his people as they are of him. His main security is in the distrust which his subjects have one toward the other. All feel the oppressiveness of his authority, and would be glad to shake it off; but who will dare to take the initiative in so perilous an undertaking? Information on such a subject always commands a high premium, and a man can scarcely breathe his thoughts without the fear of betrayal.

But there are other difficulties in the way of dethronement and revolution. If one despot is laid aside, it will only be to make room for another. The idea of imposing constitutional restraints is a matter which they do not comprehend, and would be utterly valueless in a community where there are no common bonds of virtue or patriotism; besides which, oppressive as the government is, the people have always been accustomed to it, and feel it much less sensibly than would be supposed. Education and religion alone can effect any material change in their views, or fit them for a more liberal and enlightened form of government.

The king is considered the legal heir to all the property of his subjects. He shows his magnanimity in most cases, however, by receiving only what unwrought gold may be found among the possessions of a deceased subject; abandoning the ornaments, furniture, and other property to the wife and children of the deceased. Many of the caboceers and other rich men take advantage of this, by having their gold manufac-

tured into ornaments and distributed among their friends, so as to keep it out of the reach of the king after their death.

Each caboceer, provided he is in good standing with the king, is permitted, once in his life, to make an ostentatious display of his wealth in the streets of Kumasi. This, of course, is a gala day, and the brightest and happiest in his sublunary existence. He decks himself, his wife, his children, and his dependents in his richest robes, and with all the gold ornaments he can possibly muster, and then parades them through the streets with martial music for hours together, and concludes the exhibition by a grand feast to which all of his friends are invited. Vanity and love of display are not discreditab<sup>le</sup> passions among such people, and as they honestly show out all they feel on these occasions, their behavior is superlatively ludicrous to those who have less simplicity of character. The king is no doubt actuated by an interested as well as a benevolent motive in allowing this privilege to the principal men of the state. It gives him and his spies an opportunity to find out how much real wealth they have; and the more shrewd and distrustful know this, and never make a full display of all their riches, unless they are carried away by an extreme love of show. Bowdich mentions the case of one man who made a display of his gold ornaments during his sojourn in the city, which he estimated at sixteen hundred ounces of gold, equal to something like \$28,000.

But the king himself is the great property owner in the country. His revenues are derived from a variety of sources. A tax of twenty per cent. is paid on all gold manufactured into ornaments. The mines are considered as the property of the crown, and a large percentage is paid on all the gold taken from them. Taxes paid by those licensed to trade, tribute derived from conquered provinces, and all the gold found in the market of Kumasi—which is said to amount to a considerable sum—all go into the royal coffers, and make

the King of Ashanti the richest man, perhaps, on the continent of Africa.

He makes frequent display of his riches, but especially when he receives distinguished visitors from a distance. On the occasion of receiving the English embassy, he was seated on a throne incased with massive gold, his person enveloped in the richest silks, and wearing as many ornaments of pure gold on his neck, arms, wrists, fingers, ankles, and toes as he could comfortably support. His attendants and ministers, at the same time, made a display of a still greater amount in belts, gold-hilt swords, hatchets, scales and weights, horns, dishes, stools, and innumerable other articles of pure gold, and all belonging to the royal treasures.

Slavery prevails here, as it does in most parts of Western Africa, but on a larger scale. Many of the caboceers own as many as a thousand slaves. Captains and other subordinate officers of the army have their proportionate share also. They are procured in various ways. All prisoners of war, if not executed, are reduced to slavery, and distributed among the officers of the army. Many are reduced to this condition by misconduct. But much the greater proportion of them are pagan negroes brought from the interior by their Mohammedan conquerors and sold as slaves. A great accumulation of domestic slaves has taken place in Ashanti since the suppression of the trade along the sea-coast. So long as there was a free outlet for them to foreign countries, the trade in slaves was very active in Ashanti; and the excessive number there at present results from the continued flow of this stream without any outlet for it. This tide has already slackened, however, and must ere long cease to flow. The maritime tribes are beginning to find out that they have already more domestic slaves than is consistent with their safety or comfort; and the present distinction between masters and slaves must gradually disappear, or servile wars will take place that may leave the slaves in the ascendancy.

Slavery is not here, or in any other part of Africa, what it is in most other portions of the world. In some of its aspects it is a mere nominal affair; and nowhere, in Africa, can slaves be regarded in any other light than as dependents. He is expected to acknowledge the superiority of his master, to constitute a part of his retinue when he makes a display of his riches, accompany him on his war expeditions, assist in building his houses and in cultivating his farm; but in other respects he has a larger margin of liberty than the peasantry in many parts of Europe.

Masters here would abuse their power if the fear of witchcraft, in which slaves are supposed to be particularly skilled, did not act as a most salutary check. In many cases the law, or what is the same thing, public opinion, allows a man the power of life and death over his slaves, but he will not hastily resort to extreme measures when he knows a thousand secret invisible engines of witchcraft may be let loose against him. Before he proceeds to any measures of violence, he must be sure that he has just cause to do so, and be able, at the same time, to make others see the matter in the same light with himself. Slaves know very well in what their own power and the means of redress consist, and they are sure to turn their master's dread of witchcraft to good account. In many parts of Western Africa slaves who conduct themselves with propriety and modesty often rise to respectability in the community, and become themselves owners of slaves. The writer knows several cases where slaves themselves have owned a larger number of bondmen than their own masters; and anomalous as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, in many parts of the country at least, that the relationship between the slave and his master is indispensable to the security and the happiness of the former in the community where they live. This grows out of the feudal nature of their government, in which certain leading characters, who have acquired prominence in society by age, by

military exploits, or by the accumulation of wealth, are the arbiters in all matters of general interest, and are the defenders of all the common people who range themselves under their standards. As the slave can not claim protection on the score of consanguinity, he must do it on the score of being a dependent. Otherwise he would be liable to all sorts of oppression at the hands of a community which has no proper sense of individual rights. Besides which, the term slave does not bear all the opprobrium here that it does in other parts of the world. The distinction between slave and master is not so broad; and the former, especially where a good understanding has existed for some time, looks up to the latter more as a father and protector than master.

Polygamy is a favorite institution with the Ashantis, and, like every thing of the kind, it is carried to an extravagant length. A man's importance in society is rated according to the number of his wives and slaves; and naturally enough, the only limit known to the multiplication of them in a country where both can be had for money, is a man's ability to purchase. In Ashanti the law limits the king to three thousand three hundred and thirty-three. Whether it requires him to come up to this mark is not known. Public opinion requires him to have a very large number in order to his respectability; he must have more at least than any of his caboceers. During the working season the wives of the king, with the exception of a half dozen or more, are dispersed on their plantations. When in the capital they occupy two whole streets, but are very much secluded from the rest of the population. No one is permitted to see them except the king's female relatives, or such messengers as he may send, and even these must communicate with them through their bamboo walls. Sometimes they go forth in a body through the streets, but are always preceded by a company of boys, who warn the people to get out of the way, and avoid the unpardonable offense of seeing the king's wives.

The men especially, no matter what their rank, must get out of the way; and if they have not had sufficient time to do this, they must fall flat on the ground and hide their faces until the procession has passed. To see one of the king's wives, even accidentally, is a capital offense; and the scene of confusion which occasionally takes place in the public market, in consequence of the unexpected approach of the royal cortége, is said to be ludicrous beyond all description. On a few state occasions the wives of the king are brought out into public view, and may be seen without endangering the lives of the spectators. On the occasion when the treaty made by Bowdich was signed, three hundred of them were present, probably for the double purpose of giving sanctity to the treaty and making a display of the king's importance. The caboceers, captains, and other principal men of the country, have as many wives as they can get; but they must be careful not to approach too near to the king's number so as to awaken his jealousy. The number of the caboceer's wives indicates his rank.

This multiplicity of wives looks as if there were a much larger female than male population. This is true only of the maritime districts, however. To supply the demand for women in Ashanti the surrounding country must be greatly drained of its female population, while none born in the kingdom are ever taken to these neighboring districts to supply their losses. All kinds of expedients are practiced to procure wives. Girls are betrothed at a very early age, and, of course, with no reference to their personal preferences. Cases are mentioned where they are betrothed even when not more than five years of age. An Ashanti lady regards it as a very flattering token of admiration to have overtures made for a young daughter, and it is said engagements even earlier than this are sometimes actually made. The girl, however early betrothed, is generally left with her mother until she attains to womanhood, the husband-expect-

ant, in the mean time, making occasional presents to both mother and daughter. Any liberties taken with a girl under betrothment by a third person, is regarded and treated in the same manner as if they had been taken with one of the man's married women. Adultery is not uncommon, though severely punished when detected. In some parts of Western Africa it is punished with the loss of an ear, the nose, or a finger. In Ashanti it is usually punished by fine, and, as a general thing, according to the rank of the man who has been offended, and the ability of the offender to pay. If a man is unable to pay the reasonable demand made for such an offense, he may be sold or put to death, though these extreme measures are not often resorted to. In some parts of the country it is regarded as a mark of magnanimity to overlook these as mere peccadilloes. If a man has a very large cortége of women he can afford to allow of some encroachments of this kind without feelings of jealousy or resentment. On the other hand, any violent retaliation indicates a measure of personal jealousy which always belittles a man in the eyes of an African community.

The Ashanti wife is not placed on a footing of social equality with her husband. Her position is a menial one, and she seldom aspires to any thing higher than merely to gratify the passions of her husband. She never takes a seat at the social board with him. Indeed it would be regarded as a degradation on the part of the husband. The different women of his household, at a given concert among themselves, bring each their quota of food, and set it before their lord, each one taking up a small portion of their respective dishes and eating it in his presence, as evidence that they have not used poison in the preparation of his food, then retire to their respective houses, while he partakes of his repast alone. His smaller children, and generally those of the wives who have provided his food, gather around him with their little wooden bowls to receive at his hands a portion

of the superabundant supply that has been set before him. He feels great pleasure in feeding his little ones; indeed this is almost the only way in which he can gain any hold upon their affections, or induce any feelings of filial regard toward himself.

One of the king's sisters or some other female relative exercises as much authority over the women of the kingdom as the king himself does over the men. She is not independent of the king, however, and her jurisdiction is often restricted to the supervision of the royal seraglio, and she no doubt finds as many little quarrels, and big ones too, to settle as she can well manage. All of the principal men of the country likewise make one of their wives the head of the others. In most cases her decisions are regarded as final; but there may be an appeal to the head of the family, whose adjudications seldom amount to any thing more than merely softening down the matter as far as possible.

It is almost impossible to form any thing like a satisfactory estimate of the population of any portion of Western Africa. No census is ever taken, and it would look almost like an invidious affair to strike the balance so closely between the relative strength of different kingdoms. The kingdom of Ashanti in some periods of its past history must have had a large population. In the war with the northern kingdoms, of which several afterward became tributary, it is said that a hundred thousand men were killed. This is no doubt exaggerated; but the number was probably very large. In the single massacre at Anamabo, in 1807, where there were Europeans to take cognizance of the matter, it is said that eight thousand people were killed; and the Ashantis regarded these as but a handful compared with those that were killed in their northern wars. The population of Kumasi, the capital of Ashanti, has been variously estimated, by white men who have been there, from fifteen to two hundred thousand. M'Queen, in his Geographical Survey of Africa, after bring-

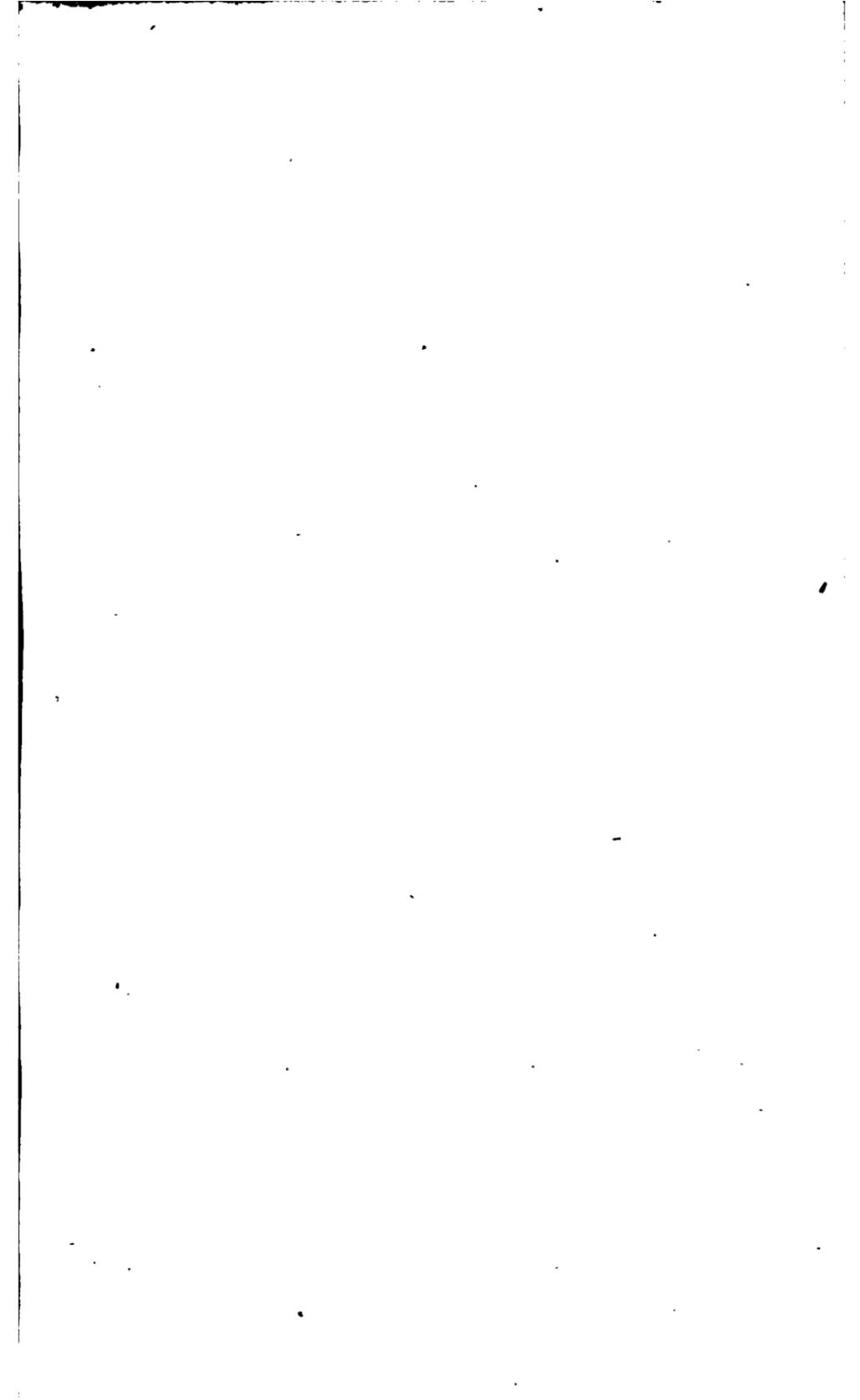
ing together the estimates of Bowdich, Dupuis, and others, comes to the conclusion that the population is probably about 100,000; and Mr. Beecham, who derives his information from Mr. Freeman, a highly respectable missionary at Cape Coast, and one who has had better means of forming a correct judgment on the subject than any other man living, adopts the estimate of M'Queen as being the nearest to the true state of the case.

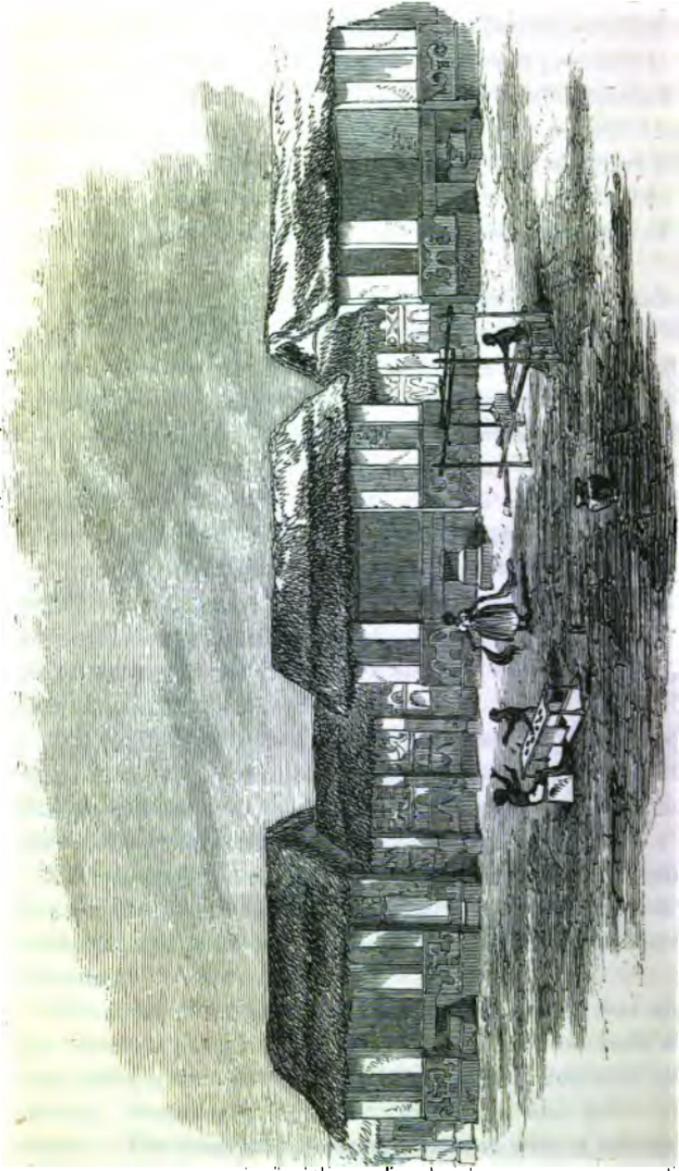
The same author estimates the population of Ashanti proper at 1,000,000. Including the population of the tributary provinces, he supposes it would not be less than 3,000,000. If we include the maritime population from Cape Appolonia to the River Volta, the entire population of the Gold Coast would amount to four or five millions. This, however, can be regarded only as an approximation to the true result. The slave-trade and the desolating wars of the early part of the nineteenth century no doubt reduced the population very considerably. But the suppression of the slave-trade and thirty years of uninterrupted peace have repaired this breach to some extent, so that it is now very nearly as great as it ever was.

The soil is productive, and yields abundantly Indian corn, sugar-cane, yams, potatoes, plantains, bananas, ground nuts, melons, onions, and various other articles of food, and many kinds of tropical fruit.

Cotton, indigo, and coffee are raised in sufficient quantities for the present demand, but they might be increased indefinitely, and no doubt will be, as the people advance in civilization.

The style of building in Ashanti is not unlike that along the sea-coast already described. Their houses are built with clay walls, generally one story high, and covered with grass thatch. Sometimes they are very large, and have many rooms. The walls and doors are painted with a species of chalk, and pictures of animals and grotesque figures of all





STREET IN KUMASI.

kinds are drawn upon their doors and window-shutters. The houses of the nobles and principal men are so constructed as to inclose a hollow-square, into which the apartments of the different wives all open. The side fronting the main street has a projection of the roof, some eight or ten feet, under which there are lounges, and where the master of the house receives his visitors.

The Ashantis are well versed in many of the mechanic arts. They manufacture gold ornaments of various kinds, and many of them with much real taste. They fabricate swords, agricultural implements, wooden stools, and cotton cloths of beautiful figures and very substantial texture. Their only perfect dye is the indigo blue. To get a red color to work into the web, they not unfrequently unravel yards of crimson silk velvet, which they procure at Cape Coast for this purpose.

Ashanti has a large amount of commerce with the interior kingdoms of Africa. Kumasi is occasionally visited by caravans from Housa, Bornou, and Timbucktu, and it is said there have been caravans even from Cairo and Tripoli. The chief exports of the country are gold dust, ivory, and the gura nut. A portion of the gold dust and most of the ivory are taken to the forts on the sea-coast and exchanged for European manufactures. Much gold goes by way of Housa to Timbucktu, and from thence to the Barbary States. The gura nut is a species of large red bean, of a bitter taste, but greatly prized for its tonic properties. It grows on a tree resembling somewhat the magnolia, and is to be found only along the sea-coast regions. The tree bears a large number of pods, in appearance and size not unlike a cucumber. Each of these pods contains a half-dozen or more of these irregular-shaped beans. They are greatly prized by the interior nations, and especially by travelers who have to perform long journeys, and many times without sufficient food.

The gold is procured both by washing and digging. The

soil every where in Ashanti seems to be impregnated with it, and large quantities are procured from the sand even of the streets of Kumasi. There are, besides, very rich mines, and especially in Gaman, where the gold is procured in large lumps. The mines are very imperfectly worked, and some of the richest are sacred to their fetiches, and are not worked at all. These mines would, no doubt, have long since fallen into the hands of white men and have had their value fully tested, but for two difficulties; first, the Ashantis, a terrible horde of savages, would have to be conquered and driven out of the country; and next, the unhealthiness of the country, which no sword could overcome, would thoroughly prevent white men from working them. It is best for both whites and blacks that these mines should be worked just as they are. The world is not suffering for the want of gold, and the comparatively small quantities that are brought to the sea-coast by the Ashantis keep them in continual intercourse with civilized men, and ultimately, no doubt, will be the means of introducing civilization and Christianity among them.

Among the darkest features in the history of this people are the cruel and bloody human sacrifices which are annually made to the royal ancestors. The savage and atrocious cruelties practiced on these occasions are perhaps without a parallel in the history of the world. All who have read an account of these horrid details are constantly reminded of the declaration of the Word of God, that "the dark places of the earth are filled with habitations of cruelty." A more detailed account of these practices will be given under the head of the superstitious customs of the country.

## CHAPTER XL

## SLAVE COAST.

Decline of African Kingdoms and the Causes of it.—Benin, when discovered.—People converted to Christianity in consequence of the King having a white Wife.—Yoruba.—Abeokuta.—Dehomi, a terrible Despotism.—War, the Pursuit of the Nation.—Regiment of Women.—Treaty to break up the Slave-trade.—Christianity alone can restore Peace and Prosperity to the Country.

THE Slave Coast, so called from the great number of slaves who have been exported from this part of the country, extends from the River Volta, on the west, to the Niger, in the Gulf of Benin, on the east. Between these two rivers, the Atlantic Ocean on the south, and the Kong Mountains on the north, are included the three kingdoms or countries of Dehomi, Yoruba, and Benin.

The two last are no longer under independent organized governments, but the names still apply to the countries where these governments once existed.

Dehomi, too, though it still continues to be governed by a single chief, has probably passed the meridian of its glory and power, and is tending toward disorganization. This has been the general tendency of things in the whole of Western Africa for more than two centuries. If we can rely upon the accounts of the earlier voyagers to the coast, and especially those of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there were in those days many and comparatively powerful negro kingdoms in this portion of Africa. But they have long since been broken up into many small independent communities, who have little or no traditionary knowledge of the more extended organizations which once existed among their forefathers.

This deterioration, for it can scarcely be regarded in any other light, is to be ascribed to a variety of causes. One of the most important of which undoubtedly has been the prevalence of the foreign slave-trade. It is quite observable, that, in those regions where the traffic has been carried on with the most vigor, there the process of disorganization and deterioration has been the most rapid. Nor could it well be otherwise. The very measures which were employed in carrying on this traffic, at least over three-fourths of the country, were in themselves quite sufficient to undermine the foundations of any government in the world. For a long term of years, slaves were procured on the part of these larger and more powerful governments by waging war against their feebler neighbors for this express purpose; and in this way they not only cut off all the sources of their own prosperity and wealth, but the people themselves, while waging this ruthless and inhuman warfare, were imbibing notions and principles which would make it utterly impossible for them to cohere long as organized nations.

As soon as the external supply began to fail, these larger communities commenced to prey upon their own vitals. The penalty of death, in the case of criminals, was commuted into a bill of sale and transportation, and when men were too tardy in rendering themselves obnoxious to this penalty, false accusations were brought forward and sustained, and especially on the charge of witchcraft; so that it became a frequent occurrence that persons were taken to the slave factories and sold as slaves, who themselves, and perhaps not more than a few weeks or months previously, had been parties to the selling of their fellow-men under the same circumstances. Distrust, jealousy, hatred, and suspicion, grew up rapidly in the midst of these transactions, and soon made it impossible for people to live together in peace and harmony in the midst of such outrages.

There is something, likewise, in the very nature of their

superstitious notions and customs which renders it impossible for the people to dwell together in peace and quietness. The belief in witchcraft, and the unjust measures employed to purge the community of its injurious effects, are better calculated to keep the people in a state of constant perturbation than to effect peace and harmony. And as these notions and practices have constantly been growing worse, it was almost impossible for any large political organization to hold together.

The general intercourse established about this time between themselves and white men contributed, no doubt, to hasten the downfall of existing governments. It was a new element thrown into the body politic. From the time that white men first visited their shores and spread before them the products of civilized art, it became a ruling passion with the African to court their favor, and secure for himself as large a share of these coveted treasures as he possibly could. Rivalries grew out of this passion, and no pains or means were spared in endeavors to supplant each other in the white man's esteem. This led to the breaking up of the larger communities into almost as many fragments as there were ambitious men to head them. Nor has this ruling passion subsided even at the present day.

Benin, the most easterly of these provinces, was discovered by the Portuguese in 1485. Alfonso de Aviro, the discoverer, on his return to Europe was accompanied by an Ambassador from the King of Benin to the Court of Portugal, with the request that Christian missionaries might be sent to instruct his people in the principles of Christianity. Fernando Po was dispatched immediately to the Gulf of Benin, and after discovering the island which bears his name, he ascended the Benin River to a place called Gatou, where he founded a Portuguese settlement. A church was planted at this place soon after, and it is said that more than a thousand persons in a very short time were baptized and registered among the adherents of Rome.

At a later period, according to Barbot, the King of Benin engaged to bring his entire kingdom over to the Roman Catholic faith if the priests would provide him with a white wife. An embassy was immediately dispatched to the neighboring island of St. Thomas, where there was a considerable white population; and a strong appeal was made to the Christian feeling of the sisterhood, one of whom had the courage to look the matter in the face, and actually accepted the hand of his sable majesty. She ought to have been canonized, but it is not known that this deed of self-sacrifice ever received any special notice from the Father of the Church.

The Portuguese did not long retain possession of Benin. The kingdom was much more contracted than was at first supposed; its commercial resources were comparatively limited, and the country proved to be exceedingly unhealthy. They continued to purchase slaves here up to a very recent period, but their influence over the country has always been less than that of England and other European nations. No traces of Roman Catholicism are found among the present inhabitants of the country; and perhaps a more degraded or barbarous people are nowhere else to be found on the coast of Africa.

Many years since the kingdom was divided into two minor provinces, one of which is still known as Benin, and the other as Waree. The capital of Benin covers a large extent of ground, but does not contain, according to Captain Adams, more than 15,000 inhabitants. The town and island of Waree, which is the principal sea-port and commercial dépot of the kingdom, has a population of something like 5000.

The Dutch, English, and French have all had trading establishments at these places at different times. None of them, however, have attempted to form permanent settlements here. The country, or the maritime portions of it, being encompassed and penetrated by the various minor riv-

ers which form the outlet of the Niger, is low, flat, and marshy, and is perhaps the most unhealthy for Europeans of any portion of Western Africa.

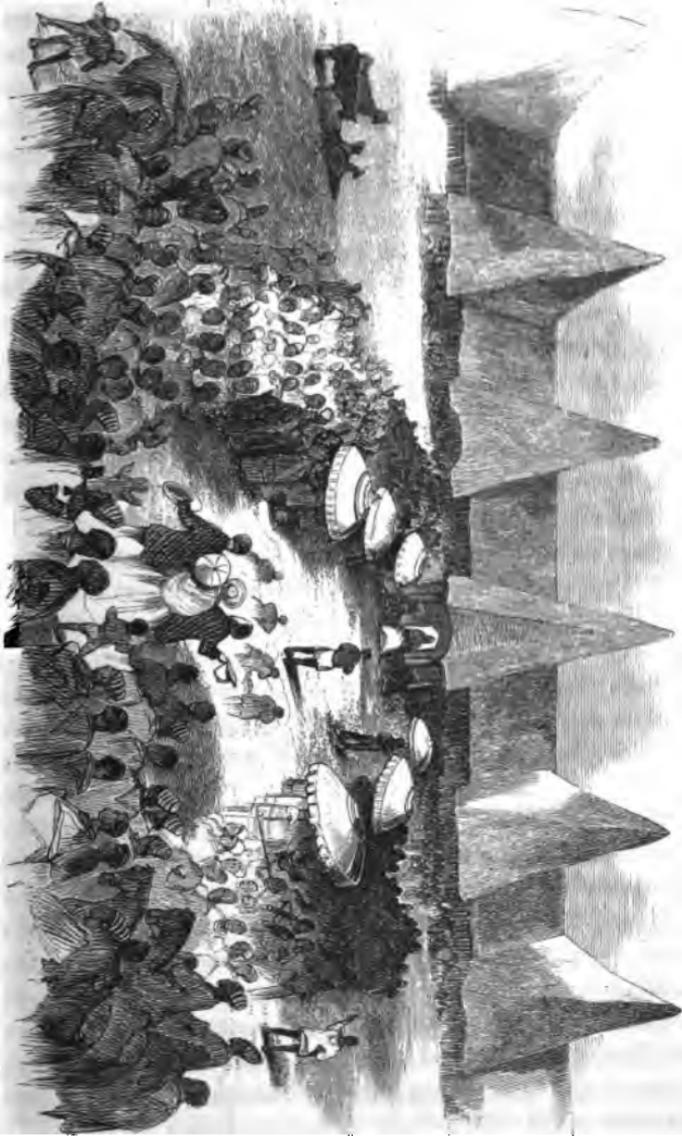
Formerly the slave-trade was carried on here very extensively, but the English squadron found it comparatively easy to keep it in check, in consequence of the calms which prevail in these latitudes, and which enabled them to make prizes of nine-tenths of the vessels which attempted to escape with cargoes of slaves. In consequence of the restraints imposed upon the slave-trade, the people of Benin have turned their attention to commerce in the natural products of the country, and already the rivers in this vicinity, especially that known as the Bonny River, have become the largest and most flourishing palm-oil marts on the whole coast. At the present time there are seldom less than twelve or fifteen large-sized ships, mostly from Liverpool, lying in the Bonny, receiving cargoes of palm-oil, and the quantity exported yearly is very great, and is constantly increasing.

The character and habits of the native population here are very bad. They are thievish, turbulent, grossly addicted to intemperance, and, were it not for the fear of summary punishment by the men-of-war on the coast, they would not at any time hesitate to perpetrate the most atrocious villainies upon the white men who visit their country. Unfortunately, the whites who are engaged in this trade do not always maintain the best character for sobriety and morality; and the deeds of outrage perpetrated by them in this dark corner of the world, not only upon each other but upon the natives of the country, are by no means favorable to the improvement of the moral or social condition of the country.

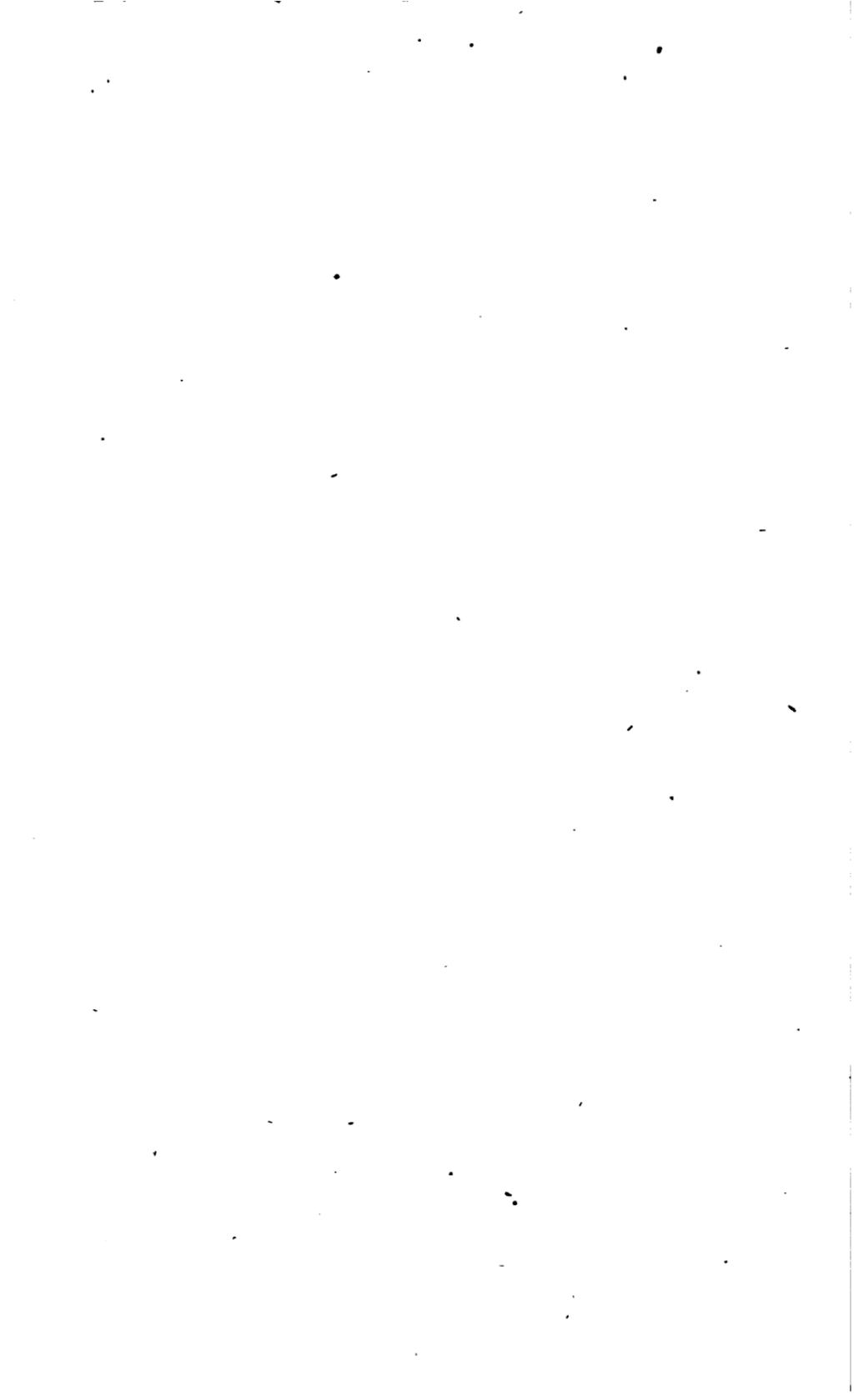
*Yoruba* (formerly *Yarriba*) lies to the west of Benin, and between it and the kingdom of *Dehomi*, but is greater in extent than either. It extends from the sea-coast to the Niger, which separates it from the kingdom of *Nufi*. In former years the whole of this extensive region of country

was united under one sovereign, but it has long since been broken up into many petty principalities, which are bound together by no friendly or political bonds. The dismemberment of the government was occasioned in part by the prevalence of the foreign slave-trade, and partly by the invasion of the Fellatahs, twenty-five or thirty years since. The eastern and northern portions of the country at the present time are virtually under the domination of the Fellatahs, while the southern and western districts are inhabited by the Ketu, Egba, and other aboriginal tribes. The principal sea-port of Yoruba is Lagos, and this, in a great measure, is in the hands of the Popo people, who came from the country of Ardra to the west. Lagos for many years past has been a most notable slave mart, and was one of the last to be coerced into the abandonment of the traffic. Situated on the sea-coast, at the mouth of a large river which penetrates to the heart of Yoruba, and on the banks of a navigable lagoon, extending from the Volta on the west, and communicating with the principal outlets of the Niger to the east, it had extraordinary advantages for carrying on the slave-trade; and for a term of more than twenty years it was prosecuted with the utmost vigor, in despite of all the efforts of the British squadron to put an end to it. A large number of Portuguese and Spanish slave-traders settled here, and by them the natives were trained to the arts of civilized warfare, so that when it was finally determined, in 1852, to storm and take the place, the people made such a formidable resistance that it cost the British squadron many valuable lives before their object was accomplished. The place is now virtually under the jurisdiction of the British Government, and it is retained with the view of keeping the traffic in slaves in check.

Desolated and disorganized as Yoruba is, a nucleus of life and order has recently been formed in the heart of it, which, from present appearances, promises to restore order and har-



YORUBA PALACE.



mony at no very remote day. About thirty years ago a few small, and almost desponding tribes or bands, that were constantly annoyed and threatened by the slave-hunts carried on in the country, betook themselves to a notable cavern near the banks of the Ogun, and about seventy-five miles from the sea-coast, as a place of safety and refuge from their enemies. In the course of time they were joined by others in the same circumstances, and they leagued together for their mutual defense. At first they were feeble, were afraid to venture far from their place of concealment, and were compelled to feed upon berries, roots, and such articles of food as they could pick up about their lurking-place. As they increased in numbers, however, they engaged in agriculture and built themselves houses, and under the guidance of an excellent and liberal-minded man by the name of Shodeke, all these various bands, of which it is said that there were the remnants of one hundred and thirty towns, were consolidated into one government. They continued to increase until 1853, twenty-eight years from its commencement, when it is said that their population amounted to 80,000; by some it has been estimated at 150,000. The place received the name of Understone, or Abeokuta, in honor of the cavern where the first pioneers found a shelter and a place of concealment.

About fifteen years since a number of re-captives from Sierra Leone, who had formerly been taken from this region of country, after having received an education and acquired a little property, purchased a small vessel and visited Badagry and Lagos for trade. Here they became acquainted with many of their own nation, and some whom they had known before they were taken away from their homes. They acquired much information about the country generally, and especially about Abeokuta, which had grown up so rapidly, and made so noble a stand against the slave-trade. When they returned to Sierra Leone, and gave information about what they

had learned of the character and prospects of Understone, large numbers of the re-captives immediately resolved to return to their native land; some with the view of making wealth, others with the expectation of meeting relatives from whom they had long been separated, and others from the still higher motives of carrying that precious Gospel which they had heard at Sierra Leone to their benighted countrymen.

Several of these companies immediately set out, a part of whom landed at Badagry (the port from which the Landers set out on their exploration of the Niger), and others at Lagos, all of whom ultimately reached Abeokuta. In the course of three years, from 1839 to 1842, it is said that Abeokuta received an accession of five hundred persons from Sierra Leone. These emigrants carried with them the little property they had amassed; many of them were educated, and somewhat accustomed to the habits of civilized life, and a few were devoted Christians, who came in the fullness of the Gospel. They were kindly and cordially received by the people of Abeokuta, and not a few met their relatives, and, in a few cases, parents and children who had been separated for twenty years or more were brought together. This gave new life and energy to the whole community. Missionaries from Sierra Leone and England followed these emigrants, and in a short time schools were formed and churches erected; and perhaps there is no spot in the whole heathen world where the cause of Christianity and civilization have made more steady or rapid progress than here during the last twelve or fifteen years. One of the most remarkable men connected with this enterprise is a man of the name of Crowther (in the Yoruba language he was called Adgai). He was a native of the country, and was embarked as a slave on board of a slaver at Badagry, in 1822. This vessel was captured by a man-of-war, and taken to Sierra Leone. Here he received a good education, was converted, and became a minister of the Gospel. He was among the first to return

to his native country and hoist the Christian banner in this dark portion of the earth, and has ever since been one of the most effective members of the missionary band. He still remains in this good work, and is now laboriously engaged in translating the Bible into the Yoruba language. He found his own mother and several of his sisters here, and has since had the great satisfaction of seeing them become humble followers of the Lord Jesus.

Crowther is a very uncommon man, both on account of his eminent piety and his high intellectual qualifications; and his history, in some of its particulars, reminds one of many incidents in the lives both of Joseph and Moses. His attainments in learning furnish a happy illustration of the capacity of the negro for improvement, and the high and honorable destiny which awaits his country when it is brought under the influence of Christianity and civilization.

We see, too, in the history of this man, and the great enterprise of which he may be regarded as the head, the legitimate results of missionary labor. The missionaries at Sierra Leone had labored through many a long and tedious night; little or no visible impression was made upon the minds of the people at first; time after time their number was thinned out by death; on several occasions both they and their Christian friends in England discussed the question whether the mission should not be given up. But wiser and heavenly councils prevailed. The work was continued, prayer was sent up to Heaven, the showers of Divine grace began to descend upon their work, and now the richest fruits are being gathered, not only at Sierra Leone, but in the far-off region of Yoruba; and perhaps before a very distant day its influence will be felt in the heart and the remotest corner of Africa.

The King of Dehomi watched the growing power of Abeokuta with an evil eye. Something more than three years ago he set in motion a large army with the view of destroying this great and growing city, and reducing its inhab-

itants to slavery. But the same superintending Providence which preserved this community during the period of their infancy and weakness, was over them in this more imminent danger. Prayer was offered up by many Christians within the walls of the town, and was heard. The king made a desperate assault upon the place, but he met with a most unexpected and spirited resistance. The engagement was carried on outside of the walls for several hours, when the Dehoman army was compelled to give way, and it is believed that the king himself would have been captured if it had not been for the desperate and almost frantic fury with which his Amazons defended his person.

The Abeokutans had been trained for this desperate emergency by an American missionary who was residing there at the time, and who had himself once been in some of our own engagements in Mexico. The people remember his name and his services with much gratitude, though there has been no published account of this fact before.

Dehomi is the largest and most powerful of all these nations. Its government is an absolute despotism, and if regard be had to the superstitious veneration which the people entertain for their sovereign, and the atrocious cruelties that are constantly perpetrated by them at his bidding, it has scarcely any parallel in the history of the world.

It lies between the kingdom of Ashanti on the west, and Yoruba on the east, and extends from the sea-coast on the south to the Kong Mountains on the north, being about a hundred and eighty miles wide and about two hundred in length. Very little was known of the existence of this people until the early part of the eighteenth century. They are supposed, however, to have been the same mentioned by Leo Africanus under the name of Dauma, whom he represents as living in that region. Their first appearance on the sea-coast was about the year 1724. At that time a notable king, of the name of Guadja Trudo, overran and conquered the king-

dom of Ardra, which lay between him and the sea-coast. At the same time an English factor, of the name of Bulfinch Lamb, was captured and taken as a prisoner to Abomi, the capital of Dehomi. He was detained here three years, but treated with much kindness, and was allowed to have free correspondence with the agents of the West African Company at Cape Coast. The account which he gave of the state of the country at that time is very nearly as applicable to it at the present day as it was then.

A few years subsequent to the first invasion of the sea-coast regions by the Dehomans, a second was provoked by the injudicious interference of the European factors in the local affairs of the country. At this time Whydah, the principal settlement on the sea-coast, was reconquered, and all the European factories at Jaquin and other places in the neighborhood were destroyed. The merchants, officers, and others, connected with these foreign establishments, were made prisoners; all of whom, however, were soon after set at liberty, with the exception of the English governor of Whydah, who was put to death for having instigated the people to throw off the Dehoman yoke.

Since that period to the present the kings of Dehomi have held absolute sway over Whydah, and have exacted tribute from all the sea-port towns on this part of the sea-coast, and especially from Popo, Porto Novo, and Badagry, where the foreign slave-trade, until within a very short period, was carried on almost with as much vigor as at Whydah itself. Mr. Robert Morris, an English trader, visited Abomi in 1772, and a few years afterward published an account of his journey, and the state of the country at that time. Dr. McLeod visited the Slave Coast in 1803, and published another volume on Dehomi. Within a few years past the country has been successively visited by Mr. Duncan, English Vice-consul at Whydah; by Lieutenant Forbes, of the British navy; and Rev. Thomas Freeman, of the Wesleyan mis-



sion at Cape Coast; all of whom have published full and corroborative accounts of the actual state and condition of that country, so that what was formerly published of the atrocious cruelties perpetrated here are no longer to be regarded as fabulous.

The king is one of the most absolute tyrants in the world; and being regarded as a demi-god by his own subjects, his actions are never questioned. No person ever approaches him, even his favorite chiefs, without prostrating themselves at full length on the ground, and covering their faces and heads with earth. It is a grave offense to suppose that the king eats, drinks, sleeps, or performs any of the ordinary functions of nature. His meals are always taken to a secret place, and any man that has the misfortune or the temerity to cast his eyes upon him in the act, is put to death. If the king drinks in public, which is done on some extraordinary occasions, his person is concealed by having a curtain held up before him, during which time the people prostrate themselves, and afterward shout and cheer at the very top of their voices.

The king is the absolute proprietor of the land, the people, and every thing that pertains to his domain. The people are his slaves, and they must come and go at his command; and what is very marvelous (and can be accounted for only by the fact that they look up to him as a god), they are pleased to have it so. It is a great honor to enjoy his favor, and no man wishes to die otherwise than fighting his battles. The women of the country, of all ages and conditions, are his absolute property. Parental claim is unknown. No man can have a wife unless she is purchased from the king or is conferred upon him as a reward of bravery. Not only all the native-born women of the country, but all those taken in the predatory wars he is constantly waging against his neighbors, are his absolute property, and can be disposed of only according to his good pleasure. The present king has appro-

priated no less than three thousand women to his own use. The number belonging to his head warriors depends upon their bravery, but no one is allowed to have a number large enough to suggest most remotely any idea of rivalry with the king. It is well known that many of the wives of the king must be sacrificed at the death of their lord, and this, no doubt, is a powerful motive to induce them to take the best care of him, and prolong his life as much as possible, but never deters any from freely entering into this honored relationship.

At the death of the king it is not uncommon for his wives to fall upon each other with knives, and lacerate themselves in the most cruel and barbarous manner; and this work of butchery is continued until they are forcibly restrained.

The women of the country are distributed once a year. When they are sold, which is always the case except where they are given as rewards of merit, it is always for a fixed price. The purchaser lays down the stipulated sum at the feet of the king, and must receive just such an one as his caprice may suggest, whether young or old, sickly or healthy.

Most of the stouter women are reserved to make soldiers; and what is very remarkable, under the peculiar training to which they are subjected, they are said to constitute the bravest portion of the king's army. The number in the army at the present time is said to be about 5000. The king places implicit reliance upon their bravery, and prefers to be surrounded by them in times of imminent peril. They are thoroughly organized, have their own officers, and in all regular engagements have an important post assigned them. It is to their bravery and desperate fighting that the present king is indebted for the preservation of his life in his late disastrous assault upon Abeokuta. During the sojourn of Vice-consul Duncan and Lieutenant Forbes at the capital, the king made frequent displays of his female regiments. They were engaged in sham-fights, and made to force their way

through hedges of thorn-bushes, to show how they surprise their enemies by falling upon their towns. These Amazons use muskets and all other implements common in African warfare. They become very athletic and masculine, and retain no true feminine refinement. When they would reproach each other for imbecility or cowardice, they say "You are a man."

For two centuries or more the Dehoman soldiery have had little else to do than to wage war for the purpose of capturing slaves. The surrounding country, in consequence, has been kept in a state of constant perturbation, and some of the fairest portions of the land have been utterly exhausted by these desolating wars. The King of Ashanti has rich gold mines, and he has, therefore, had much less motive to follow up the slave-trade. Indeed for many years past the European traders on the Gold Coast were not in the habit of buying slaves; and the King of Ashanti consequently had no outlet for his slaves, even if he had been disposed to carry on this traffic. The King of Dehomi, on the other hand, had no other revenue than what was derived from it; and as the Portuguese, Spanish, and others engaged in this business made Whydah their head-quarters, there was always a greater demand for slaves than the king could supply, and his slave-hunts were, therefore, plied with little or no intermission. The blockading squadron which the British government has kept on this part of the coast for several years past, has well-nigh put a stop not only to the trade but the perpetual wars which the King of Dehomi waged for the purpose of keeping it up. The king has recently entered into a treaty for the entire abandonment of this nefarious business, and peace, it is hoped, will once more be restored to this unhappy and distracted country. This, if it is to be a permanent measure, will form a marked crisis in the history and condition of this whole region. The country has natural resources which, if properly developed, will make

it one of the finest portions of Western Africa. The soil is good, the seasons are regular and favorable for agricultural improvements, and its geographical position furnishes every facility for commercial enterprise. The products of the country are Indian corn, manioc, yams, potatoes, beans, ground nuts, plantains, and bananas. Cotton is produced to a limited extent, and might be increased almost indefinitely. But palm-oil will, no doubt, become the great article of export. It may be produced here to an almost unlimited extent, and the people will soon discover that it will afford them a larger and far more certain profit than the slave-trade ever did. It will require years, however, before all the desolations of the former traffic are fully repaired. Not only have all the surrounding nations been exhausted and worn out by the wars of the King of Dehomi, but they were rapidly drying up all the resources of his own kingdom. It was necessary not only to supply the foreign demand, but the graves of all the royal ancestors, as in Ashanti, must be watered every year with the blood of human sacrifices. Criminals (those that were esteemed so by the laws of Dehomi) were put to death in great numbers every year; and what seems almost incredible to civilized and Christian people, wars were frequently waged for the express purpose of getting human skulls to pave the court-yard and ornament the walls of the palace. And not only was the nation desolated by this reckless and unnatural waste of human life, but the whole country was burdened with a most oppressive system of taxation that had well-nigh extinguished the last spark of national life, and all to furnish the means of the most lavish and unheard of waste of property on the part of the king that can be conceived. Like the King of Ashanti, he is heir to the property of all his people. Every subject is regarded as a slave, and pays an annual tax of head money. The women of the country all belong to the king, and as they are sold to their husbands, the revenue from this source alone is

immense. The king has the largest share of all the slaves that are captured in his wars, and he receives a certain percentage upon every individual exported from his dominions. And so in relation to the internal commerce of the country. A tax is imposed upon every article of food, clothing, etc., that passes from the hands of one person to another. Smuggling and fraud are rife, no doubt, but the king's revenues, nevertheless, are very great.

Under all these adverse influences the country has deteriorated very rapidly, and especially during the few years that the slave-trade was shut up almost entirely to this particular section of the coast. Forbes and Duncan estimate the present population of Dehomi proper at not more than two hundred thousand. His army, which is very great in proportion to the general population, is estimated at twenty thousand, of whom five thousand are women. A very considerable amount of this aggregate population is made up of captives and slaves, so that the original Dehoman population is reduced to a small amount.

The sea-port towns over which the King of Dehomi claims jurisdiction are Popo, Whydah, Porto Novo, and Badagry. Of these Whydah is the largest, and is most completely under his jurisdiction. It has a population of ten or twelve thousand, which is of a very mixed character, and in some respects one of the worst people in the whole country. Besides the ancient native population, there are adventurers here from Cape Coast, free blacks from Brazil, brought here by Portuguese slave-traders as domestics, or natives who returned here after obtaining their freedom in Brazil, and recaptives from Sierra Leone. There are also many mulattoes, the children of Portuguese and Spanish slave-traders, who have lived here in considerable numbers for a long time past. This mixed population, with Portuguese training, and under the strict surveillance of the agents of the King of Dehomi, have made progress in little else than vice, and their

pre-eminence in this respect is scarcely to be questioned. There is no place where there is more intense heathenism ; and to mention no other feature in their superstitious practices, the worship of snakes at this place fully illustrates this remark. A house in the middle of the town is provided for the exclusive use of these reptiles, and they may be seen here at any time in very great numbers. They are fed, and more care is taken of them than of the human inhabitants of the place. If they are seen straying away they must be brought back ; and at the sight of them the people prostrate themselves on the ground, and do them all possible reverence. To kill or injure one of them is to incur the penalty of death. On certain occasions they are taken out by the priests or doctors, and paraded about the streets, the bearers allowing them to coil themselves around their arms, necks, and bodies. They are also employed to detect persons who have been guilty of witchcraft. If in the hands of the priest they bite the suspected person, it is sure evidence of his guilt, and no doubt the serpent is trained to do the will of his keeper in all such cases. Images, usually called *greegrees*, of the most uncouth shape and form, may be seen in all parts of the town, and are worshiped by all classes of persons. Perhaps there is no place where idolatry is more openly practiced, or where the people have sunk into deeper pagan darkness.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society of England have had a missionary station at Badagry for some years, and not without some important and encouraging tokens of success. Measures are in contemplation for the establishment of a second at Whydah, and a third at Abomi. The king, it is thought, is more favorable to Christian missions now than he formerly was. And certain it is, that nothing but the Gospel of Christ can ever rescue this miserable people from their deep, deep degradation, and every philanthropic heart will rejoice when the remedy is applied.

## CHAPTER XII.

## SUPERSTITIOUS NOTIONS OF NORTHERN GUINEA.

No well-established Form of Religion.—Belief in one Supreme Being.—Future Existence.—Transmigration.—Spirits of dead Men.—Fetichism.—Demonolatry.—Worship of Animals.—Judaism.—Witchcraft.—“Red-water Ordeal.”—Funerals.

It is not an easy task to give a full and satisfactory exposition of the religious creed of the pagan tribes of Africa. Those who have lived longest in the country, and have had the best opportunities to make themselves acquainted with the subject, have not always been able to satisfy their own minds in relation to what they really believe and hold as their religious creed. This arises from a variety of causes. One of the principal of which, undoubtedly, is that there is no well-defined system of false religion which is generally received by the people. There are a few leading notions or outlines of a system that prevail in all parts of the country; but all the details necessary to fill up these outlines are left to each man's fancy, and the answers given to inquirers on the subject are almost as various as the characters of the persons to whom they are submitted. And such is the predominancy of the imagination in the mental constitution of the negro, that he can scarcely discriminate between what is traditionary in his religious creed and what is the result of his own fanciful imaginings. Another difficulty arises from the extreme reluctance of the people to make known their superstitious notions. This may arise from their characteristic dread of ridicule, for they seem not to be insensible of the weakness and puerility of their systems of religion, and naturally shun the scrutiny of white men.

Close observation and prolonged experience have, however, thrown some light on this intricate subject, and the following outlines may be regarded as fully and satisfactorily established.

The belief in one great Supreme Being, who made and upholds all things, is universal. Nor is this idea imperfectly or obscurely developed in their minds. The impression is so deeply engraved upon their moral and mental nature, that any system of atheism strikes them as too absurd and preposterous to require a denial. Every thing which transpires in the natural world beyond the power of man, or of spirits, who are supposed to occupy a place somewhat higher than man, is at once and spontaneously ascribed to the agency of God. All of the tribes in the country with which the writer has become acquainted (and they are not few) have a name for God, and many of them have two or more, significant of his character as a Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor.\* The people, however, have no correct idea of the character or attributes of the Deity. Destitute of revelation, and without any other means of forming a correct conception of his moral nature, they naturally reason up from their own natures, and, in consequence, think of him as a being like themselves. Nor have they any correct notion of the control which God exercises over the affairs of the world. The prevailing notion seems to be that God, after having made the world and filled it with inhabitants, retired to some remote corner of the universe, and has allowed the affairs of the world to come under the control of evil spirits; and hence the only religious worship that is ever performed is directed to these spirits, the object of which is to court their favor, or ward off the evil effects of their displeasure.

\* In the Grebo country, *Nyiswa* is the common name for God; but he is sometimes called *Geyi*, indicative of his character as a Maker. In Ashanti he has two names, viz., *Yankumpon*, which signifies "my Great Friend," and *Yemi*, "my Maker."

On some rare occasions, as at the ratification of an important treaty, or when a man is condemned to drink the "red-water ordeal," the name of God is solemnly invoked; and what is worthy of note, is invoked *three times* with marked precision. Whether this involves the idea of a Trinity, we shall not pretend to decide; but the fact itself is worthy of record. Many of the tribes speak of the Son of God. The Grebos call him *Greh*, and the Amina people, according to Pritchard, call him *Sankombum*.

The belief in a future state of existence is equally prevalent. A native African would as soon doubt his present as his future state of being; but he has no clear or satisfactory notions of the place, circumstances, or conditions of his future life. The belief itself is implied in the intercourse which they profess to maintain with the spirits of their deceased friends, the clothing, furniture, and ornaments which are deposited at their graves at the time of their burial, and the food which they stately take them for years afterward, and in their idea of dreams, which they always construe as visits from the dead. The only idea of a future state of retribution is implied in the use of a separate burial-place for those who have died by the "red-water ordeal," or who have been guilty of grossly wicked deeds.

The doctrine of transmigration is very common. Hence animals inhabiting certain localities, as the monkeys near Fishtown, crocodiles near Dix Cove, snakes at Whydah, are sacred, because they are supposed to be animated by the spirits of the dead. Where a child bears a strong resemblance, either physical or mental, to a deceased relative, it is said to have inherited his soul. Native priests pretend to hold intercourse with the spirits of children who are too young to talk, or to make known their wants. Their crying is often ascribed to dissatisfaction at the name that has been given them, at the unsuitable nature of their food, or something else of a similar nature.

The Grebos, as well as other tribes along the sea-board, have a vague notion of a purgatorial state. But this they undoubtedly borrowed from the Roman Catholic priests, who visited the country during the seventeenth century for the purpose of propagating Christianity among its newly-discovered inhabitants.

The spirits of the dead are supposed to mingle freely with the living. Any sudden or strong impressions made upon the imagination, or any striking fancies that may arise in their minds, are supposed to be brought about by the agency of attendant spirits.

Any admonitions, warnings, or cautions that may come to them through their dreams, are regarded as coming from the same source, and they seldom fail to avail themselves of these hints and cautions, however preposterous they may be. Unaccustomed as they are to rely upon their own judgments in the ordinary affairs of life, and without any superhuman revelation to guide them in the path of duty, it is not surprising that they are eager to receive communications from the spirits of their deceased friends, especially as they are supposed to have emerged from the uncertainties and darkness of this to the clearer light of another world.

Men are prone enough to court this intercourse even with the light of a divine revelation in their hands. How much stronger does this propensity naturally become where they are entirely destitute of it!

*Fetichism* and *Demonolatry* are undoubtedly the leading and prominent forms of religion among the pagan tribes of Africa. They are entirely distinct from each other, but they run together at so many points, and have been so much mixed up by those who have attempted to write on the subject, that it is no easy matter to keep them separated.

A fetich,\* strictly speaking, is little else than a charm or

\* From the Portuguese word *fetico*, a charm, amulet.

amulet, worn about the person or set up at some convenient place, for the purpose of guarding against some apprehended evil or securing some coveted good.

In the Anglo-African parlance of the coast, they are variously called *grisgris* (greegrees), *jujus* (jeujeus), and *fetiches*, but all signifying the same thing. A fetich may be made of a piece of wood, the horn of a goat, the hoof of an antelope, a piece of metal or ivory, and needs only to pass through the consecrating hands of a native priest to receive all the supernatural powers which it is supposed to possess. It is not always certain that they possess extraordinary powers. They must be tried, and give proof of their efficiency before they can be implicitly trusted.

If a man, while wearing one of them, has some wonderful escape from danger, or has had good luck in trade, it is ascribed to the agency of his fetich, and it is cherished henceforward as a very dear friend, and valued beyond price. On the other hand, if he has been disappointed in some of his speculations, or been overtaken by some sad calamity, his fetich is thrown away as a worthless thing, without, however, impairing his confidence in the efficacy of fetiches in general. He has simply been unfortunate in having trusted to a bad one, and with unimpaired confidence he seeks another that will bring him better luck.

Where a person has experienced a series of good luck, through the agency of a fetich, he contracts a feeling of attachment and gratitude to it; begins to imagine that its efficiency proceeds from some kind of intelligence in the fetich itself, and ultimately regards it with idolatrous veneration. Hence it becomes a common practice to talk familiarly with it as a dear and faithful friend, pour rum over it as a kind of oblation, and in times of danger call loudly and earnestly upon it, as if to wake up its spirit and energy.

The purposes for which fetiches are used are almost with-

out number. One guards against sickness, another against drought, and a third against the disasters of war. One is used to draw down rain, another secures good crops, and a third fills the sea and rivers with fishes, and makes them willing to be taken in the fisherman's net. Insanity is cured by fetiches, the sterility of women is removed, and there is scarcely a single evil incident to human life which may not be overcome by this means; the only condition annexed is that the right kind of fetich be employed. Some are intended to preserve life, others to destroy it. One inspires a man with courage, makes him invulnerable in war, or paralyzes the energy of an adversary.

Sometimes they are made for the express purpose, and are commissioned with authority to put any man to death who violates a law that is intended to be specially sacred and binding.

There are several classes of fetiches, for each of which there is a separate name. One of these classes embraces such as are worn about the person, and are intended to shield the wearer from witchcraft and all the ordinary ills of human life. They are expected to bring him good luck, inspire him with courage and wisdom. Another class are such as are kept in their dwellings, having a particular place assigned them, and correspond in the offices they perform to the penates of old Romans. They have also national fetiches to protect their towns from fire, pestilence, and from surprise by enemies. They have others to procure rain, to make fruitful seasons, and to cause abundance of game in their woods, and fish in their waters. Some of these are suspended along the high-ways, a larger number are kept under rude shanties at the entrance of their villages; but the most important and sacred are kept in a house in the centre of the village, where the Bodeh or high priest lives and takes care of them. Most of these, and especially those at the entrances of their villages, are of the most uncouth forms—representing the heads of an-

imals or human beings, and almost always with a formidable pair of horns. Large earthen pots filled with bees are frequently found among these fetiches—the bees being regarded somewhat as a city guard.

The practice of using fetiches is universal, and is so completely inwrought into the whole texture of society, that no just account can be given of the moral and social condition of the people that does not assign this a prominent place.

One of the first things which salutes the eyes of a stranger after planting his feet upon the shores of Africa, is the symbols of this religion. He steps forth from the boat under a canopy of fetiches, not only as a security for his own safety, but as a guaranty that he does not carry the elements of mischief among the people; he finds them suspended along every path he walks; at every junction of two or more roads; at the crossing-place of every stream; at the base of every large rock or overgrown forest tree; at the gate of every village; over the door of every house, and around the neck of every human being whom he meets. They are set up on their farms, tied around their fruit trees, and are fastened to the necks of their sheep and goats, to prevent them from being stolen. If a man trespasses upon the property of his neighbor in defiance of the fetiches he has set up to protect it, he is confidently expected to suffer the penalty of his temerity at some time or other. If he is overtaken by a formidable malady or lingering sickness afterward, even should it be after the lapse of twenty, thirty, or forty years, he is known to be suffering the consequence of his own rashness.

And not only are these fetiches regarded as having power to protect or punish men, but they are equally omnipotent to shield themselves from violence. White men are frequently challenged to test their invulnerability, by shooting at them; and if they are destroyed in this way (and this is a very common occurrence), the only admission is, that that

particular fetich had no special virtues, or it would have defended itself.

It is almost impossible for persons who have been brought up under this system ever to divest themselves fully of its influence. It has been retained among the blacks of this country, and especially at the South, though in a less open form, even to the present day, and probably will never be fully abandoned, until they have made much higher attainments in Christian education and civilization. On some of the plantations at the South, as well as in the West Indies, where there has been less Christian culture, egg-shells are hung up in the corner of their chimneys to cause the chickens to flourish; an extracted tooth is thrown over the house or worn around the neck to prevent other teeth from aching; and real fetiches, though not known by this name, are used about their persons to shield them from sickness, or from the effects of witchcraft.

The natives of Africa, though so thoroughly devoted to the use of fetiches, acquire no feeling of security in consequence of using them. Perhaps their only real influence is to make them more insecure than they would have been without them. There is no place in the world where men feel more insecurity. A man must be careful whose company he keeps, what path he walks, whose house he enters, on what stool he seats himself, where he sleeps. He knows not what moment he may place his foot or lay his hand upon some invisible engine of mischief, or by what means the seeds of death may be implanted in his constitution.

The parings of their finger-nails and the hair of the head must be carefully concealed, or they may be converted into a fetich for the destruction of the person to whom they belong.

A fetich, like a sharp instrument, if unskillfully used, or if applied otherwise than in strict accordance with the directions given by the priest, may be the ruin of the very

man who has procured it for the destruction of some one else.

The use of fetiches which have the power of taking away life is justifiable under certain circumstances. A man is justified in setting up one about his premises to destroy the life of any one who should attempt to take away his own. He may guard his property in the same way, or use a fetich to recover it when stolen.

But fetiches are chiefly used as a defense against witchcraft, and probably had their origin in connection with this. Of this, however, we will speak more fully in another place.

The belief in the existence of spirits, who are supposed to control the affairs of men, is co-extensive with the use of charms and fetiches. Whether the natives of the country have the Jewish distinction between *diaboli* and *daimonia* in Northern Guinea is not certainly known, but the inhabitants of Southern Guinea undoubtedly have. It is universally admitted, however, that there is great diversity of character among the spirits with which they have to deal, whatever may have been their origin. Some are regarded as good spirits, and their kind offices are earnestly sought. Houses are built for their accommodation, and frequent offerings of food, drink, clothing, and furniture are taken to them. Native priests pretend to hold intercourse with them, and become *media* between the dead and the living. The means by which this intercourse is held is always veiled in mystery, but quite as satisfactory proofs are given of the reality of the intercourse as are furnished by our modern spiritualists; and it is highly probable that the latter might have their wits sharpened by making a visit to Africa, and availing themselves of the experience of the brotherhood there. Undoubtedly it is a much older practice in Africa than in America, it commands almost universal assent there, and on this account, at least, it ought to command the respect of the more modern explorers of the art here.

There are other spirits, however, whose presence and influence are greatly deprecated; and all sorts of means are employed to expel them from their houses and villages. They are supposed to cause drought, famine, pestilence, war, and all sorts of evil. Offerings are tendered to them to cause them to withdraw their wrath, and the utmost cautiousness is practiced not to provoke their displeasure. Indeed, the idea seems to be, though not very definitely put forth in their religious creed, that there are two great spirits, or classes of spirits, which preside over the affairs of men; one of which is good and benevolent, and the other stern and resentful; and that the spirits of dead men take rank with one or the other of these, according as they have been virtuous or wicked in this world. They are more particular about the religious worship they offer to the evil spirits than to the other, which is to be accounted for from the fact that their sense of guilt, and dread of punishment, is a much stronger feeling in their minds, than any emotions of love, or gratitude for favors received.

On the Gold Coast there are stated occasions, when the people turn out *en masse* (generally at night) with clubs and torches, to drive away the evil spirits from their towns. At a given signal, the whole community start up, commence a most hideous howling, beat about in every nook and corner of their dwellings, then rush into the streets, with their torches and clubs, like so many frantic maniacs, beat the air, and scream at the top of their voices, until some one announces the departure of the spirits through some gate of the town, when they are pursued several miles into the woods, and warned not to come back. After this the people breathe easier, sleep more quietly, have better health, and the town is once more cheered by an abundance of food.

Demoniacal possessions are common, and the feats performed by those who are supposed to be under such influence are certainly not unlike those described in the New

Testament. Frantic gestures, convulsions, foaming at the mouth, feats of supernatural strength, furious ravings, bodily lacerations, gnashing of teeth, and other things of a similar character, may be witnessed in most of the cases which are supposed to be under diabolical influences. In a few cases of the kind, it is very evident that some of these wonderful feats were effected by the action of powerful narcotics. But there were other things that could not be accounted for in this way. These extraordinary manifestations, however, are more common among the inhabitants of Southern than Northern Guinea. All of these spirits, whether good or evil, are supposed to inhabit certain great rocks, large hollow trees, mountains, caverns, deep rivers, and dense groves. These places are sacred, and no one ever passes them except in silence, and without dropping some kind of an offering, though it be but a leaf, or a shell picked up on the beach. Food is stately sent to them by the hands of a priest, who acts as proxy to the spirit, and eats it up. A deep cavern, with an echo, is always fixed upon as a favorite residence for these spirits, and oracular answers are given on all subjects, provided a suitable offering is presented at the same time. The priests are often suspected of imposture; but no man has the hardihood to test the matter by actual observation. Were any one to venture near enough to ascertain whether there was not a veritable human being to give these responses, a legion of spirits might fall upon him, and destroy him for his presumption. He would, therefore, rather remain in doubt and uncertainty, than risk his life by so perilous an undertaking.

These spirits are also supposed to take up their abode in animals; and all such, in consequence, are considered sacred. Monkeys found near a grave-yard are supposed to be animated by the spirits of the dead. On some parts of the Gold Coast the crocodile is sacred; a certain class of snakes, on the Slave Coast, and the shark at Bonny, are all regarded

as sacred, and are worshiped, not on their own account, perhaps, but because they are regarded as the temples, or dwelling-places, of spirits. Like every other object of the kind, however, in the course of time the thing signified is forgotten in the representative, and these various animals have long since been regarded with superstitious veneration, while little is thought of the indwelling spirit.

The indulgence extended to sacred animals makes them tame and docile, which contrasts so strangely with the disposition of other wild animals, that it greatly confirms the superstitious notions of the aborigines regarding them. The monkey, in certain localities, will venture almost near enough to receive food from the hand of a man; the alligator at Dix Cove, will come up from his watery bed at a certain whistle, and will follow a man a half mile or more, if he carries a white fowl in his hands; the snake at Popo has become so tame that it may be carried about with impunity, and is so far trained that it will bite, or refrain from biting, at the pleasure of its keeper; the shark at Bonny comes to the edge of the river every day to see if a human victim has been provided for his repast.

The practice of offering human sacrifices to appease evil spirits is common; but in no place more frequent, or on a larger scale, than in the kingdoms of Ashanti and Dehomi, and in the Bonny river. Large numbers of victims, chiefly prisoners of war, are stately sacrificed to the manes of the royal ancestors in both of the first mentioned places, and under circumstances of shocking and almost unparalleled cruelty. At the time of the death of a king, a large number of his principal wives and favorite slaves are put to death, not so much, however, as sacrifices to appease his wrath, as to be his companions and attendants in another world; a practice, which, though cruel and revolting in itself, nevertheless keeps up a lively impression of a future state of existence.

A deranged man is one who is supposed to be prematurely deserted by his soul. The imbecility of extreme old age, or second childhood as it is called, is regarded in the same light. Sleep is supposed to be the temporary withdrawal of the soul from the body, and spirits wandering about without the body, sometimes come in conflict with each other. If a man wakes up in the morning with pains in his bones or muscles, he infers that his spirit has been wandering about in the night, and received a castigation at the hands of some other spirit.

It is common for the living to send messages to the spirits of their deceased friends by some one who is on the point of dying, informing them of their circumstances in life, and asking their advice and assistance in certain emergencies.

In Southern Guinea the worship of ancestors is one of the leading features of their religious system; but we shall have occasion to give a more minute account of this in another place.

Mixed up with these pagan notions and customs there are many obvious traces of Judaism, both in Northern and Southern Guinea; and in the latter, some undoubted traces of a corrupted form of Christianity, which have probably traveled across the continent from ancient Ethiopia, where Christianity was once firmly established.

The African race have a wonderful capacity for conforming themselves to any circumstances in which they may be placed, and they can adopt almost any number of religious creeds without being disturbed by their incongruity, or the direct antagonistic character which may exist among them. The religion of Senegambia is a complete medley of paganism, Judaism, and Mohammedanism; and it is difficult to say which of the three occupies the most prominent place, or exerts the greatest influence upon the character of the people. The prevailing philosophy on the subject is, that by combining the three they are sure to secure the aggregate

good of the whole. In Northern Guinea, paganism and Judaism are united; and in Southern Guinea, paganism, Judaism, and some imperfect traces of a corrupted form of Christianity. In the former region of country Judaism is more prominently developed; some of the leading features of which are circumcision, the division of tribes into separate families, and very frequently into the number twelve; the rigid interdiction of marriage between families too nearly related; bloody sacrifices, with the sprinkling of blood upon their altars and door-posts; the formal and ceremonial observance of new moons; a specified time for mourning for the dead, during which they shave their heads, and wear soiled and tattered clothes; demoniacal possessions, purifications, and various other usages, probably of a Jewish origin. Some of these usages, especially the rite of circumcision, might be supposed to have been of a Mohammedan origin, if it were not for the entire absence of all other traces of this religion among the pagan tribes of both Guineas.

Although the natives of Africa retain these outward rites and ceremonies with the utmost tenacity, they have little or no knowledge of their origin, or the particular object which they are intended to commemorate. Many of them are performed to shield themselves from some threatened evil, or to secure some coveted good. But in the great majority of cases they are attended to merely as a matter of habit; and the only reason assigned for observing them, is that their ancestors did the same before them.

*Witchcraft* is a prominent and leading superstition among all the races of Africa, and may be regarded as one of the heaviest curses which rests upon that benighted land. This superstition, it is true, has prevailed to a greater or less extent among most of the nations of the earth, and may be regarded as almost inseparably connected with a low and barbarous state of society. In Africa, however, all the absurdities and extravagances belonging to it are egregious-

ly exaggerated, and in this respect it scarcely has any parallel.

A person endowed with this mysterious art is supposed to possess little less than omnipotence. He exercises unlimited control, not only over the lives and destiny of his fellow-men, but over the wild beasts of the woods, over the sea and dry land, and over all the elements of nature. He may transform himself into a tiger, and keep the community in which he lives in a state of constant fear and perturbation; into an elephant, and desolate their farms; or into a shark, and devour all the fish in their rivers. By his magical arts he can keep back the showers, and fill the land with want and distress. The lightnings obey his commands, and he need only wave his wand to call forth the pestilence from its lurking-place. The sea is lashed into fury, and the storm rages to execute his behests. In short, there is nothing too hard for the machinations of witchcraft. Sickness, poverty, insanity, and almost every evil incident to human life, are ascribed to its agency. Death, no matter by what means, or under what circumstances it takes place, is spontaneously and almost universally ascribed to this cause. If a man falls from a precipice and is dashed to pieces, or if he accidentally blows out his own brains with a musket, it is, nevertheless, inferred that he must have been under some supernatural influence, or no such calamity could have occurred. A man is supposed to have been transformed into an elephant and killed, simply because his death occurred the same day that one of these animals was killed in the same neighborhood. The arts of witchcraft may be exerted with or without any material agency. Poisonous substances are included under this general head simply because the people can not understand the process, *modus operandi*, by which they occasion death. Extended observation has convinced them that certain substances taken into the stomach invariably produce death. The process is mysterious, however, inas-

much as other substances of equal bulk will not produce the same result. One, therefore, according to their modes of reasoning, has intrinsic powers which the other has not; and why may not some other substance, by a process not more inexplicable, produce the same result without being brought in contact with the body? If the process in one case is inexplicable, it is not less so in the other. If you appeal to actual experiment, they are ready to meet you on this ground. They have known death to follow the machinations of witchcraft, without any material agency, as surely as the use of poisons. If it is alleged that poisons act promptly, uniformly, and with certainty, it is replied, that the arts of witchcraft, from their nature, operate more slowly, but not less certainly.

How any one comes in possession of this mysterious art nobody certainly knows. By some it is supposed to be obtained by eating the leaves or roots of a forest tree. By others it is believed to be conferred by evil spirits.

It is regarded as one of the most hateful accomplishments to which any man can attain. There is nothing more heartily or universally deprecated than even the suspicion of possessing this odious art. The imputation of it is the most serious stigma that can possibly be affixed to a man's character, and almost any one would prefer death to remaining for any length of time under the suspicion of practicing it against others.

And yet, deprecated as it is, any man is liable to be charged with it. Every death which occurs in the community is ascribed to witchcraft, and some one consequently is guilty of the wicked deed. The priesthood go to work to find out the guilty person. It may be a brother, a sister, a father, and, in a few extreme cases, even mothers have been accused of the unnatural deed of causing the death of their own offspring. There is, in fact, no effectual shield against the suspicion of it. Age, the ties of relationship, official promi-

nence, and general benevolence of character, are alike unavailing. The priesthood, in consequence of the universal belief in the superstition, have unlimited scope for the indulgence of the most malicious feelings, and in many cases it is exercised with unsparing severity. They are not exempt themselves, however, from the same charge, and may fall under public condemnation as well as others. It is difficult to say whether men have a greater dread of the machinations of witchcraft against themselves, or the suspicion of practicing it against others. There is nothing against which they guard with such constant and sedulous care. The fetiches which they wear about their persons, which they suspend over their doors and at the gates of their towns, are intended to shield them from this dangerous foe. Nor are they less careful to avoid every thing that would expose them to the suspicion of practicing this art against their fellow-men. Every thing in look, word, or deed, that is liable to misconstruction, is carefully avoided. A man must shun all places and associations that would look like participation in evil designs against any of his fellow-men. In case of the extreme sickness of any one of his townsmen he must avoid excessive levity, lest he be regarded as taking real pleasure in his anticipated death; and too much feeling and solicitude, on the other hand, lest he be suspected of hiding his guilt by a cloak of hypocrisy. For the same reason a woman will not allow her husband, or any of her male guests, to partake of the food she sets before them, until she herself has taken the first mouthful, to assure them that she is practicing none of the arts of witchcraft.

But terrible as witchcraft is, in either of these aspects, there is a complete remedy for it in the "red-water ordeal." This, when properly administered, has the power not only to wipe off the foulest stain from injured innocence, but can detect and punish all those who are guilty of practicing this wicked and hateful art. And from the results of

this ordeal there is and can be no appeal. Public opinion has long since acknowledged its perfect infallibility, and no man ever thinks of gainsaying or questioning the correctness of its decisions. The "red-water" is a decoction made from the inner bark of a large forest tree of the *quimosa* family.\* The bark is pounded in a wooden mortar and steeped in fresh water, until its strength is pretty well extracted. It is of a reddish color, has an astringent taste, and in appearance is not unlike the water of an ordinary tan vat. A careful analysis of its properties, shows that it is both an astringent and a narcotic, and, when taken in large quantity, is also an emetic.

A good deal of ceremony is used in connection with the administration of the ordeal. The people who assemble to see it administered form themselves into a circle, and the pots containing the liquid are placed in the centre of the inclosed space. The accused then comes forward, having the scantiest apparel, but with a cord of palm-leaves bound round his waist, and seats himself in the centre of the circle. After his accusation is announced, he makes a formal acknowledgment of all the evil deeds of his past life, then invokes the name of God three times, and imprecates his wrath in case he is guilty of the particular crime laid to his charge. He then steps forward and drinks freely of the "red-water." If it nauseates and causes him to vomit freely, he suffers no serious injury, and is at once pronounced innocent. If, on the other hand, it causes vertigo and he loses his self-control, it is regarded as evidence of guilt, and then all sorts of indignities and cruelties are practiced upon him. A general howl of indignation rises from the surrounding spectators. Children and others are encouraged to hoot at him, pelt him with stones, spit upon him, and in many instances he is seized by the heels and

\* In Southern Guinea a shrub which has red roots is used in this ordeal. At the Gabun it is known by the name of *nkazy*.



"RED-WATER ORDEAL."

dragged through the bushes and over rocky places until his body is shamefully lacerated and life becomes extinct. Even his own kindred are required to take part in these cruel indignities, and no outward manifestation of grief is allowed in behalf of a man who has been guilty of so odious a crime.

On the other hand, if he escapes without injury, his char-

acter is thoroughly purified, and he stands on a better footing in society than he did before he submitted to the ordeal. After a few days, he is decked out in his best robes; and, accompanied by a large train of friends, he enjoys a sort of triumphal procession over the town where he lives, receives the congratulations of his friends, and the community in general; and not unfrequently, presents are sent to him by friends from neighboring villages. After all this is over, he assembles the principal men of the town, and arraigns his accusers before them, who, in their turn, must submit to the same ordeal, or pay a large fine to the man whom they attempted to injure. It is fortunate that this check exists, otherwise there would be little else than crimination and recrimination, until the remedy would become ten times worse than the disease.

There is seldom any fairness in the administration of the ordeal. No particular quantity of the "red-water" is prescribed, and the amount administered always depends upon the state of feeling in the community toward the accused. If they are indignant toward him, and are intent upon his destruction, they compel him to swallow enough of the "red-water" to endanger life, even if it had no poisonous qualities. In many cases a man is dismissed after drinking the usual quantity, the people caring very little whether he lives or dies. If he dies, it is a clear evidence of his guilt, and they care no more about it. A strong emetic, administered soon after, always brings on vomiting, and at once relieves the patient. The people entertain singular notions about the nature and power of this ordeal, and sometimes use it in other cases than those where a man is accused of witchcraft. They are not fond of examining witnesses, or scrutinizing the evidences that may be adduced in ordinary cases of litigation. They suppose that the "red-water" itself possesses intelligence, and is capable of the clearest discrimination in all these doubtful cases. They suppose that when

taken into the stomach, it lays hold of the element of witchcraft and at once destroys the life of the man. This power, or instrument of witchcraft, they suppose to be a material substance; and I have known native priests, after a *post mortem* examination, to bring forth a portion of the *aorta*, or some other internal organ which the people would not be likely to recognize as belonging to the body, as proof that they had secured the veritable witch. Natives of the Grain Coast have another ordeal, known as the "hot-oil ordeal," not often applied to cases of witchcraft, but used to find out theft, or cases of infidelity among married women. The suspected person is required to plunge her hand into a pot of boiling oil; if she suffers no pain, it is a decisive mark of innocence; but, on the other hand, if scalded, she is guilty, and receives a castigation, over and above the pain and inconvenience of having a burned hand. There are cases where the hand is plunged into this boiling liquid without occasioning pain or apparent injury. In such cases, some application, no doubt, is made to the hand to prevent the immediate effect of the heat; but what it is, is not certainly known. If a woman is subjected to this ordeal, at the requisition of her husband, and sustains no injury, she exacts a handsome present from him, as a penalty for his unjust suspicions; and she is, no doubt, gratified to have her character thus raised above the imputation of guilt.

Although the inhabitants of Northern Guinea have no written literature, they have large stores of what may be called unwritten lore in their traditions, legends, fables, allegories and proverbial sayings, which, if reduced to writing, would constitute a very respectable library of themselves. Their allegories and proverbial sayings are inwoven into all their ordinary conversation; and, indeed, an uneducated native African can scarcely make himself understood, or give point or force to his discourse, without the constant use of

these. Their fables are highly dramatic. Wild animals are made to personate men, and no one can ever acquire a thorough knowledge of the character of the people without a knowledge of their fables.

Their traditions involve some outlines of historic truth, but are so much mixed up with their own fancies, that they can be received only with the greatest caution. Some of their traditions have evidently been borrowed from the Bible, but whether they have traveled across the continent and been handed down through many successive generations, or been borrowed from the Roman Catholic missionaries who visited the country in the sixteenth century, it is scarcely possible to determine.

They believe in the unity of the race, and account for the difference in complexion, energy, and intelligence which characterizes the different branches of the human family, by the following story: God set before the two sons of the original progenitors of the race, one of whom was black, and the other white, the choice between *gold* and a *book* (the symbol of intelligence). The oldest son seized upon the gold, and left the book to his younger brother. The latter, by some mysterious process, was immediately transferred to a remote and cold country, where he perpetuated his original complexion, developed his intelligence, and has made himself so respectable and powerful. The older brother remained where he was born, retained his dark complexion, and has lived long enough to see that wisdom and intelligence are far superior to riches. This tradition may have had its origin in the Bible account of Solomon's choosing wisdom in preference to wealth or power. Or it may be a merely fanciful mode of accounting for the superiority of the white men, on the score of their possessing the art of reading and writing. There is, also, a tradition of a great deluge which once overspread the face of the whole earth; but it is coupled with so much that is marvelous and imaginative, that it can scarcely be

identified with the same event recorded in the Bible. There are, also, many and extravagant stories about the advent of the Son of God; but so much disfigured and caricatured, that one almost feels pained at the thought of their having had their origin in connection with the real advent of the blessed Saviour.

African funerals are always attended with extraordinary pomp and display. The corpse is washed, painted, and decked in the handsomest clothes, with the greatest profusion of beads that can be procured, and is then placed in a rude coffin, in some conspicuous place, while the ordinary funeral ceremonies are performed. The character and pomp of the ceremonies, of course, depend upon the age and the standing of the man before death. If he has been a person of importance in the community, his friends and the townspeople assemble at an early hour in front of the house where the corpse reposes, and form themselves into a circle, inclosing a large open space. A live bullock, tied by the four feet, is placed in the centre of the circle, and is to be slaughtered at the proper time, nominally for the dead, but really for the visitors who come to participate in the ceremonies. Every body is expected to bring some kind of present for the dead, which may be a string of beads, a knife, a plate, a pipe, or a looking-glass; all of which are laid in the coffin, or by its side, to be taken to the grave. Most of the men are expected to bring with them a good supply of powder, and testify their respect for the dead by the number of times they fire their guns in the open square, and the amount of ammunition with which they are loaded. Sometimes fifty or a hundred men are discharging their muskets at the same time, not only stunning the ears of all around, but enveloping themselves so completely with the smoke as not to be seen except by the flash from the fire-pan. The only precaution observed, is merely to elevate the muzzles of their guns above the heads of those in the circus with themselves.

When these ceremonies are concluded, two persons take up the coffin (which, among the Grebos, is usually a section of a canoe boxed up at the two ends) to carry it to the grave-yard. Sometimes the dead refuses to leave the town, and the bearers are driven hither and thither by a power which they affect not to be able to withstand. They go forward for a few moments, and then are suddenly whirled around, and carried back at the top of their speed. The head man of the family then approaches the bier, and talks plaintively and soothingly to the corpse—inquires why he is unwilling to go to the grave-yard—reminds him that many of his friends and kindred are already there, and assures him that every attention will be given by his surviving friends to his future wants.

Under the influence of this persuasion, the restraints which were imposed upon the bearers are relaxed, and they set out once more to the place of burial. They have not gone far, however, when they are thrown violently against some man's house, which is tantamount to an accusation that the proprietor, or some other member of the household, has been the cause of the death. The suspected person is at once arrested, and must undergo the "red-water" ordeal. The corpse, after this, is borne quietly to its resting-place, when the bearers rush to the water side, and undergo a thorough ablution before they are permitted to return to the town. Guns are fired, morning and evening, for some weeks afterward, in honor of the dead, provided he has been a man of prominence and influence in the community. Food is occasionally taken to the place of burial for months and years afterward, where a small house is built over the grave, furnished with a chair or mat, a jug to hold water, a staff to use when he walks abroad, a looking-glass, and almost every other article of furniture or dress that a living man would need. All blood-relations are required to shave their heads, and wear none but the poorest and most tattered garments for one

month. The wives are required to come together every morning and evening, and spend an hour in bewailing their husband.

A stranger, witnessing their wailings for the first time, would think their grief was unfeigned and most intense. A more thorough acquaintance with their character and customs, however, would soon convince him that their pretended grief was but a disguise to shield themselves from the suspicion of having caused the death of their husband.

This term of mourning is continued for one month, after which the male relations come together, and the wives of the deceased are distributed among them just as any other property would be. They are then permitted to wash themselves, put away the ordinary badges of mourning, and before taking up with their new husbands, they are permitted to visit their own relations, and spend a few weeks with them.

# PART III

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## CHAPTER I.

### SOUTHERN GUINEA.

Geographical Outlines.—Face of the Country.—Climate and Seasons.—Principal Districts.—Ethiopian Race.—Difference between the Ethiopian and the Nigritian Races.—European Settlements in Southern Guinea.—Trade.—Agricultural Products.—Food.—Fruits.

SOUTHERN or Lower Guinea is that portion of Africa which lies along the Atlantic Ocean between the Kameruns Mountains, 5° north latitude, and Cape Negro, 15° south latitude. It is separated from the unexplored regions of Central Southern Africa by the Sierra del Crystal Mountains, which run parallel to the sea-coast for twelve hundred miles, and not more than two hundred and fifty or three hundred miles distant. It has an area of something like three hundred thousand square miles, and a population, it is supposed, of seven or eight millions.

The general aspect of the country is not unlike that over which we have already traveled. The Mountains of the Moon terminate in sight of the sea-coast, near the mouth of the Kameruns River, in a bold, towering peak of more than fourteen thousand feet in height. It is said by mariners to be covered with perpetual snow, and although there is really something that resembles it, the impression needs verification. The mountains of the islands of Fernando Po, Princes,

St. Thomas, and Annabon, all of which stand in a direct line with each other, and which would seem to be the higher peaks of one great range of mountains, and with their rich drapery of tropical verdure, they present some of the most varied and imposing natural scenery to be found any where in the world. The Sierra del Crystal reveals some of its striking outlines to the mariner between the Kameruns and the Gabun. From this point it gradually diverges from the coast until it reaches the distance of three hundred miles, and then runs parallel to it until it reaches  $16^{\circ}$  of south latitude. The face of the country between the Kameruns and the Gabun is hilly and broken, except along the water-courses, where it is level. From the Gabun to Cape Lopez it rises to table-land of moderate height, and is every where covered with tropical growth of the richest hue. Nearer to the Kongo the surface of the country is level; and prairies, intersected with strips of wooded land, become common, and present a new feature in African scenery.

The climate of Southern Guinea in many respects differs from that both of Senegambia and Northern Guinea. It is free from that hot and stifling atmosphere which is often felt in regions nearer to the Great Desert. Extending over more than twenty degrees of latitude, it has much greater variety of climate than Northern Guinea, which covers only four or five degrees. The air, as a general thing, is dryer, cooler, and healthier, and becomes increasingly so as you recede from the equator in a southerly direction. The case is reversed, however, going northward. The heat becomes greater, and the climate less healthful in proportion as we approach the northern tropic, which must be ascribed, in some measure at least, to the influence of the Great Desert. In most parts of Southern Guinea there are two well defined dry, and two rainy seasons. The distinctions of summer and winter, or hot and cold seasons, are unknown to the inhabitants of the country. The beginning of the rainy season at

any given point within the tropics is always immediately after the sun has passed it in his march either to the north or the south. As he makes but one visit to the tropics in twelve months, there is but one rainy season there, but that is continued much longer. As the sun crosses the equator twice in the year, there are two rainy seasons to correspond, each of which follows immediately in his footsteps.

The first dry season, called by the natives of the Gabun *Enowo*, commences about the first of June and ends the first of October. During these four months the sky is overcast, and there are constant appearances of rain without enough at any time to lay the dust. For Europeans this is always the coolest and healthiest part of the year. The natives, being inadequately clad, find it disagreeably cold, and have more sickness than at any other portion of the year. The land wind blows very strongly at this season, and usually from one or two to ten or eleven o'clock in the morning, when it is succeeded, after a lull of an hour or two, by a sea-breeze very nearly as strong. Toward the close of this dry season the sun breaks forth from the clouds with great power, the grass withers away, and the earth becomes so much heated at the middle of the day that the natives suffer pain from walking barefooted.

The second dry season, called *Nanga*, commences about the middle of January, and continues to the first of March. Occasional showers of rain, accompanied by sharp thunder and lightning, fall during this season, but they are seldom very heavy, and in some seasons do not occur at all. The heaviest rains are between the middle of October and the last of December; and what is remarkable, the heaviest showers fall at night. The rains commence again the last of March and continue to the last of May. Tornadoes prevail from the middle of December to the middle of March, and sometimes even later. They blow with much violence, but seldom continue for more than an hour or two. They

cool and purify the air, and on this account they are always welcome visitors.

The evenings and mornings are always cool and pleasant ; and if exposure to the sun during the middle of the day is avoided, the climate along the sea-coast is never felt to be oppressive. The usual range of the thermometer is from 74° to 84° Fahrenheit. Foreigners who have resided in the country for some time, become sensitive to these changes, however slight they may be. This very moderate temperature along the sea-coast under the equator is undoubtedly owing to the fact that it is so constantly fanned by the alternate land and sea breezes. In the interior, beyond the influence of these alternate breezes, the heat, no doubt, is very great, and especially so under the equator. Between the land and sea breezes there is usually a lull of one or two hours, and when that occurs about twelve o'clock it is the warmest and most oppressive part of the day.

Southern Guinea is usually divided into five separate districts: 1. The Pongo or Gabun Coast, extending from the Kameruns River to Mayumba, 3° south latitude; 2. The Coast of Loango, extending from Mayumba to the Kongo River; 3. Kongo, extending from the southern banks of the river of the same name to Ambriz; 4. Angola, reaching from Ambriz to the River Koanza; 5. Benguela, reaching from the southern borders of Angola to Cape Negro. As we propose to give a more full account of each one of these districts in separate chapters, we would simply remark here that they are bound together by no political compact. Nor are the inhabitants of the same district under any one general government. The process of disintegration has gone further here than even in Northern Guinea, it being difficult to find more than half a dozen villages any where acknowledging one common head. All those who speak the same dialect have a fellow feeling for each other, and are always ready to join hands against a common foe; but beyond this they are bound to-

gether by no political ties whatever. While every village, or cluster of villages, has a head, whom they denominate their king, he is little more than the elder, or more prominent one of half a dozen or more patriarchs, who are the real governors of the country. But of this particular type of government we shall treat more fully in a subsequent chapter.

The inhabitants of Southern Guinea belong to one great branch of the Negro or African race, who have spread themselves over the whole of the southern half of the continent, and are known as the Ethiopian race, from their supposed descent from the ancient Ethiopians of the Nile. They differ in many important respects from the Negro race living to the north of the Mountains of the Moon, who are usually denominated the Nigritian family, and are so called from the great river which flows through their principal country. The only people in Southern Africa who do not belong to this great Ethiopian family are the Arabs, who have acquired a footing along the coast of Zanibar, within a comparatively late period, and the Hottentots, Namakwas, Bushmen, and a few other small tribes near the Cape of Good Hope. From whom these smaller tribes have descended is not known. They are entirely a different people from the Kaffirs, Bechuanas, Zulus, and other branches of the Ethiopian family who are dominant in this region of country. It has been conjectured that they may have descended from the crew of a shipwrecked Mogul vessel, but this is little more than a mere conjecture. They were the exclusive occupants of the southern extremity of the continent previous to the period when it was overrun and conquered by the Kaffirs and other kindred tribes. The Hottentot language is radically different from that of the Kaffir family, and is characterized by certain *clicks* which no European tongue has ever been able to master.

Recent philological investigations leave little or no doubt of the wide extent of this great Ethiopian family. The

Pongo and Kongo families of the western coast, the Kaffirs, Zulus, and Bechuanas of South Africa, the Swahere and other tribes of the east coast, as well as the interior tribes, so far as they are known, all belong to this great family. The aboriginal inhabitants of Madagascar, too, it is probable, belonged to this same race. Proofs of their identity may be drawn from the physical resemblances, the sameness of their customs, superstitious notions, mental constitution, and, above all, in the marked affinities which exist among their dialects.

Notwithstanding this marked relationship, there are striking varieties among the different branches of this great family. Scattered over so vast a region of country as they are—along the western shores, under a vertical sun; at the Cape of Good Hope, enjoying one of the mildest and most healthful climates in the world; along the eastern shores, in constant contact with men of a different race; along the southern slopes of the Mountains of the Moon, where civilization has not yet shed her first beams—it were impossible—but great diversities would arise. These are not so great, however, as to cast any doubt upon their common origin. The inhabitants of the mountain regions are always of a lighter complexion than those of the sea-coast of the same latitude. The Pangwe people, who have recently descended from the Sierra del Crystal Mountains to the head-waters of the Gabun, are two shades lighter than the natives who were born in these maritime regions. It is probable that the Kaffirs, who are not unlike the Pangwes in their general appearance, have retained their peculiar complexion by descending directly from the mountainous regions of the interior to the high latitudes of the Cape of Good Hope, without passing through the maritime regions either of the east or west coasts. The Jagas (Giaghas), who were once such a terrible scourge to the kingdom of Kongo, in the days of its greatness, are of a similar character, and no doubt the same people with the more modernly discovered Pangwes.

The difference between the two great families of the African race, the Ethiopian and Nigrítian, is marked and unmistakable. It may be noticed in the character, habits, appearance, religious notions, superstitious practices, but especially in the utter dissimilarity of their languages. Between the two there is scarcely any more resemblance than there is between the English and the Chinese.

An extended comparison between the general characters of the two races would show advantages and disadvantages on both sides. If the native of Southern Guinea has not the tall and commanding figure of the Mandingo or the Jalof, the athletic frame of the Kruman, the manly and independent gait of the Avêkwom, or the mechanical ingenuity of the Fanti, he has an intelligent and inquisitive countenance, a well-formed head, a graceful figure, and is, beyond doubt, superior to them all in the gentleness and urbanity of his manners, and the inimitable ease and readiness with which he accommodates himself to any circumstances in which he may be placed. If he has not the means of making so imposing a show of wealth as the native of the Gold Coast, he has a much clearer appreciation of what constitutes true civilization, and can much more readily conform himself to the views and feelings of civilized men.

The points of difference between these two families are not inaptly illustrated by the leading characteristics of the languages which they respectively speak. The dialects of Northern Guinea, as a general thing, are harsh, abrupt, but energetic and direct. Their vocabulary is small. Their words have but few inflections, and they can express only the bolder outlines of thought. The dialects of Southern Guinea, on the other hand, are soft, pliant, and flexible to an almost unlimited extent. Their grammatical principles are founded upon the most systematic and philosophical basis, and the number of their words may be multiplied to an almost indefinite extent. At the same time, they are capable

of expressing all the nicer shades of thought and feeling, and perhaps there is no language in the world which is capable of more definiteness and precision of expression.

The Portuguese established themselves at several points along the coast of Southern Guinea at a very early period after their first discovery of the country. The River Kongo was discovered in 1484, and was regarded at the time, and for a long period afterward, as the most valuable and important discovery that had been made in any part of Western Africa. A friendly alliance was formed at once with the sovereign of a great kingdom of the same name on the south side of the river. The Catholic religion was introduced among the people, and, in a very short time, the Portuguese made themselves masters of every point of importance, either along the banks of the river or near its outlet. Soon after they annexed Angola and Benguela to these possessions, and established a line of fortifications between these countries and St. Salvador, the capital of Kongo. At a later period they extended this line of fortifications several hundred miles into the interior, with the view, no doubt, of connecting their possessions on the east and west coasts. But this object was never carried out.

For more than two centuries the Portuguese exercised almost absolute control over the affairs of Kongo. They settled all their internal quarrels and feuds, made St. Salvador the centre of a large trade in slaves and ivory, and established the Roman Catholic religion in every nook and corner of the state. But this control has long since been abandoned, and with it almost every trace of Romanism has disappeared. Their vessels, up to a very late period, have been in the habit of frequenting the river for the purpose of obtaining slaves, and in this way a few of the natives have some knowledge of the Portuguese language; but beyond this no connection exists between the two countries at the present day. Indeed the kingdom of Kongo itself, as such, has long since ceased to

exist. The territory which once supported a government as extended and powerful as Ashanti or Dehomi, is now occupied by an almost indefinite number of petty principalities (if, indeed, they deserve this name), which have no political relationship to each other whatever. Their settlements at Angola and Benguela are still continued, and the one at Londo St. Paul, the capital of Angola, is the largest and, in some respects, the most important European settlement on the whole coast.

Very soon after the Portuguese established themselves on the banks of the Kongo, they got possession of the islands of St. Thomas and Princes; and for a long term of years made them, and especially the former, the very garden of all Africa. These are still in their possession, and are important at the present day only for their exports of coffee and cocoa.

In the year 1679 the Dutch attempted to form a settlement on the island of Corisco (which is situated about forty miles to the north of the Gabun River), but it was abandoned after a few years. Mr. Mackey, an American missionary residing on the island at the present time, has recently discovered a pile of Dutch tiles, which, though buried for nearly two centuries, were in a state of perfect preservation. The present inhabitants of the island have no knowledge whatever of any such settlement, and it is probable that they did not settle there until some time after it was abandoned by the Dutch.

The French have recently taken possession of the Gabun River, and exercise jurisdiction over the people on both sides. With the exception of this and the Portuguese possessions just mentioned, there are no European settlements in any part of Southern Guinea.

The principal places of trade on this part of the coast are the Kameruns River, where there is a large palm-oil trade; Batanga, where there is the largest ivory mart in Africa; Bo-

neto, well known for its export of ebony; Corisco Bay, noted for its trade in red-wood and ebony; the Gabun, which furnishes red-wood, ebony, ivory, and beeswax; Cape Lopez, Kama, and Mayumba, noted in former times for their slave-trade; Loango and Kabinda, important in former times for their participation in the same traffic; Ambriz, Loando St. Paul, and Benguela, where the trade is very much in the hands of Portuguese merchants, and consists, besides slaves, of ivory, gum-copal, beeswax, and turtle-shell.

The population of this part of Africa has undoubtedly been very much reduced by the constant drain made upon it by the slave-trade; and the reduction would have been much greater if it had not been for a constant migration of the interior tribes to the sea-coast. These wastes will be repaired much more rapidly now that the foreign slave-trade has virtually been arrested.

The agricultural products of Southern Guinea consist of little else than such articles of food as the natives raise for their own consumption. The principal articles are Indian corn, sugar-cane, plantains, yams, sweet potatoes, cassava (manioc), tania, ground nuts, okrea, beans, pumpkins, and a species of squash, from the seeds of which a kind of vegetable marrow is obtained, which is much esteemed. Of these the plantain and cassava are the staple articles of food. The plantain is used in a green state, and is either boiled or roasted. When boiled, it is somewhat like the Irish potato, but is not so soft or mealy. When roasted before the fire it becomes snow white, has the flavor of the bread fruit, and makes a very good substitute for bread. The plantain-tree is a beautiful growth, and almost every native hamlet in this part of the country is completely embowered by them. It is also cultivated on the farms, and yields every month in the year. When once planted, it continues to yield without farther care until the soil is exhausted.

The cassava cultivated in this region belongs to a species

which is regarded as poisonous in a raw state. The root must be soaked eight or ten days in fresh water, when it becomes soft, and is ready to fall to pieces. After drying it in the sun it is pounded in a mortar, and with the addition of a little water, is made into dough. It is then moulded into rolls of a foot and a half in length, and of the size of a man's arm, and bound up in leaves, and steamed for one or two hours, when it is fit for use. This is the main article of food, and is preferred to almost any other kind by those who have been accustomed to it, but is by no means tempting to foreigners. The sugar-cane grows luxuriantly, but is never manufactured into sugar, the natives never having acquired the art of doing this. Ground nuts are used in the preparation of stews and broths, but render them too rich for stomachs of moderate digestive powers. Indian corn is used only in a green state, and at but one season of the year.

Most of the tropical fruits are to be found at the Portuguese settlements, and at a few of the leading native settlements also. Oranges, limes, lemons, pine-apples, bananas, guavas, mangoes, granadillas, sour sops, custard-apples, and the Jack nut, may be found in abundance on the islands of St. Thomas and Princes, at the Gabun, and some other places on the coast. These fruits are more luscious than can be fancied by those who have eaten them only after they have made a sea-voyage. The pine-apple is particularly a luscious and healthful fruit when it is permitted to ripen on its own native soil. It grows spontaneously and abundantly in the woods, but is somewhat improved, at least in size, when cultivated.

The woods and forests abound with wild fruits and nuts, many of which are very palatable. One of these is a species of wild mango called *Aba*, which is prized not only as a fruit, but for the kernel, which is converted into an article of food called *Dika*, which is greatly prized. The fruit when ripe is of a pale yellow color, somewhat fragrant, of the size of a

hen's egg, but more of the kidney shape. The outer pulp is sweet and juicy, but has too much of a terebinthine taste to be relished by most persons. The nut is flat, and contains a kernel which, when pounded and moulded into a large mass, may be kept a whole year, and is much used in the preparation of stews and broths.

There is another fruit from which the famous vegetable butter is obtained, sometimes called the shea-butter. It grows on a large tree, and is of the size of an orange. The exterior of the fruit is rough, but the inside is filled with a sweet, soft pulp, in which are imbedded half a dozen or more nuts, resembling somewhat large acorns, from which the vegetable butter is extracted. The oil when first drawn is clear and transparent, but when it hardens is white; and resembles fresh lard. It answers for cooking, but would be an indifferent substitute for good table butter.

There is another wild fruit called *Azygo*, which is eagerly sought after in its season. It is the product of a large forest tree. In size and shape it is more like the olive than any other fruit, but has none of the oleaginous properties of the olive. It is scalded with boiling water, and eaten with salt, the taste being much like that of the avagada pear. There is also a species of wild grape known at the Gabun by the name of *Ntábá*, of a blood-red color, of the size of our largest grapes, which are very palatable.

## CHAPTER II.

## SOUTHERN GUINEA.

Principal Articles of Export.—The Slave-trade.—Traffic carried on by Barter.—The "Round Trade."—Tedious Process of buying a large Tooth of Ivory.—The Cunning of Native Africans.—Redoubtable African.—Stratagem to recover a runaway Wife.

THE principal articles of export from this part of the coast, as has been incidentally mentioned already, are ivory, palm-oil, ebony, red-wood, beeswax, gum-copal, copper ore, ground nuts, turtle-shell, and, within a few years past, gum-elastic has been added to the list of exports.

All of these articles are not to be found at any one point on the coast. Ivory is more generally distributed than any other, but is exported in much larger quantities from Batanga, Gabun, and Ambriz, than other places. Not less, perhaps, than fifty tons are annually exported from each of these districts, while very few of the other ports furnish more than the tenth part of this. Palm-oil is shipped in large quantities from the Kameruns River, but very little, as yet, from any other part of the country. Ebony is limited to Boneto, Corisco, and the Gabun, while the red-wood may be found along the whole length of the coast. Copper ore is brought down from the mountains of Kongo upon the shoulders of men, and shipped only from Ambriz. Gum-copal is exported mainly from Angola. The gum-elastic was first discovered by the writer, and has been procured, as yet, only at Corisco, Gabun, and Kama. The milk or juice which forms this gum is from a large forest vine or creeper, and not from a tree as in South America. The quality of the gum is undoubtedly good, but the natives of the country have not, as

yet, fallen upon any plan by which it can be cured without an admixture of water, which injures its market value. Should any process be devised for curing it, so as to exclude all extraneous matter, it would soon become a most important branch of commerce.

The slave-trade was once carried on very extensively over this whole region of country. The first treaty formed between the British and Portuguese governments for the suppression of this traffic, restricted the operations of the British squadron to the coast north of the equator. So that while the trade was kept in abeyance along the coast of Northern Guinea, it was carried on for a good many years with redoubled energy in Southern Guinea. There has, however, been very little of it on any part of the coast for three or four years past. At the same time, the aborigines are betaking themselves more heartily and actively to lawful commerce; and there is reason to believe that if the slave-trade is held in abeyance a few years longer, the natives will feel no disposition to revert to it again under any circumstances.

All traffic is carried on in this region by barter, and by what is known as the "round trade," or "bundle trade." The produce of the country is not concentrated in the hands of a few factors or merchants, as in most other parts of the world, but every man must be the vender of his own produce. And for every article which he sells, and especially tusks of ivory, he must have a certain number of articles in exchange. On every tooth, if it be of any considerable size, he must have so many muskets, kegs of powder, brass pans, copper rods, wash-basins, plates, and gun-flints—the whole number not being less than thirty—and these must be reduplicated in proportion to the size of the tooth. If it should weigh as much as one hundred pounds, the seller would not expect less than ten of each of these articles. This is what is called the "round trade."

It is carried on by a most tedious, and, to novices, a most annoying process. The natives understand the art of "driving a bargain;" and stupid as they are reputed to be, five cases might be adduced where white men have been cheated for one where these natives have been overreached. If an article of merchandise is offered to them which they have never seen before, and of the real value of which they have no means of forming an idea, they may be deceived, but not in relation to things with which they are familiar. One important advantage which the native has over the captain or supercargo of a ship is, that time is of little value to him, while dispatch is every thing to the other. The single tooth of ivory is the black man's all, and he can afford to spend days, or even weeks, in turning it to the best account, while the captain must have multitudes of them, and in a comparatively short time, or his voyage is an unprofitable one. The African is aware of this, and he invariably turns it to the best account. The tooth is laid down on the deck with an air and manner on the part of the owner that it is no insignificant affair. The buyer and seller confront each other over the tooth. A parley takes place as to who shall make the first offer. It has been weighed on board the vessel, and the captain knows exactly what it is worth, but means to get it for as much less as he can. The owner has weighed it half a dozen times before he left home; he knows its worth and what he will probably get for it, but means to wring as much more out of the captain as he can.

If the captain makes the first offer, it is always considerably below the true mark. The other rejoins, and puts his demand quite as much above the right mark, both allowing themselves ample leeway. The captain assumes an air of indifference, talks about taking up his anchor and going where ivory can be bought on more reasonable terms; the African puts on an expression of quiet unconcern, recounting in his own mind, perhaps, how many times he has be-

fore heard similar protestations when they meant just nothing at all. After a while the captain rallies and makes a second offer, approximating somewhat nearer to its real value. The other expresses some doubts whether there is any use to try farther, as they are so far apart; but he will not be outdone in trade, and therefore makes a second demand nearer to the true value of the tooth, but asserts most positively that this is his ultimatum. A longer pause now ensues. The captain wants the tooth, he can afford to give more than he has offered for it, but he must not appear too yielding, or he will defeat his own purpose.

The native trader knows that his demand is too high, the goods of the captain are just the kind and of the quality he wants, and he means to be more reasonable, but he notices that the white man is becoming impatient, and now indifference and procrastination are of the utmost importance to his interest. A third concession is made by both parties, and now they are so near together that they conclude to "split the difference," and the bargain is closed. The tooth is passed down into the hold, and the articles of merchandise agreed upon are passed up. The captain gives a small present or *dash*, and the native leaves the ship in fine glee, promising to be back soon with another tooth.

The sea-coast tribes, many of whom have acquired a smattering of the English and French languages, act as factors for the interior tribes. These native merchants must be governed in the prices they demand by the expectations of those for whom they act. They manage, therefore, not only to get all that is expected by the bushman, from whom they received the tooth, but as much more as will pay themselves a handsome commission, and this is what makes bargaining so difficult. The bushman, again, received the tooth from another bushman living still farther back in the country, and he manages to secure himself a commission also. In this way the tooth passes through half a dozen hands on its

way to the sea-coast, and as the merchandise paid for it must pass through the same hands, and each one abstracts a commission, a mere moiety reaches the original owner. Sometimes he gets nothing at all, and this invariably leads to strife, and not infrequently to bloodshed. In consequence of these frauds and strifes among the people, the trade of the country has taken a different turn of late years, not altogether to the advantage of the white man, however. It is expected, when the ship arrives at a given port, the captain or supercargo will give out a large portion of his cargo in trust to the native merchants of the place. These freight their boats and canoes with the goods, and ascend the rivers as far as they are boatable, or as far as the interior tribes will allow them to go, and there purchase ivory. Sometimes, however, a man at a still greater distance gets possession of a large and valuable tooth, and he utterly refuses to let it pass out of his hands until the money comes for it. He is under no immediate necessity to sell. He takes some pains to get up a rumor about the tooth. It is the largest one that the oldest resident of the country has ever seen. It is so large that a cat has raised a brood of kittens in the hollow end of it. The measure of the tooth, both its circumference and length, is sent down to the sea-coast, considerably exaggerated, of course. The intermediate people, who are interested as well as the owner, help to circulate and swell the fame of the wonderful tooth. Many of them have seen it with their own eyes, and there is no mistake about its huge size. A ship happens to be in port, and the rumor of this tooth reaches the captain through so many channels, and under circumstances which seem to preclude the possibility of collusion, that he concludes that it must be marvelously large. His heart is set upon it. Such a tooth will add materially to the value of his cargo, and will be gratifying both to his owners and to his own pride to have taken home the largest tooth of ivory that ever left the coast of Africa. The de-

mand made by the owner is less than the value of the tooth, even if it should not be more than half as large as it is represented to be, and he forthwith dispatches a messenger after it, with the expectation that he will be back in two or three weeks. In the mean time the captain has other business to engage his time. The messenger, in due time, returns and states that the tooth was complimented by the first installment paid upon it, and had actually traveled two days toward the sea-coast, but having arrived at a certain river, it utterly refused to cross until a few additional articles of merchandise were sent to meet it. The native merchant, who is the medium of communication with the captain, has no doubt but the tooth is on the way, and persuades the captain, as the money already advanced is far less than its value, he had better humor the party and send what is demanded. The additional amount is dispatched. So long as the native merchant, who ought to know if there is any deception, is so frank and sincere, there can not be much risk in what he is doing. After a much shorter absence the messenger returns the second time, and solemnly avers that the tooth has made another stage, and is now comparatively near the sea-coast, but there is a certain fetich mountain that will not allow it to cross over unless another installment is paid. This awakens serious apprehensions in the mind of the captain. He has already paid almost as much for the article as it is worth, and does not feel like risking more. But still his factor tells him there is no doubt but the tooth will find its way to his ship, and he does not know certainly, but hardly thinks it will turn out smaller than it has been represented to be. Besides, it would not do for him to lose it after paying so much as he has already done. An additional sum is paid down, but not very gracefully, as the captain is now both uneasy and in an ill humor.

The next message is that the tooth has actually reached the beach, but the party who brought it down refuse to give

it up unless they are remunerated for their trouble. There is no alternative. The captain means to have it aboard even if it costs him more than its real value. He more than suspects that its size has been grossly misrepresented, but there is no help now. So the bearers are paid off, and the famous tooth is laid on the deck of the vessel. The captain sees that he has been overreached, but the party who have done it are out of his sight. He indulges freely in unavailing abuse. The native merchant, in order to ward off the displeasure from himself, becomes more abusive of the bushmen than the captain himself. He will yet make the whole party sorry, and the captain finally consoles himself with the reflection that he will be wiser hereafter.

All the incidents of this transaction may have actually taken place, or it may have been a farce from beginning to end. The factor, whose sincerity and honesty the captain never suspected for a single moment, may have had the tooth in his house from the beginning of the negotiations, and used all this subterfuge and trickery merely to get a better price for his ivory. And all this imposition might be carried on without the least danger of one of his townsmen informing upon him. For one man to give information against another in such circumstances, would be an offense of the gravest character. Every man is entitled to all the benefit that may accrue from his cunning, and any intermeddling, especially where a white man is the injured party, is an offense that would be visited with universal condemnation.

The natives of this part of Africa are unsurpassed for their cunning and shrewdness; and trade, for which they have an ardent love, is the very sphere in which that cunning and shrewdness is called into exercise.

White men, who live among them, or go there for the purpose of trade, are constantly made the dupes of their cunning, and in two-thirds of the cases, perhaps, without ever finding it out. Two rival vessels, for example, are in port

at the same time. The captains look upon each other with a jealous eye, and are not very apt to have much friendly intercourse. If there is the least distrust of each other the natives are the first to detect it, and they never fail to fan it into a feeling of outright hostility. Messages are carried from one to the other which were never uttered. One has averred that the other shall not purchase a single tooth of ivory while he himself has the means of purchasing. The other is nettled by this gratuitous onslaught, and he determines to measure arms with his rival. Both are ready to give higher prices, and the natives enjoy the fruits of a rivalry that has been awakened by their own cunning. These white men, without having had any personal interviews, always afterward retain unkind feelings toward each other, and may never find out how they were brought into hostility.

The aborigines take advantage of white men, however, in other matters as well as in trade, which the following anecdote will illustrate:

There is a very notable character in the Gabun of the name of Cringy. No stranger ever visits the river without making his acquaintance, and no one who has made his acquaintance ever forgets him. He is a little, old, gray-headed, humpback man, but with a remarkably bright and by no means unpleasant eye. He speaks English, French, Portuguese, and at least half a dozen native languages with wonderful ease. He is perfectly familiar with the peculiar habits, feelings, and customs of all these nations, and he can act the Frenchman, the Spaniard, or the Englishman, just as circumstances may demand, without any apparent effort. His village is perched on a high bluff on the north side of the Gabun River, near its outlet. His position is favorable for catching the first glimpse of every sail which comes to the river, and just as soon as he is sure of her destination, he jumps into his boat with spy-glass in hand, and goes out

to meet it. If the captain has never been to the river before, and no one has warned him against Cringy, he is almost sure to be captivated by his artfulness. He has any number of certificates recommending him as a good and worthy man, and to be trusted in all matters of trade. The bad certificates (books as they are called) are left at home, or have long since been destroyed. Already Cringy has engaged the entire confidence of the captain, pilots the ship over the bar, and conducts her to the anchoring ground directly in front of his own village. The ship, according to the well-known views of the people, is now Cringy's. He is to be the captain's sole adviser, and if any body else infringes in the slightest degree upon his rights, he is stigmatized at once as a rude and ill-mannered fellow. Cringy is now every thing to the captain—acts as his interpreter and factor. If he thinks it about time to add a good certificate of recent date to the stock he already has, he will conduct himself throughout with the most perfect propriety, and to the entire satisfaction of his employer, so that he will leave the coast with the conviction, however differently others may regard him, that he is one of the most honest and upright men on the river. If, on the contrary, Cringy should sail on the other tack, and cheat him out of a good deal of his property, the captain will go away feeling that he is, beyond all doubt, the most consummate scoundrel on the face of the earth.

Cringy has been seized half a dozen times or more by men-of-war or other vessels, and put in irons for misdemeanors of which he has been guilty. But he has been so adroit with his tongue, and so good-natured withal, that he has always been set free after a very short confinement. On one occasion the entire population of the Gabun were compelled by a French man-of-war to pay Cringy's debts. They have never forgiven him for it, but have no way by which they can get redress. He is rather a favorite with the French

residents notwithstanding all his obliquities, and he is frequently employed as interpreter in their service.

But the particular case of adroitness which we set out to detail was this: After the French, a few years since, had reduced the natives near the mouth of the river into obedience by the force of arms, Commodore B—— proposed to visit King George's towns, about thirty miles higher up, in the hope of getting them to acknowledge the French authority without a resort to violence. In order to make a strong and favorable impression he determined to take his squadron, which consisted of two large sloops of war and a smaller vessel, up the river. As none of the Frenchmen could speak the native language, and none of King George's people could speak French, it was a matter of great importance that a good interpreter should be provided. It was determined that Cringy was the most suitable man, and he was summoned on board the Commodore's vessel, and agreed at once to do so. The proposal struck him favorably on several accounts. It was an honorable calling, and he expected to be remunerated handsomely for his services. But there was a weightier reason, which nobody would be likely to think of but himself. One of Cringy's wives was the daughter of King George. Sometime previous, to this she had run away, and gone back to her father on account of some rough treatment she had experienced at the hands of her husband. All his previous efforts to get her back had failed, and now, when the proposition came from the Commodore, the thought occurred to him that this visit might be turned to good account. Henceforth his thoughts were engaged about what he was to accomplish for himself, and not what he would effect for his employer. He could easily conceal his own plans, however, and at the same time evince the most absorbing interest in the Commodore's mission.

The party set out, and with a favoring wind and tide the vessels were soon at anchor at their place of destination.

The Commodore thought it best not to adventure himself into the town without a corps of armed marines. The party after landing had to walk half a mile through a thick wood before reaching the place. The people had had no intimation of such a visit, and the sudden arrival of this armed body produced a very strong sensation. A large part of the population were ready to take to flight, but as there was no hostile demonstration on the part of the Frenchmen, and especially as they were conducted by one of their own country people, their fears were considerably allayed. Cringy assured the people to the right and left as they passed up to the palace, that the Frenchmen had come only for a "talk palaver." The Commodore took his seat on one side of the great hall, having his marines on one side of him, and Cringy between himself and the king. After the usual salutations were over, Cringy was instructed to say that the Commodore had made King George a friendly visit, with the view of establishing friendly relations between him and the King of France, and would be glad to have him put his signature to a paper to this effect. Cringy, with the air and manner of one charged with a very weighty responsibility, said, "King George, the Commodore is very sorry that you have not returned my wife. He wishes you to do it now in a prompt and quiet manner, and save him the trouble and pain of bringing his big guns to bear upon your town."

King George felt the deepest indignation, not so much against the Commodore as Cringy, for resorting to so extraordinary a measure to compel him to give up his daughter; but, like a true African, he concealed the emotions of his heart. Without the slightest change of countenance, but with a firm and determined tone of voice, he said to his own people, "Go out quietly and get your guns loaded, and if one drop of blood is shed here to-day, be sure that not one of these Frenchmen get back to their vessels; but be sure and"—he said it with great emphasis—"let Cringy be the

first man killed." This was more than Cringy had bargained for, and how is he to get out of this awkward scrape? The lion has been aroused, and how shall he be pacified? But this is just the position to call out Cringy's peculiar gifts, and he set to work. In the most penitent terms he acknowledged and begged pardon for his rash and unadvised counsel, reminded his father-in-law that they were all liable to do wrong sometimes, and that this was the most grievous error of his whole life. And as to the threat of the Commodore, a single word from him would be sufficient to put a stop to all hostile intentions. The wrath of the King was assuaged. But the Commodore by this time had grown impatient to know what was going on, and especially why the people had left the house so abruptly. With the utmost self-possession Cringy replied that the people had gone out to catch a sheep which the King had ordered for the Commodore's dinner, and as to signing the paper, that would be done when the Commodore was ready to take his departure; and to effect these two objects Cringy relied wholly upon his own powers of persuasion. True enough the sheep was produced, and the paper was signed; King George and the French Commodore parted good friends, and neither of them knew for more than a month after the double game which Cringy had played; and what was more remarkable than all, Cringy was rewarded by the restoration of his wife.

## CHAPTER III.

## SOUTHERN GUINEA.

Difference between the Maritime and the Interior Tribes.—Style of Building.—Social Institutions.—The Size of Villages.—Furniture.—Dress.—Social Character of the People.—Polygamy.—Marriage.—The Head Wife.—Slavery.—Division of Labor.

THERE is much diversity in the habits, character, and circumstances of the inhabitants of Southern Guinea; and especially between those residing along the sea-coast and the tribes of bushmen immediately in the rear of them. Indeed there is greater contrast between these classes residing in the immediate neighborhood of each other than among any other tribes in the country. The former are gentle, peaceable, polite, and courteous in a remarkable degree, in all their intercourse with civilized men. They are cleanly and decent in their persons and dress, have animated and intelligent countenances, are much given to hospitality, and are decidedly averse to all warfare and bloodshed. The bushmen living directly behind them are characterized by traits of character almost directly the opposite. They are coarse and ill-mannered, filthy in their persons and dress, and in almost every respect bear strong marks of being real savages. In speaking of the character and habits of the people generally this distinction must be kept in mind.

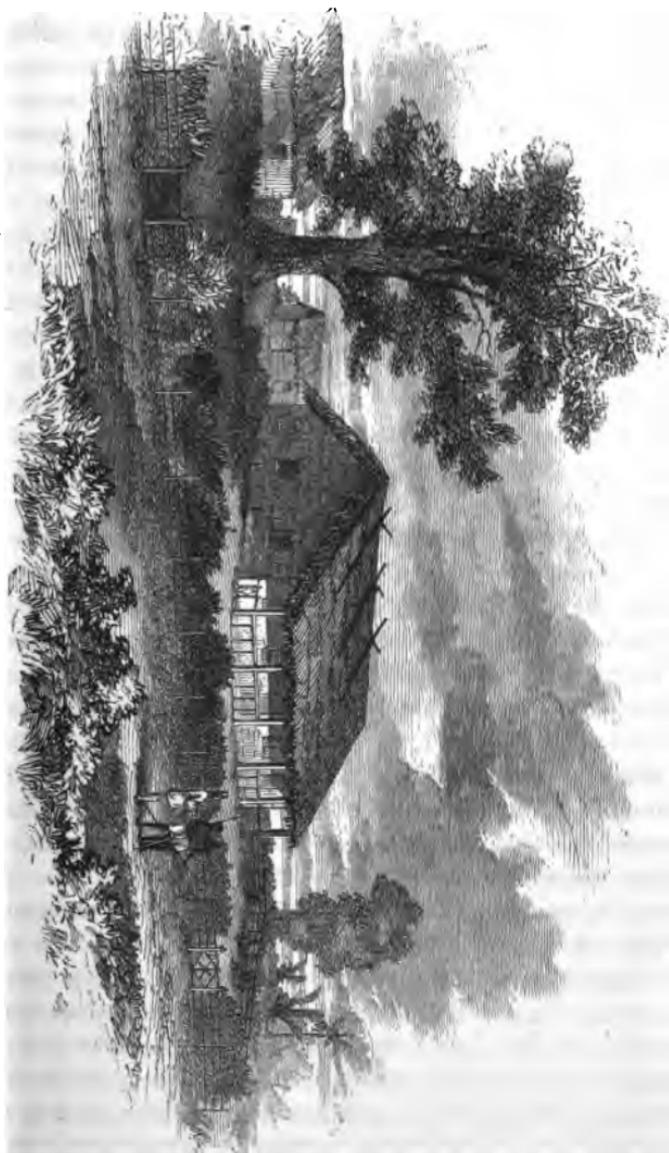
The style of building in this portion of Western Africa is entirely different from any thing we have seen in Northern Guinea. Along the sea-coast the houses are constructed of bamboo, of a quadrangular form, and covered with mats made of the bamboo leaf. The larger and better class vary in length

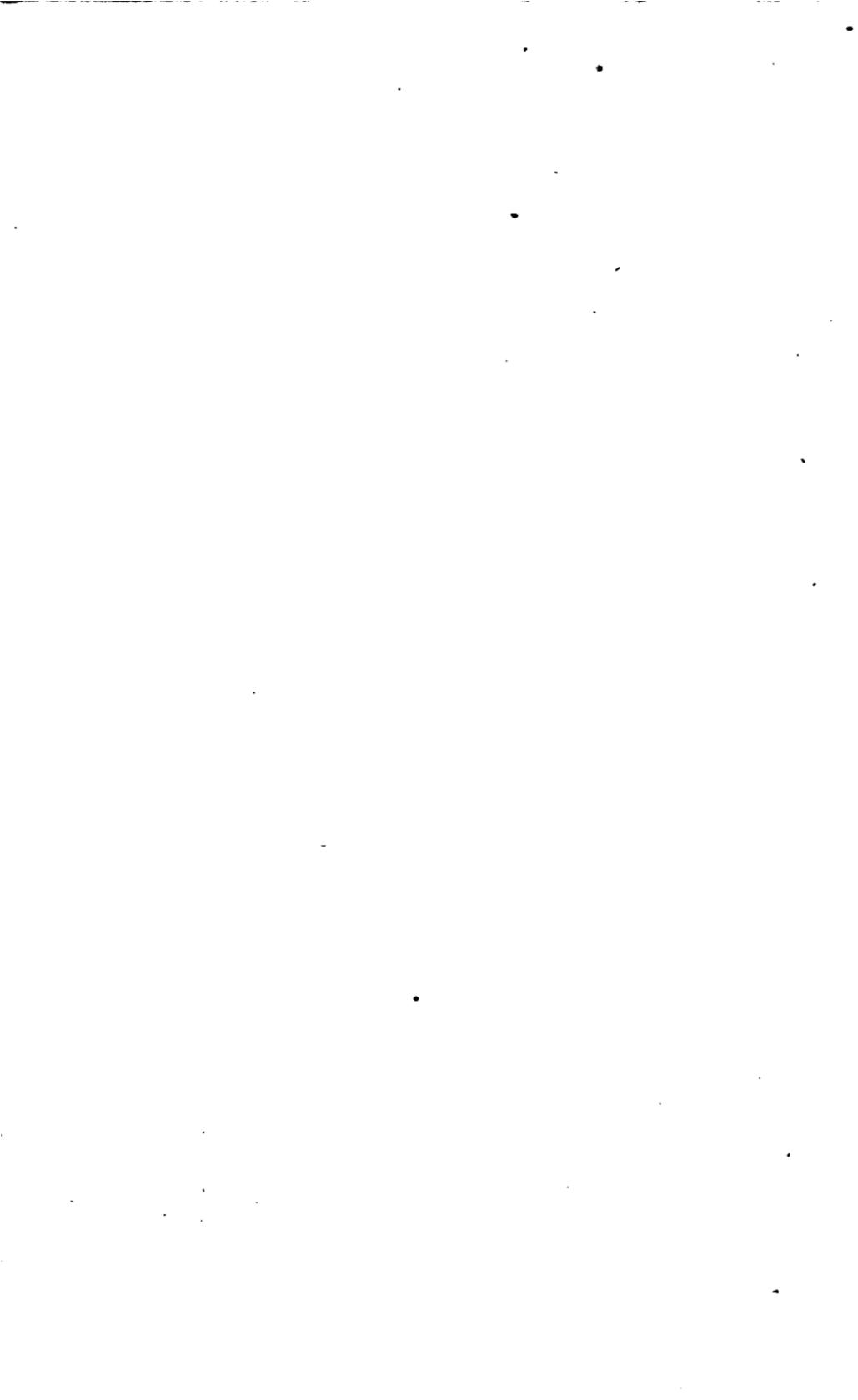
from fifty to one hundred feet, and have a corresponding width. They are always of one story, with raised clay floors, and are partitioned off into five or six rooms, which serve as sitting, sleeping, and cooking apartments. When constructed with care they are neat in appearance, perfectly dry and healthful, and with the single improvement of board floors, they are preferred, even by foreign residents, to almost any other kind of house that can be built in the country. The best specimens of this class of houses are to be seen at Corisco, the Gabun, and Cape Lopez. At Batanga the houses are very small, little more than huts set upon scaffolds four or five feet above the ground, and are entered by climbing up a ladder. The same style prevails at Loango, with the exception that here they are constructed with much more taste.

The interior tribes, and especially the Bakélis and Pangwes, build houses in a simpler and much more primitive style. Their villages have the appearance of two long, parallel shades, of uniform height and width, and about twenty paces apart. This intermediate space is their principal and only street. The sides of the houses are inclosed with large strips of bark, while the roofs are covered with leaves. This long shade is partitioned off into apartments of very nearly uniform dimensions, and the only way of determining the number of habitations, or families who occupy them, is by the number of little doors which open into the main street.

The chief and the principal men build their houses somewhat after the style of the sea-coast fashion, and so as to intersect, at intervals, the long range of the more common houses. This general arrangement of their villages has reference, no doubt, to their mutual defense in the petty wars in which they are almost always engaged, and particularly against nocturnal surprises. Either end of the village is strongly barricaded, with a small door in the centre, which is always closed at nightfall. The outer walls are protected

MISSION RESIDENCE, GABON.





by piling up against them any amount of brushwood. Sometimes thick blocks of wood are laid against the inner side of the outer walls, so as to shield the inmates from the shot of an enemy who might be lurking about at night.

These interior villages vary in length from one or two hundred yards to a mile or more. They are situated for the most part on high hills, which are not very accessible at night, or in the bosom of the thickest forest-woods that can be found. In approaching one of the latter class you have nothing to remind you that you are in the immediate vicinity of an inhabited village, until you are almost at the gate; and even then their low houses are so completely embowered in plantain-trees that you recognize the village only by the smoke rising up among their large and broad leaves. In approaching one of these villages at night, particularly in times of war, it is necessary to give a signal before you walk up to the gate, or be exposed to a shot from the guard. In their houses these bush tribes have very little either of furniture or ornament. A few mats to sleep on, half a dozen or more blocks of wood for stools, and a few of the plainest utensils for cooking and eating, constitute the whole of their furniture.

The sea-coast natives are considerably in advance of this. Many of the wealthier traders have articles of furniture of foreign manufacture, such as chairs, tables, sofas, and, when they can afford it, the walls of their houses are covered with pictures in gilt frames. Of late years Yankee clocks have been introduced, and are greatly prized, especially for their ticking and striking qualities. At first they were thought to be too complicated in their mechanical structure to be understood by black men. But one or two men, who had more curiosity than the rest of their countrymen, ventured to take one of them entirely apart, and, after scrutinizing all its parts, succeeded in putting it together again, and set it in motion, both to their own, and the surprise of a good many of their

countrymen, who happened to be present. A few more trials made them adept clock-menders, and now almost every house in the Gabun has one or more clocks. I have known one man to have half a dozen in the same room, all running at the same time; and were valued on the principle "the more the merrier."

They take their meals at table, and use knives and forks as gracefully and naturally as any other people in the world. Some of the wealthier men spread tables that would be inviting to any one, and not infrequently have a variety of French wines to offer their guests at the same time.

The usual dress of the males of the Gabun is a shirt, over which is wrapped a large square cloth, extending from the armpits to the ankles, and a neat silk hat. It is a mark of gentility to have this cloth trail on the ground, and the more the better. On Sunday when they go to church, or when they go on board of a ship, they wear shoes, and sometimes stockings. Vests and coats are also worn when there is a disposition to make a show. Many of them have full suits of naval or military clothes, epaulets, cocked hats, and swords, which, however, are used only on very great occasions. The dress of the women consists of a square cloth extending from the arms to a little below the knee, with a loose shawl or silk handkerchief thrown over the shoulders, while their legs and arms are literally loaded with bright brass rings. The rings which they wear around their legs are very heavy and massive, weighing sometimes twenty-five or thirty pounds, and give them, as a matter of course, a very hobbling gait. Both sexes are fond of ornaments, especially finger and ear rings. Both display great taste in braiding their hair, which not only improves their general appearance, but gives them an air of neatness and cleanliness. The women have a variety of modes of arranging theirs, and one is particularly struck with the skill they display in selecting a given style for any particular face. Sometimes the hair is





YANAWAY, A GABUN PRINCESS.

braided into two or four ridges, running in parallel lines from the front to the back part of the head. Again it is plaited over a cushion or pad laid on the top of the head in the form of a crescent. Artificial hair, in the form of large rosettes, is worn on the temples, and complete their *beau-ideal* of a handsome head-dress.

Baldness is not of very frequent occurrence among Africans, but when it does happen, it is regretted almost as much as among white men. It is frequently concealed by a periwig made of the fibres of the leaf of the pine-apple, and is quite as good a "make-believe" as the best Parisian connoisseur could produce.

The customs of society impose no artificial restraints upon the social intercourse of the different classes of society. Women may, if they choose, take their meals at the table with their husbands; and it is expected, in all cases where a man has a number of wives, that one or more of them sit down to table with him. Children always make their appearance about meal times, and nothing seems to give an African father more real pleasure than to deal out little messes to them while he is eating himself. Indeed this is almost the only way he has of engaging their affections.

It is a singular and anomalous fact, that the African race, who have the social element more strongly implanted in their natures than any other portion of the human family, have little or no real social enjoyment. This is undoubtedly to be ascribed, in a very considerable degree, to the prevalence of polygamy—an institution that has undermined all the deep foundations of society, and has left the people almost without the name or semblance of domestic happiness. A man's importance and respectability in society depends, here as elsewhere in Africa, upon the number of wives; and the only limit imposed upon the number is his ability to purchase them. The wealthier men of the Gabun have from twenty to fifty. The late King of Cape Lopez is said to

have had more than two hundred. In many of these cases the relation of wife and husband is a mere nominal affair. In others it partakes more of the relationship of master and slave. There is not, however, the disproportion between the number of the males and females of the country as would seem to be implied by the existence of polygamy. In the first place, polygamy is confined in a great measure to the maritime tribes, who have the means of multiplying their wives, and who draw upon the bush tribes as well as their own for them. In the next place, a very large proportion of the younger male members of society have no wives, a circumstance which leads to unbounded immorality. There is a laxity of morals in connection with this institution which can scarcely be understood by virtuous minds. All the children born of the acknowledged wife of a man are by the laws of society his, and beyond this he cares very little whether they are legitimate or illegitimate. Adultery may be visited both by fine and corporal punishment. But it is regarded as rather magnanimous for a man of many wives to overlook rather than to punish such offenses. The generality of men discover little or no fastidiousness in the selection of their wives. If a slave has any prepossessing traits of character, he hesitates not to enroll her among his wives, and places her on a footing of perfect equality with the others. No hesitation is felt in selecting a wife even from a bush clan that is regarded with decided contempt; and what is still more remarkable, I have frequently known a master and his man-slave to marry sisters. While men of the maritime tribes may marry any number of wives among the bush tribes, nothing would be more abhorrent to their ideas of propriety than that a bushman should marry one of their women.

Intermarriages among the sea-coast tribes are effected by interchanging sisters or daughters, and not by purchase. The party who make the first overture must take some kind

of offering to the parents of the girl, but this is not regarded in the light of purchase money by either party. Marriage is not ratified by any formal ceremony. When all the preliminaries are settled, the groom sets out for the residence of the father of the bride, attended by a retinue of young persons of both sexes, accompanied with drums, fifes, and banners. A few hours are spent in drinking and dancing, and the party return with the bride to her husband's house, her arrival being signalized by the firing of muskets or cannon. If the bride is from a bush tribe, much of this ceremony is dispensed with. She is placed under the special guardianship of one of the older wives, and is initiated into all the mysteries of the more fashionable society into which she is now introduced. She has been raised to great honor, and she is to deport herself very differently toward her lord from what she has been accustomed to see among her own people. Many of the heathenish practices of her own people must be laid aside. Cleanliness in her personal habits is now indispensable. Kindness and respectful deportment toward her co-wives is of the first importance. Prompt obedience to all the commands of her husband is inculcated, and she is told that this is a decided mark of a good wife. If a disproportionate share of labor is imposed upon her by the other members of the household, she is to endure it as patiently as possible. She must cultivate a quiet and amiable temper, and if her husband should now and then inflict a corporal chastisement, she must not run away, but look upon it as a sort of compliment, especially as it shows more regard for her than if he were to neglect her altogether. These lessons are carefully practiced until the woman gets to understand her own position, and all the novelty of her situation is worn off; then she acts pretty much as she pleases, following the bent of her own inclinations, whatever that may be.

It is considered a more honorable affair with the Mpongwes to marry among their own people. But the tenure by

which these fashionable wives are held is very slender, and the mortification of having been abandoned by one of them is a pretty hard offset against the honor of the connection. The women have a greater margin of liberty in the first place, and the constant temptations held out to them to run away and marry some one else, give them quite a character for fickleness. The practice, too, demoralizes them so much that marriage becomes, in reality, a mere nominal affair.

The case is different where a woman who has been purchased runs away from her husband. She must be restored, or the money be returned which was paid for her. This her friends can seldom do, and it is their policy to have her remain quietly with her husband whether he is kind to her or not. If the relations of the fugitive wife refuse to give her up, the aggrieved husband has the right to seize any of their townsmen wherever he may meet them, strip them of their property, and inflict corporal punishment on them, and saddle the whole responsibility of the affair on the family of the offending wife. A town palaver is called, and the delinquent family are compelled not only to repair damages, but to restore the fugitive wife. The husband, until his wife is returned or remuneration made, has, by a well-known usage of society, the right to make reprisals indiscriminately upon the property and persons of the villagers, and this right is exercised with uncompromising severity. If the woman escapes and flies to some distant part of the country, and there throws herself upon the protection of some man whose wife she engages to be, he is, by all means, bound to protect her to the last extremity. If he is able and willing to advance the sum paid for her, it is received, and the affair is settled; but if he refuses to do this, or is not able, her friends are still held responsible by the original purchaser. A very large proportion of these strifes are not settled without shedding blood, for which the family of the woman is responsible. In view of these responsibilities, the influence of the family

is always on the side of the husband, and against the woman if she manifests the least disposition to elope. Thus the evil passions of these heathen people are balanced one against the other; otherwise they would sink below the level of brutes.

There is nothing which an untutored African covets more than a numerous progeny. Children as they grow up to maturity enrich him, give him prominence and respectability in society, and when he is dead they perpetuate his name among men. For the generality of his wives, if he has a considerable number, he cares very little, except so far as they enrich him with children. The women understand this, and it detracts very much from the affection which they would otherwise cherish for their husbands. Under the exasperation caused by the reflection that they are the mere instruments of bearing and nourishing children for a man who, they know, has not one particle of affection for themselves, they often run away and leave their children (whom they have no right to take with them) to the care of others. Such conduct upon the part of mothers does not argue an entire want of maternal affection, but it is the wicked customs of the society in which she lives that forces this painful alternative upon her. Although separated from the father of her children, she still lives in the same neighborhood, and has the opportunity of performing acts of constant kindness for them; and the father, unless he is an austere man, will allow her to have some part in the training of her own children, even though she refuses to be his wife. In the great majority of cases, however, the younger wives have not a great deal to do in the management of their own children, even when they remain with their husbands.

The head wife of the establishment exercises a matronly superintendence over the whole household. If the children are sick, she must take them under her immediate care, see that they take their medicines, and are in no way neglected.

She must adjudicate all the little quarrels that spring up among the children or their mothers. She is, in fact, her husband's viceroy in all family matters, and is responsible to him for the good behavior of the whole family. Her position is a very influential one. If she gains and maintains the confidence of her husband, she can make him do almost any thing she pleases. She can invoke or turn away his wrath against any member of his household. The presents he makes to the different members of his family pass through her hands, and she is always consulted in connection with such presents. She carries his keys and gives away many a leaf of tobacco or glass of rum, of which he knows nothing. There is not the slightest danger of her being found out or exposed. To give information under such circumstances is about the greatest offense of which an African can be guilty. Besides which, there would always be a multitude of witnesses to frown down and falsify all such testimony.

Nor is this head wife less important to the rest of the family than she is to her husband. If they have any special favors to ask, to be successful, they must be preferred by her. She is generally acquainted with all the secrets of the family, and she can effect the condemnation or acquittal of the guilty almost at pleasure. She is, in fact, the mistress of her husband, as well as his whole household.

Domestic slavery prevails to a very great extent in Southern Guinea. Whether it had its origin in the foreign slave-trade, or existed anterior to this, it is almost impossible to ascertain at the present day. The probability is that it is a natural institution, growing out of the wants and circumstances of society, but in this case has been greatly promoted and strengthened by the foreign traffic. Men become slaves in a variety of ways. Prisoners of war have the alternative of death or slavery, and almost without exception they choose the latter. Some have pawned themselves, or their children, on account of debt, and have become slaves in reality though

not in name. Some have been reduced to this condition for alleged crime, and especially on the charge of witchcraft.

Slavery in Africa, however, is a very different thing from what it is in other parts of the world. So far as labor is concerned, it is not an onerous system. While they are children, and can easily be coerced, they are made to do much labor, in the way of bringing wood and water, nursing children, and going on errands; and if negligent or idle they are often punished, and sometimes with great severity. As soon as they attain to manhood this kind of labor is laid aside, and it is only occasionally that they are afterward called upon to perform any kind of work for their masters. If a master has a house to build, is about to take a journey, or has a job of work that requires a good many hands, he calls upon his slaves to assist, and if they refuse he has the right to coerce them. In fact, the relationship of a slave to his master, after he has attained to manhood, is more that of a dependent than a slave. A master has a right to sell a slave, but can not dispose of one that has lived with him for a considerable time, except it be for crime. The authority which a master exercises over a slave is very much modified by his constitutional dread of witchcraft. If he treats his slave unkindly, or inflicts unmerited punishment upon him, he exposes himself to all the machinations of witchcraft which that slave may be able to command.

As a general thing, slaves are not treated differently from the children of their masters. They both address him by the term of father—they work side by side in the same boat or canoe, eat at the same table, and sleep on the same mat. If a slave is discreet, and deports himself with propriety, there is no reason why he may not rise to respectability and wealth. There are several of this class at the Gabun and at Cape Lopez who are wealthier and more respected than their own masters; and, what will seem very strange to those who have contemplated the institution only through the me-

dium of their own feelings, these slaves are themselves the owners of slaves.

A slave in the Gabun was once asked why he did not take the money which he was known to have accumulated and ransom himself. His reply was, "I have as much freedom as I want, and I prefer to buy a slave to wait upon me."

There are no general arrangements among the inhabitants of this part of the country in relation to the division of labor. The men are chiefly engaged in trade. Much of their time is spent in their boats and canoes, going from place to place to purchase ivory and other products of the country. They build their own houses, prepare their farms for planting, and, when not otherwise engaged, spend a good deal of time in fishing and hunting. The women attend to the ordinary duties of cooking, washing, and sewing; and, with the help of their slaves, attend to the planting and weeding of the farms after they have been prepared by their husbands. They spend a considerable amount of time in these various labors, but have neither the skill nor the implements for working very effectively. There are mechanics who work in brass, iron, and wood, with considerable skill. Their knowledge of these arts is what they pick up themselves. They are never instructed in such matters. The number of professional men is comparatively limited. The practice of medicine is not confined to a set of professional men. Certain individuals have the art of curing certain diseases, and make no pretensions to any further knowledge of the art of medicine. There is a class of priests who pretend to cure persons who are possessed with evil spirits. They may be of either sex, but do not form a very large or influential class of society.

## CHAPTER IV.

## SOUTHERN GUINEA.

Government.—Reverence for old Age.—Fines.—Fetiches used to enforce Laws.—The Fear of Fetiches illustrated.—Inauguration of a King.—Revenues.—International Laws.—Barbarous Practices among Bushmen.—No Idea of legal Responsibility.—Singular Mode of settling a Difficulty.

It is not an easy task to characterize the type of government which prevails in this part of Africa. Indeed there is nothing like a thoroughly organized government. Every where the people speak of their kings, governors, and chiefs. But these terms do not imply the same thing which they do among more civilized communities.

The voice of the people is heard on all occasions of importance, and especially in the enactment and enforcement of laws. But notwithstanding this, the government of the country is more strictly of a patriarchal form than any other designation we can give it. The king (*Oga*, as he is called) is but the chief of a dozen or more aged patriarchs, who are really the governing men of the country. Age here is greatly venerated. Children are trained from their earliest childhood to reverence old age. One of the gravest offenses which a middle-aged or young person can be guilty of is to insult, or to treat, even with implied disrespect, an aged person. This profound respect for age, which young persons are always forward to show, and which the aged scrupulously exact, gives this class of men a predominant and controlling influence in all matters of general interest. There are no written laws; but there are certain customs and usages of long standing which are tantamount to laws, and form the

basis upon which all litigated questions are settled. If any of these standing usages are to be repealed, any new law to be enacted, or any question of general interest is to be considered, it is generally done in open council, where every male member of the community may be present and give his views. The king is always present, and presides in these deliberative assemblies. When the discussion has gone on for some time, and he sees pretty clearly what the views of the assembly are, he imposes silence, and then, embodying the wishes of the people in the form of a law, proclaims it as the law of the land. The council approves and ratifies what the king has done, and the act becomes henceforth the law of the land. The king, theoretically, has the right of veto, but the exercise of it is an unheard of measure. When a law has been enacted and ratified, a public crier goes out into the street and proclaims it at the top of his voice, so that every body may be apprised of it. The same thing is repeated at the dusk of the evening, when the people are pretty sure to be at home; and in this way no one can plead ignorance in case the law is violated.

There are not, strictly speaking, any executive officers. If one man, in open violation of a well-known law, trespasses upon the rights of another, the injured party has the right to summon to his aid a sufficient number of persons to punish the offender. He may exact what fine he pleases (ninetenths of the offenses perpetrated in the country are punished by fines), the offender having the right in turn to appeal to a public council for redress in case he conceives himself unduly fined. Capital punishment is seldom inflicted except in the case of slaves and persons condemned for witchcraft. Exile is sometimes imposed, but an offending person seldom needs to have it enforced. His own safety, if he is conscious of having done wrong, or is so adjudged by the people, would dictate to him to get out of the reach of those he has injured. He would naturally expect witchcraft, or some other secret

engine of mischief to be turned against him, and he is no longer safe in the community where he has trespassed against one of his fellow-men. Almost any crime, however, may be atoned for by payment of money. Even the sentence of death for murder may be canceled in this way if the murderer will only keep out of sight until the exasperated feelings of the friends of the murdered have been allayed. The life of a man is valued in dollars and cents, and the murderer, if he can come to terms with the friends of the deceased, pays according to the well-known standard.

Fetiches are set up to punish offenders in certain cases where there is an intention to make a law specially binding. This refers more particularly to crimes which can not always be detected. A fetich is inaugurated, for example, to detect and punish certain kinds of theft; persons who are cognizant to such crimes and do not give information, are also liable to be punished by the fetich. The fetich is supposed to be able not only to detect all such transgressions, but has power, likewise, to punish the transgressor. How it exercises this knowledge, or by what means it brings sickness and death upon the offender, can not, of course, be explained; but as it is believed, it is the most effectual restraint that can possibly be imposed upon evil-disposed persons.

When a fetich of this kind is inaugurated the community is warned of it, and the man who transgresses after this does it at his own peril. An occurrence took place at the Gabun a few years since which illustrates the operation of this principle in a remarkable degree. A law was enacted against sheep-stealing, and a fetich of dreaded power was invoked not only to kill any one who should violate the law, but any one who should know of it and not give information. Soon after a slave, who, by some means or other, had not heard of the existence of the law, stole a sheep from the yard of a white man living in the country. He made known the theft to a friend, and wished to divide the spoils with him.

This man had often before participated in the fruits of such thefts, but now he must inform upon his friend, or expose himself to the fury of the fetich. The thief was brought the next morning to the owner of the sheep, and the people, with one accord, declared that the white man might do just what he liked with the offender; he might ship him to Brazil, put him to death, or make him his own slave perpetually. In the exercise of more humanity than the people themselves possessed, the offender was banished from that part of the country. This slave was attacked with a malignant disease soon after, and, after a painful and lingering illness, died. Nobody in the country ever doubted that this was the vengeance of the fetich; and this story will be told for generations to come (unless the light of Christianity take the place of superstition), as proof of the intelligence and power of the fetich.

The kingly office is partly hereditary and partly elective. It belongs to one particular family; but the people have some choice as to the particular member of the royal family that shall be crowned. This, like all other questions of general interest, must be decided by the voice of the people. Not infrequently there are sharp contentions, and the parties frequently get into outright fights, but without more serious injury than a few bruises and scratched faces. The ceremony of inauguration is peculiar. When a king dies, a sister, or some other near female relative, must occupy the throne day and night until a successor is chosen, which may be in a few days, or it may not be for weeks. When the day of inauguration arrives, the people go *en masse* to the house of the king elect. Here and on the way to the palace every man, woman, child, and slave, has a right to say just what he pleases to him. He may be cursed, insulted, reproached, or lectured on the subject of his future duties, without any right to resent it, either at the time or when he shall have assumed the reins of government. It is said,

in explanation of this singular custom, that after he becomes king he is sacred, and as no man will ever again be allowed to say hard things of him, they must do it before he ascends the throne. It is an amusing scene. The hardest and most disagreeable things that can be thought of are proclaimed in his hearing. He is reminded of things in his past life of which he is heartily ashamed, and which he hoped had been forgotten. He is charged not to put on airs, or be supercilious when he gets on the throne. He is told that it is not decorous in a king to be close-fisted or niggardly, and he is exhorted to put away the stinginess which has been a blot on his previous life. All this and much more he must bear with the utmost meekness; and to cherish resentment for such insults is the meanest and most pitiable thing of which a king can be guilty.

There are no public revenues, and no systems of taxation. Foreign vessels, when they come to trade at one of their ports, are expected to make a present, or *dash*, as it is called in the parlance of the country, to the king and head men. Custom and the interest of the ship alike require this. The king has no power to compel the captain to pay it, except by interposing a fetich to prevent his own people from trading with him, and this is always effectual enough. The dash differs according to the disposition of the captain, and the kind and extent of the trade which he proposes to make. If he merely wants a cargo of red-wood, which can be got in a comparatively short time, he does not pay more than twenty or thirty dollars; about one-third of which goes to the king, and the remainder is divided among the head men, according to their respective ranks. If the vessel has come for a cargo of ivory, and a factory is to be established on shore, three times this amount is usually paid. These fees are not regarded as public revenues, but the property of the persons who receive them. It is customary for the native traders, especially if they are successful in business, to make a pres-

sent to the king of a piece of cloth or something of like value now and then. But this is never peremptorily demanded at any place except by the King of Cape Lopez, where royal authority is much more arbitrary than at any other places in the country. At Loango, Ambriz, and other parts where the slave-trade was formerly carried on, much larger sums were paid, but all this went into the coffers of the kings of these different places, and enabled them to purchase a large number of wives, and live themselves in a sort of barbaric splendor.

The very great number of independent communities scattered over the country renders their international relations very complicated, and frequent petty wars and standing animosities are the necessary consequences. If a man has a claim against another living in a neighboring village which he will not satisfy, the first step is to go and make a statement of his grievance to the principal men of the village where the debtor lives. This he may do with the expectation that they will require him to pay the debt, or it may be intended as a sort of warning that if they do not, he will make reprisals of the property or make prisoners of any individuals of the town, wherever he may be able to lay hands upon them. He has forewarned the people, and if the next step be one of violence, the country at large will justify his course. It is by seizing persons and holding them as hostages that half of the debts of the country are collected. It is supposed that the family of the person who is held in "durance vile" will compel the debtor to pay his debts and let the prisoner go free. If the debt is not regarded as a just one, then the affair becomes a matter of negotiation between the communities to which the disputants respectively belong.

A similar process to the one just described is pursued in relation to other matters besides debts. The elopement of wives and slaves, especially the former, is the most prolific of all sources of dispute. Nothing is felt to be a deeper dis-

grace to a man than to have his wife run away and marry some one else. It is a constant occurrence, but the sting of shame is not the less keen on that account. The sea-coast tribes, who are averse to being embroiled in wars with their bush neighbors, endure the disgrace as patiently as possible. The men here have a greater number of wives, and their reputation, is not so seriously affected by the absconding of a truant wife now and then. But with the bushman it is entirely a different affair. It is his only wife, perhaps, that has eloped with a man whom he has been entertaining as his guest. His anger and resentment are aroused, and his rage becomes more that of a brute than a man. He determines to be revenged, and if he can not overtake the fugitives, he turns aside to the nearest village and kills the first individual that comes within the range of his musket. He then retires to a safe distance, and proclaims, with stentorian voice, who he is, and why he has committed this deed of violence; and coolly tells the people that they must hold the man who stole his wife responsible. The villagers are aroused, and, as soon as the paralysis of the shock is over, they consult in reference to a plan of revenge. No resentment is felt toward the man who has committed this outrage. He had been egregiously provoked, and is not, therefore, to be blamed. But now they themselves are injured without cause—a stigma has been affixed to their character, and it must remain there until it is wiped off by some deed of equal violence. The original offender is as much out of their reach as he was out of the man's whose wife he stole. A party is dispatched to the next village, before the rumor of this affair has reached its inhabitants, and again a similar deed of blood is enacted. And this deed may be re-enacted half a dozen times in a single night. It was the intention of the man who took the first step in this bloody round to have it extend as far as possible. He has been grievously wronged himself, and he would have the whole country par-

take of the revenge he feels against the man who stole his wife. These bloody scenes are continued until the whole country is aroused, and every village is on its guard, and it is not longer possible to carry on this carnage. The inhabitants of the village, where the last murder has been committed, now summon a general council, and the whole matter is considered. The chief who summoned this council is the only person who has not had redress for the wrong inflicted upon his village. The man who has the stolen wife has something for which he has not paid, and he is required to satisfy the demand of the chief who called the council. The husband, from whom the wife was stolen, canceled his claim in taking the life of one of his neighbors, and so on in every successive case to the man who is suing for damages, and who would prefer money to taking the life of another fellow-creature. When his claim is fully satisfied the account is squared all round, and peace is once more restored to the neighborhood.

Barbarous as this practice is, it is not altogether senseless, or without its uses in a community where moral restraints and wholesome laws are unknown. The real object of such a round of bloody tragedies was to intimidate wicked men, and show them the tremendous consequences of a single act of villainy.

The individual who first set the ball in motion is considered responsible for all the mischief that follows in its train. He is discharged from all pecuniary obligations when he has paid down the price of the wife he has stolen, but not so in a moral point of view. A mother is not pacified for the loss of her child, simply because some other mother's child has been killed to atone for the death of hers. Every throb of grief that pulsates in her heart calls forth a curse upon the man who caused all this misery. His name is a reproach in every man's mouth; and to be cursed and reproached in this way by all who know him is more than any African can en-

ture, if he has not become an incarnate devil. The family of the offender is involved in the same denunciations, from which they can not escape unless they join in the general outcry against their kinsman. Such serious consequences as these can not but exert a powerful restraint upon wicked men; and, indeed, without something of the kind these miserable people would be worse than the most savage wild beasts.

The inhabitants of the country have no clear apprehensions of what constitutes the true principles of justice and equity. They are so much under the dominion of selfishness, and so much influenced by a mere clannish feeling, that they seldom trouble themselves about what is just and right between man and man. The first aim of a man, when called upon to decide in a litigated case, is to secure his own interest, if that is any way concerned; his second will be to promote the interest of his family or friends; and the third, that of the community in which he lives, not troubling himself in any measure about the abstract right or justice of the question. This fact is known on all hands; no man is thought to be just and impartial, and, therefore, few disputes are ever settled without a boisterous quarrel.

Nor have the people any correct ideas either of moral or legal responsibility. If one man kills another by accident, he is judged as harshly and punished as severely as if he had done it intentionally and deliberately. It is said that nobody can tell what were the motives that influenced the man; the deed may seem to have been accidental when in reality it was premeditated. It would be no alleviation to say that the two persons were bosom friends, for it would be replied that the friendship of the one who killed the other was mere dissimulation. Besides which, it is argued that, if accidental murder is properly punished, it will teach men the importance of caution.

A case once came under the observation of the writer

which will illustrate their ideas of moral and legal responsibility.

A vessel once advertised for laborers. A native man, who was acting somewhat as a shipping-master, took off half a dozen young men to the vessel and hired them to the captain. This was done with the consent of the young men, but without the knowledge or consent of their fathers. One month's wages was paid down, which the shipping-master pocketed as his commission. All their future wages was to be paid to the young men themselves on the return of the vessel from the proposed cruise. The parents of these young men heard of this transaction after the ship sailed, but said not a single word about it. In the course of six months or a year the ship returned, but reported one of the young men dead; the others were paid and discharged. The father of the deceased son sent a messenger to the shipping-master to ask for his son, who went aboard of the ship with him some six months ago. The shipping-master knew the full import of the message. He knew that he had taken the boy aboard and sent him off without his father's consent. Had that been obtained in the first instance, he would have been free from all responsibility; but now he is in a narrow place, and must get out of the lion's clutches as easily as possible. He produces a large amount of money and sends it to the father, and humbly requests him to let his son go with him on board the vessel. The father, if he deems the amount sufficient, accepts the humiliation, is satisfied with the present, and, in the presence of witnesses, permits his son to go on board the ship. The shipping-master is to be blamed no more, for it is always said afterward that he took the young man aboard with the father's consent.

## CHAPTER V.

## PONGO COUNTRY.

Its Geographical Outlines.—Principal Families.—Kamerun People.—Banáká.—Corisco.—Mission at Corisco.—Mpongwe.—Mission at Gabun.—Toko and Rápántyámbe.—Cape Lopez.—King Pass-all.—Kama People.—Bushmen.—Shekanis.—Bakéles.—Pangwes.

THE Pongo, or Gabun Coast, as it is now called, extends from the Kamerun River, 4° north latitude, to Mayumba, 3° south latitude. It is upward of four hundred miles in length from north to south, varies in breadth from sixty to two hundred miles, and lies between the Atlantic on the west and the Sierra del Crystal Mountains on the east.

The country receives its name from the Pongo or Mpongwe people, who, in former years, were the dominant race in this region of country, but who are now very much reduced in number and power, and are to be found only along the banks of the Gabun River.

There are five rivers in this district of country of some importance to commerce, but none of them navigable to any considerable distance. The first of these, taking them in their geographical order, is the Kamerun. At its mouth it is six or seven miles wide, and forms, therefore, a sort of estuary, but is not navigable for ordinary-sized vessels more than thirty miles. The Boneto, eighty or a hundred miles to the south of this, is narrower at its mouth but much longer. The natives speak of a bold and imposing cataract on this river, not more than twenty miles from its outlet, but I am not aware that it has ever been seen by a white man, and no very definite idea can be formed of its imposing nature upon the mere representations of the natives.

The Muni, or River Danger, as it is sometimes called, empties itself into the northeast corner of the Corisco Bay, is a mile or more in width, but is not navigable for ships for any considerable distance. Its banks are high, and covered with a rich and luxuriant tropical growth. At the distance of twenty-five miles from the sea-coast it divides itself into two main branches: one of these runs in a northeasterly direction until it reaches the foot of the Sierra del Crystal, when it turns due north, and runs in that direction until it gets near the tributaries of the Boneto; the other runs in a southeasterly direction, tracing its course along the base of the mountain very nearly to the sources of the Gabun.

The next and most important river is the Gabun. It is very nearly under the equator, forms an estuary of ten miles wide at its mouth, and is navigable to the distance of seventy-five miles. Like the Muni, it separates itself into two main branches—one of which runs to the northeast and the other to the southeast. Both of these branches are navigable for boats and canoes to the distance of a hundred and fifty miles.

The Nazareth, eighty miles south of the equator, is not so large or deep as the Gabun or the Kamerun, but is much longer than either, and affords great facilities of intercourse between the sea-coast and mountain tribes. From Cape Lopez, where the Nazareth debouches, there is a narrow lagoon running along the sea-coast, and very near to it, all the way to Mayumba. This lagoon is much traversed by boats and canoes; and when the slave-trade was in vigorous operation, it afforded the Portuguese traders great facilities for eluding the vigilance of the British cruisers, by shifting their slaves from point to point, and embarking them according to a preconcerted plan.

This region of country does not differ materially in its natural appearance from the more southerly portions of Lower Guinea, except in its bolder outlines and more luxu-

riant vegetation. The Sierra del Crystal Mountains are very distinctly seen between the Kamerun River and Cape St. John, and present at many points very bold and striking outlines. The Bay of Corisco forms a remarkable indentation in the sea-coast, and from some points presents very imposing natural scenery. It is forty miles from north to south, and half that distance in width. The Island of Corisco is situated about midway between the northern and southern capes which form the bay, but is not more than eight or ten miles in circumference. The land of the island is of moderate elevation, and at one or two points rises into high hills or bold bluffs. The country along the northern banks of the Gabun is high, undulating, and some portions of it are exceedingly beautiful. No portion of this country presents the appearance of a high state of cultivation. In fact, the proportion of land under actual cultivation is small, and what is cultivated hardly appears so, from the fact that most of the cultivated vegetables look so much like the natural growth of the country.

There are in the Pongó country as many as seven well-known independent communities along the sea-board, and as many more interior tribes between these and the mountain-range. Some general account has already been given of these tribes; but we propose, in the present chapter, to give a more specific account of them in their respective localities.

Those along the sea-board are the Kamerun, Banákâ, the Corisco or Benga, the Gabun or Mpongwe, Cape Lopez or Orungu, the Kama or Mayumba people.

Inland are the Shekanis, the Bakêles, Shebas, Yebwis, the Pangwes, and a good many smaller tribes interspersed among these. There are also a few small tribes interspersed among those along the sea-coast.

The interior tribes are not separated from each other by any well-defined geographical outlines. Different tribes, in many places, are interspersed over the same district of coun-

try, and are separated from each other by tribal relations rather than geographical lines. The Shekanis and the Bakēles, for the most part, border on the sea-coast tribes, while the Shebas and Pangwes are found nearer to the mountains.

The Kamerun people live on both sides of the river of the same name, and are said to be numerous. They have a large trade in palm-oil, and the river is frequented by a considerable number of vessels, chiefly from Liverpool, for the purpose of carrying on this trade. In former years the people were rather noted for their habits of theft, but of late they have made special effort to retrieve their character, and the consequence is that vessels trade with them now without the precautions against their thievish habits which were once found necessary. This reformation is to be ascribed, in a great measure without doubt, to the establishment of a Christian mission among them, a few years since, by the Baptist Missionary Society of England. The missionaries themselves suffered a good deal at first from their thievish habits; but of late years there has been a decided improvement in their outward and moral character, and if the lives of these missionary men are spared, still greater changes will be effected in their character and condition. Their language has been studied and reduced to writing, and already several religious books have been translated into it and circulated among such of the natives as have been taught to read.

The Banākâ people occupy a district of country of twenty-five miles in length, half way between the Kamerun River and the Bay of Corisco, and have as many villages as they occupy miles of sea-coast. As a people, they differ in many important respects from all the other tribes in this section of country. It is only recently that they have descended from the mountainous regions of the interior, and while they still bear all the marks of the better health which belongs to these higher elevations, they also exhibit strong traces of the true savage condition in which they have been brought up.

Their complexion is a shade lighter than those living on either side of them, and their general appearance reminds one much more strongly of the Kaffirs of the Cape of Good Hope than any sea-coast natives within the tropics. Their language is but imperfectly understood, as yet, by any of the neighboring tribes, and as none of them speak the English with any degree of ease, very little reliable information has been obtained in relation to the particular part of the country they formerly inhabited, or what induced them to come down to the sea-coast. Their language, so far as it is understood, shows that they belong to the same great family which have spread themselves over the whole of the southern half of Africa; but whether they are more nearly related to the tribes on the eastern or western coast of the continent remains to be proved. They seem to be simple-hearted, and peaceably disposed, and, as yet, have acquired but few of the tricks of their more experienced brethren in the same region. It will require very little intercourse with the civilized world, however, to make them perfect adepts in all the petty villainies of the maritime tribes, provided that intercourse is not regulated by the principles of sound religion. Foreign vessels have had no trade with them until within the last fifteen years. Previous to that time they had no relish for ardent spirits, and it was with difficulty that any of them could be induced to taste of it in the first instance. But those days of happy ignorance are gone; the taste has been acquired, and nowhere is rum now in greater demand. How very important is it that the influences of Christianity should be thrown around these people before they are carried away by this fearful temptation!

They are as simple and primitive in their customs and habits as any people in the world. In their forest homes they had no covering for their bodies but a narrow strip of cloth made out of the inner bark of a forest tree. More recently they use the cotton cloth which they receive from

vessels in exchange for their ivory, but still in very scant measure. Their women disfigure their faces very much by making large holes in their ears, and through the cartilaginous parts of the nose. Weights are attached to make the hole large enough to pass the finger through. Pieces of fat meat are frequently worn in these holes, but whether for ornament or fragrance is not known. I inquired of one of them once why she did it, and received the laconic answer, "My husband likes it."

In their intercourse with white men they are peaceable and forbearing. But among themselves they have some stringent laws, which are enforced with unsparing severity. Theft and adultery are punished with death, and it matters not what may be the character or rank of the offender. Passing along the beach on one occasion, my attention was called to a half-consumed human carcass, hanging from the limb of a tree, and upon inquiry I learned that it was the wife of one of the principal men of the place, who had been hung for stealing a bunch of plantains. The corpse was left hanging by the road-side as a public warning.

Their habitations are the inerest huts, and are almost concealed from view by the luxuriant banana-trees with which they are always surrounded. The huts of some of the wealthier men are raised on scaffolds, eight or ten feet above the ground, and are entered by climbing up a ladder, which is drawn up at night. Birds and animals are carved on their doors and window-shutters, and often with a good deal of taste.

Although they have not been living long on the sea-board, they have become the most noted canoemen on the whole coast. They have two kinds of canoes. One is made of cork-wood, very small, and intended to carry only one person. The other is made of very hard wood, is small and tapering at both ends, but is large enough to carry thirty or forty persons.

The small canoe does not weigh more than eight or ten pounds, and is too narrow for an ordinary-sized person to be seated in it. A saddle or bridge is laid across the middle, not more than two inches wide, but several inches higher than the sides of the canoe, as a seat. They use very light paddles, but scud over the roughest sea without danger, and with almost incredible velocity. While propelling with both hands they will use one foot to bail the water out of the canoe. When they would rest their arms, one leg is thrown out on either side of the canoe, and it is propelled with the feet almost as fast as with a paddle. They will dash with perfect safety over a surf that would swamp almost any boat that could be made. I have often seen them revolve around a ship, sailing at the rate of five or six knots an hour, half a dozen times in the course of half an hour. When tired of running around the ship, a man will climb up her side with one hand, and haul up his canoe with the other.

In the larger canoe they perform voyages of fifty or a hundred miles. Sometimes half a dozen of these canoes set out together and go as far as the Gabun or Cape Lopez. When they go in such large troops and quarter themselves upon a single person, to be entertained for several weeks, it is felt to be a severe visitation; and the Gabun traders sometimes give them the dodge, notwithstanding all the honor implied by such a visit.

The Corisco\* or Benga people, as they call themselves, occupy the island of Corisco, the sea-coast between Cape St. John and Boneto to the north, and between Cape Esterias and Cape Clara to the south, and also a small island, near the mouth of the Muni, called Elovi. The population of the main island is less than two thousand, while that of the whole tribe would scarcely exceed eight thousand. There is,

\* The island was named Corisco by the Spaniards, on account of the heavy thunder and sharp lightning which prevail here at certain seasons.

however, twice as large a population around the bay and up the river who speak the Benga language, and differ very slightly as a people. The Bengas look down upon all these tribes as their inferiors, and do not hesitate to bestow upon them the contemptuous epithet of "Bushmen."

In point of civilization the Corisco people are decidedly in advance of the Kamerun or Banâkâ tribes, but behind the Mpongwes in point of cultivated manners. In physical type of character they are more like the Kamerun than the Gabun people, but their language shows a stronger affinity for the Bakêlé than for either of the others. They are generally very black, tall, and somewhat ill-formed, but are strong, and have great power of endurance. In former years they were constantly embroiled in petty feuds among themselves.

There are but few male adults even at the present day who can not show scars that they have received in their drunken frays. Of late years, however, there has been a marked improvement in their general character and deportment. It is now a grave offense for any one to use a knife, cutlass, or any other edged instrument in their fights, and several persons have been banished from the island, within a few years past, for violating this law.

This partial reformation in their outward character has, no doubt, been brought about by the influence of the Christian mission which has been established among them. Something more than four years ago a mission was established on the island, by the Rev. James L. Mackey and Rev. George Simpson, under the direction of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. Mrs. Mackey was summoned to her final rest before the mission was fully established. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson, as is well known to the Christian public in America, found a watery grave soon after, but not until they had made a very decided impression on the minds of this island people in favor of the Gospel. Mr. Mackey labored on, notwithstanding this calamitous visita-

tion, feeling assured that the work was the Lord's, and that it would be sustained. In the autumn of 1853 his heart was cheered by the arrival of the Rev. George M'Queen as an associate in this work. About a year from that time the mission was reinforced a second time, by the arrival of the Rev. Messrs. Williams and Clements, and their wives. This mission is still in its infancy, but its influence is felt to a very considerable extent, as seen in the outward deportment of the people, and in their increased appreciation of the importance of the mission. They listen to the truths of the Gospel, and have become acquainted with the way of salvation. Their language has been reduced to writing by the missionaries, and the great truths of the Gospel are now made known to them through this channel. Schools have been established, and many of the rising generation have received the elements of a Christian education. The island itself possesses many advantages as a missionary station. The experience of the missionaries proves it to be comparatively healthy. It is central to a large population on the main land, and will be valuable as a recruiting station for missionaries located in that region. At the same time, the Corisco people have constant intercourse with all the surrounding tribes; and should they be brought under the influence of the Gospel themselves, they will have extraordinary facilities for extending the knowledge of it among the more distant parts.

The inhabitants of the Gabun, Cape Lopez, and Kama, or Cape St. Catherine, are so much alike in physical character, language, habits, and customs, and superstitious notions, that they can not but be regarded as the same family. The language of Mayumba diverges somewhat from this common standard, and may be regarded as intermediate between these and the language of Loango, to the south of it.

The Mpongwe people are to be found on both sides of the Gabun River, to the distance of thirty miles from the sea-coast. They were once very numerous, and without doubt

were the wealthiest and most powerful people in all this region of country. At the present day their population does not exceed five or six thousand. This decline in numbers is to be ascribed to a variety of causes, the chief of which are the intemperate habits which they acquired in consequence of their intercourse with civilized men, and the participation they have had in the foreign slave-trade for more than a century past. They are divided into four communities, two of which inhabit the north, and two the south side of the river. Those on the north side are near to each other, and are known as King Glass's and King Qua Ben's people; those on the south side as King William's and King George's, the former being located near the mouth of the river, and the latter about thirty miles higher up. Besides these four principal communities, there are several smaller settlements of the same people at intermediate points, and one on Konig Island, about twenty miles from the mouth of the river.

The Mpongwe people, though greatly reduced in population and power, retain, nevertheless, many interesting traits of character. They remember the renown of their forefathers, and are proud of their lineage. They regard themselves as "the people" of the country; and in point of wealth, intelligence, and general cultivation, they are certainly entitled to the first place. Strangers are always surprised to find so much intelligence, so much ease and propriety of manners, and, I may add, real urbanity, among any of the inhabitants of Africa. These personal accomplishments have been acquired by constant intercourse with white men of all nations and languages. All the produce of the country has passed through their hands, and their interest as well as their inclinations have led them to study and cultivate those manners which would ingratiate them with the traders who frequent their country. The organ of imitation is largely developed in their natures, and it is easy for them to copy and practice the best specimen of manners with which they are

brought in contact. Four-fifths of the adult male population speak the English or French language with tolerable ease, but not with accuracy. Since the establishment of Christian schools among them, a large number of the rising generation have learned to speak and write the English language with ease and readiness.

Among those who grew up to maturity before any of the advantages of education were brought within their reach, were several men of remarkable character, a brief sketch of a few of whom will not be uninteresting, especially as their characters will illustrate the natural capacity of this race for improvement. We have in a previous chapter given some account of one who was remarkable only for his cunning and adroitness. We have now before our mind's eye two men of a much higher grade of moral character. One of these is the chief of the principal settlement on the south side of the river, of the name of Râpântyâmbe, known among Englishmen and Americans by the name of King William, and by the French as King Dennie. The other is the principal trade man among King Glass's people, and is known by the name of Toko. The characters of these two men are very much alike in some respects, but in others they diverge as much as possible. The former was decorated, a few years since, by the French government, with the badge of the Legion of Honor, for services rendered in rescuing some French sailors from the hands of a savage tribe on another part of the coast. Toko acquired still more notoriety, a few years since, by the firm and obstinate stand which he made against the French authorities when they first attempted a settlement at the Gabun. Both of them are men of remarkable personal appearance, equally shrewd, and very close observers of men and things. Dennie is a man of medium stature, with a compact and well-formed frame, and of great muscular power. He is about sixty years of age. His complexion is very black, and is rendered more remarkable in contrast with the large

snow-white beard with which the lower part of his face is covered. He has a mild and expressive eye, a gentle and persuasive voice, equally affable and dignified; and taken all together, he is one of the most king-like looking men I have ever met in Africa.

Toko is a man about the same age, size, and complexion; but with features more thoroughly African than the generality of his own tribe. He has, nevertheless, a very remarkable and intelligent countenance, strongly marked with the deep vein of natural humor which pervades his whole composition. He is careless in dress, unpretending in his manners, but his shrewdness and unbounded humor, almost in spite of himself, peer out at every turn in conversation. Both of these men are familiar with all the traditionary stories of their ancestors, and have their minds amply stored with fables, allegories, and proverbial sayings. With this fund of knowledge, and with their eminently social temperaments, they are very entertaining in conversation. On this account, both are great favorites with white men who visit their country. In their modes of communicating information, however, there is all the difference that exists between the temperaments of the two men. Dennie is precise, somewhat formal, and very cautious in all his statements. When narrating a story to white men he is careful not to state any thing too hard for their credence. He keeps his own fancy under restraint, and is much more apt to take from than to add to the current stories of the country. His information on this account is more reliable, and especially as he deals more in actual facts than fictitious representations. Toko, on the contrary, knows nothing about these restraints. When he sets out to rehearse one of his favorite fables, all his humor is at once stirred up, and he yields himself to the spirit of his story. He is all glee himself, and the hearer can not for his life avoid being carried along with him. The wild animals of the woods are summoned before his audience,

they are indued with all the cunning and shrewdness of man, and before you are aware of it, you have before your imagination a perfect drama. The narrator has no misgivings about exceeding the credulity of his hearers. Indeed his humor is constantly prompting him to test this to the very utmost point, and sometimes he purposely stretches his points so far as to turn the whole story into outright burlesque.

When the French government proposed to form a naval settlement on the Gabun twelve or fourteen years ago, these two men were the most prominent and influential in the country, and it was important above all things that their consent and co-operation should be secured. Neither of them knew exactly how much was implied by such an establishment; both had suspicions that it might lead to the exercise of more authority over themselves and their country than they cared to have, and they scarcely knew how to act. They adopted in the end an entirely different line of policy. Dennie had always been a favorite with the French, while Toko was disliked for his over-partiality to the English; the former spoke the French with great facility, and the latter the English, and hence their respective partialities.

Dennie saw that the French were determined to have a settlement whether the people were willing or not; perhaps he was told so; but if not, his own shrewdness detected their purpose. It was proposed to form the settlement on the north side of the river. In this way there would be a broad river of ten miles between them and himself; and, in case their presence proved to be an annoyance, he and his people would not be so much affected as those on the same side of the river. He had hopes, too, that the partiality of the French might place him at the head of the whole of the native population of the country. He determined, therefore, to give them his hearty support, and did all he could to induce others to yield to their wishes.

Toko had no partiality for the French. He had never received any favors at their hands, could not speak their language, and therefore had no motive in consenting to their getting a foothold in the country. He spoke the English language with ease, was well known to the merchants in England who were engaged in the African trade, and he concluded that it was his interest and the interest of his people to have things remain as they had been. He knew that his people were not able to resist the French, but he calculated largely upon the sympathy and support of the English in case the French should attempt to take forcible possession of the country. He knew perfectly well, also, that these two nations had no love for each other, and he did not see why the latter would not unsheath the sword at once to defend the Gabun people. He determined, therefore, to take no step that would give the French even the semblance of a claim to the country, or that would embarrass the English in case the French set up any such claim. He no doubt expected to be rewarded by the English in case he should be successful in shutting off the French.

The stand taken by Toko commended him at once to the respect of the French, though they felt not a little annoyed at his opposition. Every kind of motive was now brought to bear upon him; but persuasions, bribes, and intimidations failed to produce any other effect than to call out his iron obstinacy. To this purpose he adhered until he was the last and only man in the country who maintained a show of opposition. He did not even then submit until the alternative of perpetual exile from his family and country was forced upon his choice. How cordial his submission finally was may be inferred from the remark of one of his countrymen, who said "that Toko was hereafter to love the French, except out of his heart."

These two men, though ostensibly friends, have always been earnest rivals, especially in matters of trade. Both

pride themselves on their skill in boat-building. If one succeeds in launching a large-sized and fast-sailing boat, it is absolutely certain that the other will go to work at once to build one that will eclipse it, even if it takes him two years to accomplish the task. They say nothing themselves about the good qualities of their boats, but leave their people to do all the bragging; and the more they brag the stronger proof do they give of their loyalty. If one builds a large house, it is certain that the other will build a larger. If one adds to the number of his wives or slaves, it is certain that the other will not long be left behind. If one makes a present to some distinguished stranger, the other is sure to do something still more handsome. And yet, notwithstanding all this rivalry, these two men manage to keep on the best terms, and are constantly interchanging acts of courtesy.

It is not to be inferred that the gentleness and external polish manifested by the Mpongwe people is based upon any real moral worth. A great deal of the smoothness and polish which they evince in their intercourse with white men is entirely fictitious. They have some true excellence of character, which would appear to much greater advantage if it was not associated with so much that is really feigned. They are kind, sociable, and hospitable in a high degree, but none of these prevent them from taking any advantages that they possibly can in trade. They are sadly addicted to falsehood, insincerity, deception, and dissimulation. In all these respects they have no rivals.

The love of trade is their ruling passion, and they evince a capacity for carrying it on which is truly surprising for uneducated men. Many of them are intrusted with goods to the value of two or three thousand dollars, and when so disposed, they can render a perfect account of the whole, though paid out in the smallest dribbles. They construct excellent boats, large enough to carry eight or ten tons weight, and in which they make voyages along the sea-coast

to the distance of three hundred miles, and which, under favorable circumstances, might cross over to South America.

A Christian mission was established among these people in 1842 by the author and two other missionaries under the auspices of the American Board of Foreign Missions. It is still carried on, and its influence is beginning to manifest itself not only upon the Mpongwe people, but upon several of the interior tribes. The missionaries found the people without a Sabbath, without a Bible, without a sanctuary, without schools, and wholly immured in heathenism. Now they have some knowledge of the Christian salvation, the Sabbath is observed, and the sanctuary is well attended. Many have received a good Christian education, and a few have been received into the Church of Christ. Their language has been reduced to writing, and a considerable portion of the Bible, as well as other religious books, has been translated into it, and circulated among the people. Christian marriages have been formed, and families are now being trained according to the principles of the Bible.\*

The Cape Lopez or Orungu people are settled along the sea-coast on both sides of the Nazareth River. They are to be found along the banks of the river also to the distance of forty or fifty miles. They are said to be more numerous than the Mpongwes, but in physical character, language, customs, manners, and modes of living, they are the same. Cape Lopez has some renown for the large share it has had in the foreign slave-trade, and for the atrociously cruel and despotic character of the late King Pass-all. This magniloquent name was assumed as expressive of his great power and wealth, but in fact might be applied with more propriety to his unparalleled cruelties. His deeds of cruelty, if he has not been grossly misrepresented, are too atrocious to be narrated. How he ever acquired so complete an ascend-

\* A more extended account of this mission will be given in another place.

ency over the minds of his people as he seems to have possessed has never been fully or satisfactorily explained. There is no parallel to it in Southern Guinea that we have ever known. The probability is he made his first advancements in power by working upon the superstitious feelings of his people; and he afterward maintained himself in authority by the very large number of slaves he was enabled to surround himself with in consequence of his connection with the Portuguese and Spanish slave-traders. Toward the latter part of his life it is said he domineered over the Portuguese residents as much as he did over his own people. It is well known that he banished several of them to the remote interior, who were never heard of afterward. It will be remembered that the name of this renowned king went the rounds of the American newspapers in connection with the execution of the Spanish pirates in Boston during the administration of General Jackson. After the robbery of the brig *Mexico* and the attempted murder of her crew, the pirates betook themselves to Cape Lopez, and were protected by him until they were forcibly taken away by Captain Trotter of the British Navy, and sent to the United States for trial.

His son and successor, the present king of the country, is a man of different and better character. He has recently entered into a treaty with the British Government by which he has bound himself to give up the slave-trade. If this treaty is adhered to, there is no reason why Cape Lopez may not become an important trading-place. It has important geographical advantages for developing a large trade in palm-oil, ebony, ivory, and various other articles of commerce. During the period when the Portuguese had the commercial ascendancy in the country, a company of Roman Catholic missionaries, according to Barbot, established themselves at this place; but they did not remain long, and left no traces of their religion that can be discerned at the

present day. Indeed the present inhabitants of the country have no knowledge of the fact that there ever was such a mission among their ancestors.

The Kama settlements are sixty or eighty miles to the south of Cape Lopez. They are much more numerous than either the Mpongwe or Cape Lopez people. They are almost the only people I have met with in Western Africa who do not live in villages. Their language does not differ essentially from either of these, except that many of their words are ended with a most singularly prolonged drawl—a habit ascribed to the influence of a single man who lived among them many years ago, and had an impediment of speech, into which the people were inadvertently drawn, and from which they have never been able to extricate themselves.

To complete our sketch of the Pongo country some account must be given of the inland tribes. Those best known at the Gabun and Corisco are the Shekanis, Bakēles, and Pangwes. The Shekanis were once very numerous. They occupied a broad belt of country extending from the Muni to the Nazareth, and for a long time they were the principal, if not the only, people of the interior with whom the sea-coast tribes living within the same bounds had and intercourse. With the sea-coast people, upon whom they were dependent for all the intercourse they could have with the ships which visited the country, they were generally on good terms. But among themselves, and with the tribes in their immediate rear, they were in constant petty warfare. This, together with their intemperate habits and the share which they have had in the foreign slave-trade, has reduced them to a mere handful of the poorest and most debased people that can be found in the whole country.

About twenty-five years ago the Bakēles, a much more numerous people, came in a great swarm from some unknown part of the interior, and spread themselves over the whole of the country occupied by the Shekanis. At first

some disposition was manifested by the latter to resist this usurpation of their country, but they soon saw that they must submit and become identified with these intruders or seek another home. A part of them adopted the former course, and the remainder drew nearer to the sea-coast settlements, in the hope of having greater security.

It is not possible to form an accurate estimate of the number of the Bakèle people, but it is probable they do not fall much short of 100,000. Compared with the maritime tribes which we have been considering, they occupy a low place in the scale of civilization. In stature they are rather below the common standard, and their bodies are disproportionately long for their legs. They bear some resemblance to the dwarfish Dokos of the eastern coast, but are not debased and brutified as these are represented to be. They cultivate the soil to some extent, have a few domestic animals, and have some rude knowledge of the mechanical arts. They are a good deal addicted to hunting, and have remarkable tact in finding their way through pathless woods. A missionary station has been established among them by the missionaries of the American Board which promises much good. The adult population seem disposed to listen to the truths of the Gospel, and the children which have been gathered into the school show as much aptitude for learning as the generality of African children. Under the influence of the Gospel, there is no reason why these people, degraded and ignorant as they are, may not rise to respectability and civilization. It will require time, however, to obliterate all traces of their former and present ignorance. Their language has been reduced to writing, and several religious books have been translated into it, and printed for the use of the people. Their language is a dialect of the common family stock which prevails over the whole of this region of country. It is more closely allied to the Benga than any other dialect to be found in the Pongo country.



The Pangwes are the most remarkable people, however, to be found any where in this region of country. It is only within a comparatively recent period that they have been seen on the western side of the Sierra del Crystal Mountains. They were scarcely known even by name to the sea-coast people twenty years ago. Something more than twelve years since the author met the first company of them who had ventured far enough from their mountain homes to look upon the head-waters of the Gabun. They had come to spy out the land, and see if it were possible to find a comfortable home on the western side of the mountains for their people. This delegation and the white man were objects of mutual interest and curiosity to each other; but at this day it is impossible to say which indulged their curiosity to the greatest extent. If the white man was altogether different from any human being they had ever before seen, they were almost as much unlike any-other portion of the African race that he had ever seen.

Since the time just referred to, as many as thirty large villages have been established by the Pangwes on the upper waters of the Gabun; and these represent themselves as but a handful compared with those that are to follow. The Bakēles are now beginning to feel just as much uneasiness at the approach of the Pangwes as the Shekanis did when they themselves first invaded their country. The probability is, that neither the Bakēles nor the Shekanis, nor both together, will be able to withstand the warlike Pangwes. They are represented as cannibals, and the idea of being devoured as well as killed is rather too frightful an apprehension to be entertained by these more timid tribes. The Pangwes say, and no doubt truly too, that they have been grossly defrauded by the Shekanis and Bakēles, through whose hands all their trade has heretofore passed, and they do not mean to have them as the medium of communication between themselves and the sea-coast tribes any longer. They are

now taking their first lessons in the art of managing canoes, and no doubt, as soon as they have mastered this new accomplishment, they will take their own produce to the sea-coast in despite of both the intermediate tribes.

The Pangwes in some respects are a very remarkable people; among savages, I do not know that I have ever met men of nobler or more imposing bearing. Their form is indicative of strength and energy rather than grace or beauty. Their stature is of medium size, but compact and well-proportioned, and their gait is alike manly and independent. The complexion of both males and females is two shades lighter than that of the maritime people, and their features, though decidedly African, are comparatively regular. But their hair, and the mode in which it is worn, is, perhaps, the most striking characteristic about their appearance. It is softer than the usual negro hair, and is usually plaited into four braids, two of which are worn in front, and two pass over the shoulders, and not infrequently reach more than half-way down the back. At the same time their bodies are smeared over with a red ointment, which heightens the singularity of their appearance to a very remarkable degree. They wear no clothing except a narrow strip of bark cloth between their legs. Their legs and arms are decorated with rings of brass or ivory. A broad-bladed knife or dirk, in a sheath of snake or guana skin, is attached to a leather thong tied around their middle. A hatchet of peculiar shape is carried on the shoulder, and the men are seldom seen walking out without a bundle of long spears in one hand. White pound beads are very much admired. Broad belts of them are worn around the arms and legs, and they are worked into the hair so as to form a complete bead-wig.

They are remarkably expert in throwing the spear. In their wars they use cross-bow and poisoned arrows, and have shields made out of the skin of the elephant. They show a

good deal of mechanical ingenuity in casting copper rings, manufacturing knives, and other implements of war. It is said they smelt their own iron; which is true, unless it is found in a native state, which seems to be the more common opinion at the present day. That which is used by the Pangwes is regarded as much superior to the trade-iron brought to the coast; so much so that they will not use the latter at all. It is not only used for the manufacture of instruments, but is the circulating medium through the Pangwe country. Strips of iron, in size and shape like the blade of a horse-phlegm, and tied up in bundles of eight or ten pieces, are the real currency of the country, by which the price of every other article is regulated. They are the only people in Western African I have ever known who had a circulating medium. They cultivate the soil to some extent. Yams, cocoa, Indian corn, plantains, beans, and a few other articles, are raised in sufficient quantities for their own consumption. They are much addicted to hunting, and excel all others in killing the elephant, which they prize both for its tusks and its flesh. The habit of contending with this monster of the woods, involving so much peril of life as it does, has done much, without doubt, to develop their energy, and to make them just the men of the dauntless intrepidity which they seem to be. Their habitations are not unlike those of the Bakéles, which have been described in a previous chapter.

The Pangwes are probably the same people as the Giaghi or Jagas, who so frequently overran the kingdom of Kongo in the earlier periods of its history. The description given of the personal appearance of the Jagas, their implements of warfare and modes of fighting, would apply equally well to these modern Pangwes. Too little is known of their language as yet, or their character and habits, to determine whether they are more nearly related to the tribes on the western or eastern coast. The missionaries of the American

Board visit their villages, and are always treated with kindness; and no doubt, when their language is mastered, and the truths of the Gospel are made known to them in it, they will show as much susceptibility to its impressions as any other people.

## CHAPTER VI.

## KINGDOM OF LOANGO.

The Limits of the Country.—Slave-trade.—Prevalence of Roman Catholicism in former Years.—Peculiar Customs.—Albinos.

THIS name is applied to all the country between Mayumba and the Kongo River. It is improperly denominated a kingdom, however, in as much as there are several independent communities in these bounds. Along the eastern borders of Loango, and between it and the Sierra del Crystal Mountains, are a good many inland tribes, the principal of whom are the Dongos, Azinkos, and Ntekas. The two principal places of trade on this part of the coast, at the present day, are Loango proper and Kabinda. The latter is situated not far from the north bank of the Kongo, and the former about midway between that and Mayumba, but not immediately on the sea-coast. Both of these settlements have beautiful bays, in which ships of almost any size may lie in safety. For many years past the slave-trade has been the chief business of the people at both of these places, and as a consequence there has been a greater or less number of Portuguese living among them. In this way a large number of them have learned to speak the Portuguese, and they have adopted many of the customs and habits of these foreign residents.

Of late years the slave-trade has been declining, while that of ivory, beeswax, and other articles of natural produce have been increasing, and as a consequence the trade is passing from Portuguese to English and American hands.

The population of Kabinda is variously estimated from eight or ten to sixteen or eighteen thousand. That of Lo-

ango is greater, perhaps, but is distributed into a very great number of contiguous villages, while that of Kabinda is concentrated into one large, compact town. The people of Loango evince a great deal of taste and skill in the manufacture of baskets, mats of all sizes and with variegated colors, and grass cloth of a fine texture. They show much skill also in carving wooden spoons, bowls, and images, of which they have a greater number than any other people in the country.

The Kabinda people, from their proximity to one of the largest rivers in Africa, have had their attention turned more particularly to boat and canoe building. Their boats are built after the European style, and so neatly that they have sometimes been mistaken for English boats.

The Loango people have as much polish of manners as the Mpongwes, but, having been for a long period more exclusively under Portuguese influence, their moral training has been worse, and they are by no means so reliable.

The king resides at a large town, called Boaro, six or eight miles from the sea-coast. His principal minister, called Mafuka, lives nearer to the water, and all business with foreign vessels is transacted through him. The people here have dealt with the Portuguese who have been living among them almost as they pleased. They exacted very large fees, in the first instance, for license to trade; in the next place, they became largely indebted to these traders without being under any compulsory necessity to liquidate their debts, and then again, frequent depredations are made upon their property without the liability of punishment. This has made them arrogant and dishonest, and they may have to be chastised severely before they learn that they may not trespass upon the rights of other white men with impunity, as they have done upon the Portuguese residents. At one time the Portuguese took formal possession of Loango, and erected a fort there for the protection of their commerce. It was subse-

quently destroyed by the French, and the trade of the place has been free to all nations ever since.

The natural products of the country are very much the same as those of the Pongo district. Cassava, yams, sweet potatoes, Indian corn, beans, pumpkins, and ground nuts, are the principal articles of food, and are to be had in abundance.\*

During the period when the Roman Catholic religion was so prevalent in the kingdom of Kongo, no less effort was made to establish it at Loango also. Merolla states that the King of Loango and his whole court, consisting of more than three hundred persons, were converted to the Christian faith, by Bernardus Ungard, about the middle of the seventeenth century. It is also mentioned that this same father, during a residence of a single year in Loango, baptized more than twelve thousand persons. The successor of this Christian king, being an infidel, put a stop to these labors, and banished every trace of Christianity from the country. The same author mentions that a black priest, of the name of "Father Leonard," at a later period, re-established Christianity in the country, and baptized, in the course of a few days, more than five thousand persons, for which he was promoted to the bishopric of Loango. All traces of religion soon after disappeared from the country.

About the year 1770, according to Malte Brun, a company of French missionaries embarked at Nantz, for the purpose of re-establishing the Christian religion in Loango. They remained in the country, however, only a few years, and while they acquired much knowledge of the customs, habits, and character of the people, they failed utterly to bring them back to the Christian faith.

Proyart, who derived his information from the missionaries,

\* The term *Pindar*, which is used in many parts of the United States for ground nuts, is a Loango word, and was introduced into this country by slaves brought from that part of Africa.

has brought together many curious facts in relation to the government of Loango, the peculiar customs of the people, and their religious notions, a brief outline of which may not be uninteresting to the general reader.

The people are represented as having been mild, peaceable, and generous, previous to their acquaintance with the Portuguese and other European nations. He instances several cases of shipwrecked seamen who fell into their hands, all of whom were treated with the utmost kindness. Among themselves a miser is regarded as the most odious of all characters; but this is not more characteristic of the Loango people than of the African race generally. The term "close-handedness," or "mean-handedness," is about the most opprobrious epithet that can be applied to a man, and there is nothing more universally resented. The same author gives the women of Loango much credit for chastity, but this he would scarcely have done if he had been more thoroughly acquainted with their character. Polygamy prevails here as extensively as it does in other parts of Africa, and its prevalence may be regarded as an infallible mark of the want of chastity. Adultery is punished according to circumstances. If the injured party is disposed to push matters to extremities, the adulterer may be deprived of liberty, and be held or sold as a slave. In most cases, however, it is treated with leniency, and nothing more than a moderate fine is exacted.

The person of the king is sacred, and he is, in consequence, subjected to some very singular rules, especially in connection with his eating and drinking. There is one of his houses in which alone he can eat, and another where alone he can drink. When the covered dishes which contain his food are carried into the eating-house, a crier proclaims it, and every body gets out of the way as quick as possible. The doors are then carefully closed and bolted, and any person that should see the king in the act of eating would be put to death. Proyard mentions the fact that a favorite dog

was immediately put to death for looking up into his master's face while eating; another is mentioned of a child that was accidentally left in the banqueting-room of the king by his father, and who awoke and accidentally saw the king eating. It was spared five or six days, at the earnest request of its father, but was then put to death and its blood sprinkled upon the king's fetich. Others might be present when the king drank, but they were bound to conceal their faces. In like manner no one is allowed to drink in the king's presence without turning their backs to him.

A similar custom prevails on the Pongo coast. A chief never drinks in the presence of others without having a screen of some kind interposed between them and himself. The design of this usage, no doubt, is to protect the chief against the machinations of witchcraft. It is a common belief that persons are more susceptible to these influences while eating, drinking, or sleeping, than under other circumstances.

Barbot mentions a king of Loango who had as many as six thousand wives. This may have been true in the common parlance of the country, but needs explanation. Men in this country, whether chiefs or not, inherit the wives of their fathers, elder brothers, and uncles, irrespective of their ages, and they are known as his wives, though the true relationship may be that of mere dependents. A man's unmarried female relatives, and his female slaves, though they have their proper husbands, are spoken of as their master's wives. Indeed all the females that are under his protection are spoken of as his wives, and for the purpose, no doubt, of magnifying his importance in society.

In every household where there are a large number of women, one of the elder ones is appointed head over the rest, and in Loango she is known by the honorable appellation of Makonda. Her position is one of great honor, and her influence is supreme not only over the women and chil-

dren, but equally over the master of the house. She can bring almost any member of the household into disrepute with the head of the family; or she can defend them, if she chooses, against any accusations that may be brought against them from other sources. It is said that the wives of the king are watched very closely; but it is probable that this vigilance is confined to a few only of his favorites. If one of these should be suspected of infidelity, a slave or some one else would be required to drink the red-wood ordeal as her proxy. If the substitute should sicken or die under the operation, the woman must be put to death also.

These are not the only cases in which the red-wood draught is taken by a substitute. It very frequently happens when an aged or respectable person is accused of witchcraft, or if he deems it necessary to purge his own reputation from suspicion, that a favorite slave or son will come forward and submit to the ordeal as his substitute. If no evil results follow, the man's moral character comes forth purified, and, of course, the slave or son who acted as his proxy is not only received into greater favor, but expects to be handsomely rewarded. If the accusation is not sustained, the accuser has forfeited his liberty, inasmuch as he attempted unjustly to take away the life of one of his fellow-men. This liability is a pretty effectual check against hasty accusations, and, indeed, it is the only thing that prevents the people from being embroiled in perpetual strifes growing out of their belief in witchcraft.

All dwarfs and albinos born in the country are regarded as the property of the king. They are kept about his person, and are looked upon as his guardian spirits. Dwarfs are not very common, but albinos may be found in almost every community in Southern Guinea. Every where they are regarded as somewhat sacred, and their persons are considered inviolable. On no condition whatever would a man strike one of them. Generally they are very mild; and I

have never heard of their taking advantage of their acknowledged inviolability. In features they are not unlike the rest of their race, but their complexion is very nearly a pure white, their hair of the ordinary texture, but of a cream color, and their eyes are gray and always in motion. They can see well in twilight, but very imperfectly in the daylight. Their skin is very tender, and blisters when exposed to the sun. They are believed, but whether correctly or not I am not prepared to say, to be incapable of propagation.

The Loango people are more addicted to idol-worship than any other people on the whole coast. They have a great many carved images which they set up in their fetich-houses and in their private dwellings, and which they worship; but whether these images represent their forefathers, as is the case among the Mpongwea, is not certainly known.

Since the abolition of the slave-trade we see no reason why Loango and Kabinda are not eligible points for the establishment of Christian missions. The country is open and comparatively healthy. The sea-coast population is considerable, and the Kongo River affords great facility of access to the interior region. The transition from the slave to lawful commerce is a favorable crisis for the introduction of the Gospel, before which would ultimately disappear not only all the evils implanted by the Portuguese, but the superstitious notions and practices of the people themselves.

## CHAPTER VII.

## KINGDOM OF KONGO.

Its Prominence.—Geographical Boundaries and Divisions.—Discovery.—The Establishment of Roman Catholicism.—Its History and Wars.—Extravagant Estimate of the Army.—The Character of its Civilization.—Spread of Roman Catholicism.—The Causes which led to its Decline.—Climate.—Slave-trade.—The main Defect in Papacy itself.—Failure of Miracles.—Tyranny of the Missionaries.

No part of Western Africa is so well known to history as the kingdom of Kongo. For this distinction, however, it is not so much indebted to any importance which it ever possessed itself, as to other causes of an incidental nature. It borders upon, and has given its name to, one of the finest rivers on the continent of Africa, and is, therefore, somewhat known merely from its geographical position. Another circumstance that has contributed to its notoriety, but not to its honor as a nation, is the fact that, from the earliest period of its discovery by the Portuguese up to the present moment, it has always borne the lead in the foreign slave-trade, and, in all probability, has furnished a larger number of victims for the markets of the New World than any other region of Africa whatever. Kongos, or their descendants, may still be identified in many parts of the United States, throughout the West India islands, and in large numbers in Brazil, where they have not yet laid aside their vernacular tongue.

But the circumstance which, above all others, has contributed to give it interest in the eyes of the civilized world, is the fact that it has been the stage upon which has been achieved one of the most successful experiments ever made

by the Church of Rome to reclaim a pagan people from idolatry. For more than two centuries the kingdom of Kongo, according to the showing of the missionaries themselves, was as completely under the influence of Rome as any sister kingdom in Europe; so that if the inhabitants of that country are not now, in point of civilization and Christianity, what Rome would have them to be, or all that a pagan people are capable of being made under her training, the fault lies at her own door. In relation to the missions which she planted about the same time in India, China, and other parts of the world, it has been alleged, with some degree of justice, that her designs were thwarted in consequence of political changes in Europe, which placed Protestant nations in the ascendant, and gave them a preponderant influence in those countries where her missions had been established. With no less justice it has been urged, that the failure of her efforts among the Indian tribes, both of North and South America, ought to be ascribed to the fact that these tribes have been overshadowed and borne down by the presence of more powerful races, without allowing sufficient time for the full development of her peculiar principles. But whether these things can be regarded as satisfactory explanations of the causes of failure in other parts of the world or not, nothing of the kind can be urged in relation to her missions in Kongo. Here she has always had the field to herself, and for more than two centuries enjoyed facilities and advantages for propagating her religion among this people, which she can scarcely ever expect to have again in any future efforts of the kind that she may make.

It is our intention in the present chapter to examine the character and results of this mission. But in order to carry out our plan, we must give a hasty sketch of the civil as well as the religious history of the country, before entering upon the proposed investigation.

The kingdom of Kongo, as also the great river of the

same name, was discovered by the Portuguese about the year 1485.\* It was not a new or isolated discovery, but an extension of those they had made some years previously higher up the coast. At the time, however, it was regarded as immensely valuable, and it awakened an interest in Portugal, in behalf of this people and country, that has not entirely subsided after the lapse of more than three centuries.

The kingdom of Kongo lies entirely on the south side of the river, which forms its northern boundary, while on the south it is bounded by the Portuguese province of Angola, on the west by the Atlantic, and on the east by the mountains of Matamba, which separate it from the country of the savage and warlike Giaghi. It is of an oblong figure, extending along the sea-coast about 250 miles, and interiorward about 350. At the time of its discovery, or very soon afterward, it was divided into six provinces, viz., Sogno, Bamba, Pemba, Batta, Pango, and Sundi, to the chiefs of which the Portuguese gave the names of dukes, counts, and marquises, which they ever after retained. Of these provinces, Sogno and Bamba were the largest and altogether the most important. Bamba was said to have been about as large as Sicily or Naples, and bordered on the province of Angola. Sogno was still larger, and not only formed the frontier of the whole kingdom, but commanded the entrance of the river, and, therefore, acquired importance proportioned to the amount of commerce carried on with the civilized world. San Salvador, the capital and metropolis of the whole kingdom, was situated in the province of Pemba, about 50 Italian miles southeast of the mouth of the Kongo, and about 140 northeast of Loando St. Paul, the capital of Angola. It was situated upon the summit of a high mountain, and not only enjoyed a magnificent prospect of the surround-

\* By the natives of the country the river is called the *Zaire*, a name that is adopted also by most modern geographers.

ing country, but was reputed healthful even for Europeans. It was not only the residence of the king, but was the headquarters of the missionaries, as also of a large number of Portuguese merchants, who resorted thither on account of the facilities it offered for trade. At the time of its greatest prosperity, which was probably the early part of the seventeenth century, it is said to have contained about 40,000 inhabitants. The palace was a large wooden building, surrounded in part by a stone wall, and was constructed, no doubt, under the direction of the Portuguese residents, and probably at the expense of the King of Portugal. For many years a bishop and his chapter, a college of Jesuits, and a monastery of Capuchins, were supported in San Salvador at the expense of the Portuguese government. Besides a cathedral of large dimensions, there were ten smaller churches, to which the ordinary names of St. John, St. James, St. Michael, St. Anthony, etc., were given, all of which contributed materially to beautify this otherwise barbaric city. It was accessible to the whites by the way of the river, but the more common route to the sea-coast was through the province of Bamba to Loando St. Paul. There were several fortified posts along this route, but none of them were places of strength or importance. The only other towns of any considerable importance were the capitals of Sogno and Bamba; neither of which, however, is supposed to have contained more than six or eight hundred houses. In both of these there were monasteries of Capuchins, and in Sony, the capital of Sogno, there were six churches, the largest of which could contain five or six hundred people. Sony was situated upon a small creek, that emptied into the Kongo, a few miles from its mouth, and was the great sea-port of the kingdom.

The history of Kongo, civil as well as religious, commences with its discovery by the Portuguese, as little or nothing is known about it previously.

Diego Cam, the original discoverer, having entered the river and learned by signs from natives whom he found upon its banks, that there was a great kingdom in the interior by the name of Kongo, was so much elated by the discovery that he took very little time to verify these equivocal proofs, but made all speed back to Portugal to report his success. The interest which this discovery awakened in the mind of the king and people of Portugal, was scarcely less than that felt by Diego Cam himself; and he was sent back almost immediately with three Dominican friars. On his second arrival he had an interview with the king, and was treated with the utmost kindness and courtesy. Two of the friars that accompanied him died soon after their arrival, probably of the effects of the climate, and the third was killed some years after by the Giaghi, while acting as chaplain to the Kongolan army.

On his third voyage to Kongo Diego Cam took with him twelve missionaries more of the Franciscan order, who are regarded as the founders of the Christian religion in the kingdom of Kongo. The Count of Sogno and the King of Kongo, his nephew, were among the first converts to Christianity. For a time the latter showed great zeal in promoting the new religion among his subjects; but as soon as he found that he was required to give up the multitude of wives and concubines with which he was surrounded, and be married to a single wife, he renounced it, and returned to the religion of his fathers. His son and successor, Don Alphonso the First, felt no such difficulty. He not only embraced Christianity himself, but did all he could to promote its interests throughout his realms. His brother Pasanquitama was a man of a very different spirit, and finding there was quite a popular dislike to the new religion, availed himself of it to raise a rebellion against his brother. The armies of the two brothers had scarcely engaged in battle when St. James was distinctly seen fighting on the side of the king; and vic-

tory, of course, soon turned in his favor. Pasanquitama was not only beaten, but was made a prisoner. He refused to ransom his life by embracing Christianity, and was accordingly executed. It fared differently with his general, who was pardoned on the condition of becoming a Christian, but had to do penance in the way of bringing water for all who were baptized in the capital. Soon after this signal victory in behalf of Christianity, a large reinforcement of missionaries was sent out by the *Society de Propaganda Fide*, most, of whom were from the Italian States; and in the course of fifteen or twenty years, the entire population of Kongo was gathered into the pale of the Roman Catholic Church.

About the middle of the sixteenth century, however, the labors of the missionaries met with a serious interruption in consequence of an invasion of the country by hordes of the warlike Giaghi. The Kongolan army, though large and well disciplined, was scattered like chaff before these savage invaders. San Salvador was burned to the ground, and the king and his people had to betake themselves to the "Isle of Horses," on the Zaire, for safety. In this extremity the King of Kongo appealed to Don Sebastian, King of Portugal, for help, which was promptly granted. Don Francis Gouvea was dispatched with six or eight hundred Portuguese troops, and after having been reinforced by two or three hundred more from Angola, he gave battle to the invaders in the heart of the kingdom. After several engagements, in which the Giaghi showed great bravery, he succeeded in driving them from the country, and restored the king to his throne. Don Alvaro the First, the king at the time, out of gratitude engaged to make the King of Portugal an annual present of slaves, and offered to acknowledge him as his sovereign. This latter proposition the King of Portugal generously declined, preferring to regard Don Alvaro as a brother king. Don Francis remained in the country with a part of his

troops three or four years for the purpose of restoring order, and to prevent another invasion of the Giaghi.

The missionaries, who, it is supposed, retired to Angola during these strifes, returned to their labors, and having been reinforced by new recruits from Europe, not only re-established the Catholic worship in all the provinces of Kongo, but extended their labors into neighboring districts over which the King of Kongo had no jurisdiction. They crossed the Zaire, and were nearly as successful in making converts in Loango and Kakongo as they had been in Kongo. In the mean time San Salvador was rebuilt, commerce was resumed on a more extended scale, and the country soon attained to a degree of prosperity and power quite beyond anything it had previously known. This period of peace and prosperity, however, was not of more than forty or fifty years' continuance.

In the year 1636 a civil war broke out between the King of Kongo and the Count of Sogno. The occasion of this war arose from an unjustifiable attempt on the part of the king to transfer the province of Sogno to the crown of Portugal. Having had need of the aid of the Portuguese of Angola to effect his coronation, he engaged to give them for their assistance two gold mines and the country of Sogno. For some time previously the Portuguese had entertained the belief that there were valuable and extensive gold mines in the country back of San Salvador. The natives of the country, either from motives of policy or from that inherent love of the marvelous which characterizes the race, had studiously encouraged this belief, without, however, furnishing any information by which the Portuguese could identify the particular region in which they were to be found. At the same time it was quite obvious that these mines could be of no special value to the Portuguese unless they could get possession of Sogno, which commands the entrance of the river, and prevent other foreigners from participating in the ad-

vantages of their discovery. To couple these two things, therefore, for the purpose of securing the assistance and co-operation of the Portuguese, showed great shrewdness on the part of the king; but so far as it concerned the welfare of the country generally, and the stability of his own throne, it showed great weakness as well as want of foresight. The proposition, as might have been foreseen, roused the indignation of the people as well as the count to the highest pitch, and they soon placed themselves in an attitude of defiance. The count denied the sovereignty of the King of Kongo, and not only charged the Portuguese with fraud in accepting what he had no right to give, but reproached them bitterly with ingratitude, inasmuch as only a few years before, when they were driven out of Loando St. Paul by the Dutch, he had given them shelter in his country, and extended to them favors that had never been requited.

The King of Kongo raised a large army, and having been joined by about eighty Portuguese, he determined to force the count into submission. In the first engagement the Sognoese army was beaten, and the count himself was slain. His son and successor, who was a man of equal energy and bravery, resumed the war, and, in the first engagement, the royal army was not only defeated, but the king himself and a large number of his Portuguese allies were made prisoners. The latter had the alternative of death or slavery submitted to them, and preferring the former, they were immediately executed. The king, Don Alvaro the Second, obtained his own liberation by acknowledging the independence of the count, and ceding to him an additional district of country. It was not long, however, before this treaty was repudiated, and hostilities were recommenced by the king, but with no better success. Finding it impossible to reduce the count to subjection, the king dispatched an embassy with valuable presents to Prince Maurice, who, at that time, was acting as agent for the Dutch in Brazil, to ask his aid. The

count sent another at the same time, and probably by the same vessel, and with presents equally valuable, to beg his non-interference. The prince determined not to interfere, and wrote to the Governor of Angola to take no part in the quarrel, as he would prefer to regard both parties in the light of friends. For a time hostilities were suspended, but the country of Sogno was never afterward united to the crown of Kongo. The part which the Portuguese had taken at the commencement of these troubles made them ever afterward intolerably odious to the Sognoese. The count indulged his resentment by persecuting the missionaries in his country. Several of them were ignominiously dragged out of his dominions, and thrust among the savages on the opposite side of the river, where it was thought they would be put to death. It was not long, however, according to the statements of the missionaries, before this deed of violence recoiled with redoubled force upon the count's own head. The love which the people bore to their religious teachers, and the apprehension of some dreadful calamity from heaven, roused them to a state of frenzy, and the count in turn was seized and drowned in the Zaire, near the spot where he had perpetrated this deed of cruelty against the missionaries. A more devout successor ascended his throne, and the missionaries were recalled to exercise more absolute authority than they had ever done before.

About the same time Don Alvaro the Second sent to Pope Urban the Eighth for a new recruit of missionaries. In compliance with this request twelve Capuchins were sent; but having been detained on account of the war with Spain, they did not reach Kongo until after this king's death. A part of this company remained with the Count of Sogno, and the others found their way to San Salvador, where they were kindly received by Don Garcia the Second, the son and successor of Don Alvaro. The reign of Don Garcia was short, and he was succeeded by Don Antonio the First, who, by his

unparalleled wickedness and brutality, not only threw his whole kingdom into disorder and anarchy, but had nearly extirpated every trace of Christianity from the land. He not only behaved in the most despotic and brutal manner to his own subjects, but treated the Portuguese residents and the missionaries with so much indignity that they were compelled to fly from his realms. It was not long, however, before the Portuguese of Angola determined to resent these indignities. An army of one or two thousand natives and four hundred Portuguese soldiers was raised, and they determined to give this impudent king battle in the heart of his own country. On this occasion, it is confidently stated by the missionaries that Don Antonio raised the incredibly large army of 900,000 men. They say very little, however, for the bravery or discipline of this immense army, when they add that the main division of it was entirely routed by four hundred Portuguese musketeers. Don Antonio himself was killed, and his crown was taken to Loando St. Paul. Had the Portuguese been so disposed, they might have turned this victory to good account by subjecting the whole kingdom to the Portuguese crown. But this seems never to have been desired. The existence of gold mines was then known to have been a mere fabrication, and as they enjoyed a monopoly of the trade of the country, there was no object in making it a dependency of the crown of Portugal. There was also, it is probable, a religious motive which prevented the Portuguese from seizing upon the country. Kongo had received the Catholic religion at a very early period after its discovery, and its sovereigns, with one or two exceptions, had always shown as much deference for the authority of Rome as those of Portugal itself. All of her kings had been crowned according to the Catholic ceremonial, and the crown itself had been bestowed by the pope as a testimony of their loyalty.

After the signal defeat just mentioned, the country was

left to recover from its disorders as best it could. It was not long, however, before order was restored, and another king placed on the throne of Don Antonio; but who he was we are not informed. He signalized his reign by an unsuccessful effort to reunite the province of Sogno to the crown of Kongo. Father Carli, in 1667, saw the great Duke of Bamba, who was always the leader of the royal forces, just after he had disbanded an army of 150,000, with which he had in vain attempted the subjugation of the Count of Sogno. Twenty years later, and the great duke himself had renounced his allegiance to the king, and cut off all intercourse between the capital and Loando St. Paul. The close of the seventeenth century may therefore be regarded as the termination of the national existence of the kingdom of Congo. From the moment that the Count of Sogno and the Grand Duke of Bamba, through whose territories alone the inhabitants of San Salvador could have any intercourse with the civilized world, renounced their allegiance to the king, the capital lost all of its commercial importance, and the king himself must have sunk down to an equality with the merest petty chief in the country. As far back as 1668, San Salvador had become a wilderness; and a pretender to the crown of the ancient realm, as a last resort, had applied once more to the Portuguese for assistance to place him upon his throne and reduce his revolted provinces to subjection. At that time, however, Portugal had enough to do to attend to her own affairs, and we hear no more of the kingdom of Kongo.

The missionaries continued their labors in some parts of the country, especially in the province of Sogno, some time after the dissolution of the government. During the earlier part of the eighteenth century their authority in Sogno was nearly as great as it had ever been; so much so, that English vessels could not buy slaves in the port of Sony without first conciliating their good-will. At what time precisely, or from what causes they finally abandoned the country altogether,

we are not certainly informed, and can, therefore, only conjecture.

Before the close of the eighteenth century—indeed, for any thing we know to the contrary, before the middle of it—not only all their former civilization, but almost every trace of Christianity had disappeared from the land, and the whole country had fallen back into the deepest ignorance and heathenism, and into greater weakness and poverty than had ever been experienced even before its discovery.

According to Malte Brun, a company of missionaries left Nantes in 1768, and endeavored to re-establish the Catholic religion north of the Zaire, but on account of sickness, or some other untoward cause, they failed to accomplish any thing. The effort was renewed by another set of missionaries from the same place five years afterward, but with no better success. In 1777, according to Grandpere, four Italian priests embarked at Rochelle for the purpose of re-establishing the Catholic faith in Sogno. They took with them large presents for the chiefs, and adopted every precaution to render their mission successful; but they found that the inhabitants had sunk down to the lowest grade of paganism, and were so savage withal, that they could not travel in safety among them. Two of the four died soon after their arrival, as it was supposed by the survivors, from the effects of poison. The other two, finding their lives in great peril, had recourse to stratagem to extricate themselves from the country. Captain Tuckey, who was sent by the English government, in 1816, to explore the Kongo River, states that three years previously some missionaries had been murdered in Sogno, and that a Portuguese pinnace had been cut off by the natives at the same time. Who these missionaries were, or how many there were, we do not know, but they were no doubt agents of the *de Propaganda Fide*. During his sojourn in the country he found no traces of Catholicism, except a few crucifixes and relics strangely mixed up with

the charms and fetiches of the country which were no doubt distributed by Portuguese slave-traders who still frequented the river. One man introduced himself on board as a priest, and said he had a diploma from the college of Capuchins at Angola, but was without education, and so ignorant of the usages of the Church which he represented, that he unblushingly acknowledged that he had a wife and five concubines. At the present time, not even these fragments of Romanism can be found, except it be the crucifixes and pictures which the Portuguese and Spanish slave-traders still continue to distribute; and so far as civilization, order, and industry are concerned, we scarcely know another community on the whole coast of Africa that will not compare to advantage with the poor, miserable, and degraded inhabitants to be found along the banks of the Kongo at the present day.

It is not easy to say how much civilization there was in Kongo in the days of its greatest prosperity. The statements of the missionaries, upon which we are in a great measure dependent for all the information we can get, are so deeply tinged with the marvelous, and are so grossly exaggerated withal, that they can not be received without great abatement. They use language that would indicate great commercial prosperity and an amount of civilization of no ordinary grade for that age of the world. Father Carli states that when he arrived in Bamba, about the year 1667, the great duke had just disbanded an army of 150,000, with which he had in vain tried to effect the subjugation of the Count of Sogno. Professor Ritter, who had advantages for examining all that was written by the missionaries in relation to the kingdom of Kongo, states, upon their authority, that the great Duke of Bamba could at any time raise in his own province alone 400,000 troops. The statement is not only made, but indorsed by several of the most intelligent and respectable missionaries, that one of the kings of Kongo, who was no doubt Antonio the First, had raised an army of

900,000. But there is not one of these statements that does not strike us as utterly incredible. We seriously doubt whether the King of Kongo ever did raise, or ever could have raised, an army of more than 20,000. To raise, equip, provision, and direct an army of 900,000, implies an amount of population and a degree of civilization of which there are no traces whatever at the present time, and which is at variance with innumerable other statements incidentally scattered over the pages of the missionary journals. The system of government organization, too, which seems to have been a sort of an elective monarchy, to which the provincial chiefs were tributaries, bears strong marks of having been formed by the missionaries or Portuguese residents, and had but little stability of its own. And as the result proved, it stuck together, and was rendered effective only so long as foreigners exercised a controlling influence in the administration of its affairs. The missionaries and the Portuguese residents no doubt did something to change the general aspect of the country. Wherever they went they planted gardens, cultivated fruit trees, and built substantial houses both for private dwellings and places of public worship. The king and some of the chiefs followed their example; but the great mass of the people continued to live in the same kind of bamboo huts as their fathers had done; they cultivated only the indigenous vegetables of the country, and were always clad with the scantiest apparel, while there were vast hordes of the poorer people who had no clothing whatever. They had no roads except the merest foot-paths. The highway from the capital to Loando St. Paul was of this description, and so infested with wild beasts that it could not be traveled in safety without an escort of fifty or sixty armed men. They had no beasts of burden, no carriages of any kind; and their commerce, exclusive of the slave-trade, which was somewhat considerable, was confined to a small quantity of ivory, copper ore, and civet cats—less in amount, perhaps,

than it is at the present day, which we suppose scarcely exceeds \$100,000.

It will, no doubt, occasion surprise that the natives of Kongo showed so little disposition to conform to the specimens of civilization that were set before them. But this is only another of the innumerable proofs that might be adduced to show that something more is necessary to secure the civilization of a heathen country than merely to set before them specimens of civilized life. The idea that such would be the case is natural enough, but is wholly unphilosophical. It implies the belief that the only hindrance to the improvement of a heathen people is ignorance; whereas the very essence of heathenism consists in indolence and an aversion to the exercise of those energies which alone can secure the prosperity of any people. We look in vain for any upward tendencies in a pagan community until their moral and intellectual natures are awakened; and as Roman Catholicism has no power to do this, we are not surprised to find that there are so few traces of civilization among the people of Kongo.

But whatever may have been the character of the civilization of Kongo, there is no doubt but Roman Catholicism was, for a period of at least two centuries, the ostensible, acknowledged religion of the realm. Paganism was interdicted by law; and the severest penalties were inflicted upon those who were known to participate in the observances of any of its rites. There were periods, too, in the history of the country, when it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to find one adult in the whole kingdom who had not, in infancy or afterward, been introduced by baptism into the Church. It is impossible to say how many missionaries at different times were sent to Kongo. Father Merolla incidentally mentions at least one hundred, among whom were Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, Capuchins, Augustins, Bernardians, Carmelites, and those of almost every other order

in the Church. The number of churches and other places of public worship was very considerable. In San Salvador there were eleven; in Sony, the capital of Sogno, there were six; and in the whole province eighteen. In the entire kingdom, it is probable, there were not less than one hundred consecrated churches, and perhaps two or three times as many other places where the priests were in the habit of performing baptism and celebrating the mass. The king and his chiefs always vied with each other in their attendance upon mass, and there was scarcely a single outward ceremony of the Church which they did not scrupulously perform. Wherever the priests went, it was the duty of the chief to send a messenger around the village to notify the people of his arrival, and direct them to come and have their spiritual wants attended to. If he failed to perform this duty, he was displaced from office, or compelled to do penance. Nor were the common people behind their chiefs in outward zeal for their adopted religion. They might be seen in long trains bearing logs of wood to the convents, or scourging themselves with unrelenting severity in the churches, as acts of penance. One of the missionaries states that the women, in one of the villages he entered, rushed upon him "like mad women" to have their children baptized. Another expressed great surprise, when an adult woman presented herself for baptism, that there was one in the country who had neglected the ordinance so long; and at the same time he complained that he could find no children to baptize, because he had been preceded by a fellow-missionary who had done the work up so effectually that nothing was left for him to do. The authority of the priests, too, in matters political as well as ecclesiastical, was established on the firmest basis. There were no acts of penance or humiliation inflicted upon the sovereigns of Europe, when Rome was at the zenith of her power, that these missionaries had not the satisfaction of seeing the humbler chiefs

of Kongo subjected to. And one can readily imagine with what awe it must have struck the simple-minded Africans, to see the Count of Sogno, the most powerful chief of the kingdom, prostrated at the church door, clothed in sack-cloth, with a crown of thorns on his head, a crucifix in his hand, and a rope about his neck, while his courtiers were looking on, clothed in their most brilliant robes.

Nor was Papacy established in Kongo in a hasty or superficial manner. It was a work at which successive companies of missionaries labored with untiring assiduity for two centuries. Among these were some of the most learned and able men that Rome ever sent forth to the pagan world. It was a cause, too, that always lay near the heart of the kings of Portugal, when that nation was at the climax of power and wealth. The royal sword was ever ready to be unsheathed for its defense, and her treasures were poured out for its support without stint.

But what has become of this church with all its resources and power? Where are the results of this spiritual conquest that cost so much, and of which Rome had boasted in such unmeasured terms of exultation? To answer these questions impartially, the friends of Rome must acknowledge that they constructed a spiritual edifice in the heart of this pagan empire that could not stand in its own strength; the moment the hand which reared and for a time upheld it was taken away, it fell to pieces. Nay more, to acknowledge the whole truth, not only has this great spiritual edifice crumbled to the dust, but it has left the unfortunate inhabitants of that country in as deep ignorance and superstition, and perhaps in greater poverty and degradation, than they would have been if Roman Catholicism had never been proclaimed among them. One thing, at least, may be affirmed without the fear of contradiction, that, in point of industry, intelligence, and outward comfort, the people of Kongo, at the present day, can not compare with thou-

sands and millions of other natives along the coast of Africa, whose forefathers never heard even the name of the Christian religion.

But how is all this to be accounted for? Has Romanism too little spirituality to bear transplanting to a pagan soil? Or is the African race incapable of being Christianized or raised to any considerable degree of civilization? These are questions in which others besides Roman Catholics are interested. The friends of Protestant missions may well despair of the evangelization of the world, if their labors are to be as protracted and to be attended with as few permanent good results.

In accounting for this failure there is no necessity to suppose that it arose either from the want of vitality in Romanism itself, or from the want of religious susceptibilities on the part of the negro race. To maintain the latter assumption would not only be at variance with abundant proofs to the contrary, but would be a serious impeachment of the power and sovereignty of Divine grace itself. It would be equally preposterous to say that Romanism has no vitality whatever. However much it may be encumbered with error and superstition, it has, nevertheless, vitality enough to maintain its own existence, as its own past history abundantly proves. Whether it has power to propagate itself among the pagan nations of the earth in the present age of the world, is a question that admits of serious doubt, and will become a subject of discussion in a subsequent part of this chapter.

In accounting for the downfall of Romanism in Kongo, something, no doubt, is to be ascribed to the decline of Portuguese power. It was under her fostering hand that the church of Kongo first rose to power and importance. She had been called upon in every emergency, and she was never called upon in vain. The time came, however, when Portugal had no more treasures to bestow upon the church, and

as little power to control the political affairs of the state. Her sympathies were still with the church and the people; but something more substantial than mere sympathies was necessary to keep up an interest in the church, or to enforce order in political matters. Besides which, it may be justly said, that if the church and government could not sustain themselves after two centuries of faithful and indulgent guardianship, there was no probability that they ever would; and it would be but a foolish waste of time and money to try to prop them up by artificial supports.

The insalubrity of the climate has sometimes been alleged as one of the chief causes which led to the suspension and overthrow of this mission. But we hear no complaints on this score by the missionaries themselves; and the fact that the mission was maintained in vigorous operation for two centuries, proves conclusively that this was never regarded as an insurmountable obstacle to the establishment of Christianity in the country. The missionaries undoubtedly suffered from the effects of the climate, and not a few of them made their graves in that land, because they chose to die in the scene of their labors. The sufferings which they endured, however, did not arise so much from the virulence of the acclimating fever, as the injudicious and extravagant mode in which it was treated. Their theory of acclimation was, that there could be no permanent health until all the blood which they brought with them from Europe was taken away and replaced by other blood, formed from the indigenous products of the country. The lancet was almost the only prescription, and the freedom with which it was used would make a modern practitioner stand aghast. Father Angello died after fifteen bleedings. His associate, who was not a physician, fearing that he had overdone the matter, reported the case to a doctor in Angola, who replied, that if he had been bled thirty times, he would probably have recovered. Father Carli, during his first attack of fever,

was bled twice a day for twenty days in succession. He was taken to Angola in a state of great exhaustion, and was bled twenty-four times more by way of *revulsion*. During three years' residence in the country, he was bled ninety-three times, besides copious effusions of blood from his nose, mouth, and ears.

But whatever blame may be attached to the unhealthiness of climate, there is one fact of an opposite character, which can not be thrown aside by those who bring the argument forward. It is that the number of foreigners who have continued to reside on the borders of Kongo, notwithstanding the withdrawal of the missionaries, even up to the present day, is much greater than the number of missionaries that were employed there at any one time. And it may be said in relation to this, as has just been said in relation to the patronage of the government of Portugal, if the church of Kongo could not live after having been nursed for two hundred years, there was no probability that it ever would.

One of the real causes, as we believe, which contributed to the extinction of the Roman Catholic religion in Kongo, was the countenance which it always extended to the foreign slave-trade. In Africa, where men are seized for the first time and converted into property for the purpose of gratifying the avarice of their fellow-men, it assumes a character of aggravation which it does in no other part of the world; and no enlightened man of the present day, who has had an opportunity to witness its degrading and disorganizing influence, will hazard his reputation for common sense or humanity so far as to attempt its justification on any principles whatever. In the earlier stages of this traffic its victims were procured in wholesale numbers by war and violence; villages were surprised, and the entire population seized and sold into slavery by their more powerful neighbors. But this system, in the very nature of the case, could not last

long; and it soon gave place to another, which, though not attended with the same outward violence and bloodshed, has, nevertheless, proved more injurious to the country, in the course of time, than the one it supplanted. Few are now taken to the markets kept open along the coast, except those charged with some crime; and the most prolific source of accusation is the charge of witchcraft, a thing so subtle and indefinite that it may always be substantiated on the most precarious evidence, and so pliable, at the same time, that it may be made to cover the most barefaced acts of injustice and cruelty. The writer has more than once known a company of men, on the mere suspicion of witchcraft, to seize upon one of their own number, sell him to a slave-dealer, and divide the proceeds among themselves, when it was not only obvious to others, but acknowledged by themselves, that there was a strong probability that they would all, within a short period, be disposed of in the same way. And yet such is the insensibility engendered by this cruel traffic, that men can acknowledge and think of such a liability without emotion. He has known two friends (professedly so, at least) come to a slave-factory, on a mere pleasure excursion, and while one was secretly negotiating for the sale of his companion, the intended victim has had the adroitness to escape with the money, and leave the other to atone for his duplicity by a life of foreign servitude. These are not rare cases, but common occurrences in the vicinity of every slave-factory on the coast of Africa; and it must be seen, at once, that where such deeds of injustice are perpetrated with impunity, there can be no order, no morality, and no sound religion whatever. And yet these, or similar deeds of villainy, must have passed under the notice of the missionaries of Kongo almost every day of their lives; and as the whole nation was included in the pale of the Catholic Church, these deeds were perpetrated by those over whom they claimed to exercise spiritual jurisdiction; and we have often wondered

what kind of morality they must have inculcated, or what system of church discipline they must have enforced, to allow such enormities.

But the missionaries are chargeable with more than the mere toleration of these things. They participated in this traffic themselves; and if not from the same motives of avarice which influenced the mass of the people around them, they at least gave the full force of their example to countenance all the enormities which were inseparably connected with it. By an arrangement with the civil authorities all persons convicted of celebrating the rites of the ancient religion were delivered up to the missionaries, and by them sold to the first slave vessel which entered the river, and the proceeds were distributed to the poor. The number of individuals thus convicted was very considerable, so that vessels engaged in transporting slaves to Brazil could always depend upon the missionaries to give them material aid in making up their complement of slaves. The missionaries, too, seemed to have no scruples in occasionally presenting a few of their domestic slaves to such captains or supercargoes as had done them favors. Father Marolla mentions that he had once given a slave to a Portuguese captain in consideration of a flask of wine that he had given him to celebrate the sacrament. Indeed the missionaries seem to have felt that there was no serious harm in consigning any number of the inhabitants of the country to foreign servitude, provided only that they were baptized, and were not permitted to fall into the hands of heretics. Allowances are to be made, of course, for the age in which these missionaries lived. The whole Christian world, Protestant as well as Papal, stands implicated in the charge of having countenanced this trade which is now so universally denounced. Still, however, it may be said in extenuation of the conduct of the great mass of the Christian world, that they never saw the worst side of the picture. Of its baneful and desolating influence upon society in Af-

rica they have known little or nothing, except as a matter of conjecture, or what they have learned from the reports of others. But the missionaries were eye-witnesses of the worst results of this traffic, and we are more than surprised that they did not interpose all their influence to save the inhabitants of Kongo from its destructive tendencies. They ought, from the circumstances of the case, to have been in advance of the rest of the Christian world in denouncing it, whereas they were greatly behind their own Church when public sentiment began to set in an opposite direction. Toward the close of the seventeenth century, Cardinal Cibo, on the part of the sacred college, wrote to the missionaries complaining that the "pernicious and abominable abuse of selling slaves was still continued," and exhorted them to use all their influence to put it down. The missionaries assembled to consider this letter, but concluded that the advice was impracticable, inasmuch as the people of Kongo had little or no trade, except in slaves and ivory. They resolved, however, to do all they could to prevent them from selling slaves to the heretics, by whom were meant the Dutch and English, but more particularly the latter. This one-sided morality did more harm than good. The people had too little discernment to see any essential difference in the case; and as the English always gave better prices, and furnished them with guns and ammunition, which the Portuguese from motives of policy would not, they always preferred the English trade. The attempt on the part of the missionaries to enforce this resolution brought them on several occasions in conflict with the authority of the Count of Sogno, and more than once they had nearly secured their own expulsion from the country. They ultimately succeeded, however, in securing to the Portuguese traders a sort of monopoly of the trade, and much the greatest proportion of slaves shipped from Kongo were taken to Brazil, so that if any praise is due for keeping them out of the hands of heretics, the missionaries

are entitled to the whole; but in the same proportion are they responsible for the ruin of that country to whose welfare they had consecrated their lives.

There were other causes, however, which contributed still more efficiently to the overthrow of Christianity in Kongo than the foreign slave-trade. Had this been left to itself, and allowed sufficient time to work out its own natural results, it would, with the utmost certainty, have obliterated every trace of civilization and Christianity. But there were other causes that intervened and did the work more summarily. We allude to the character of the religion the missionaries introduced into Kongo, the manner in which that religion was propagated, and the unjustifiable measures that were adopted to uphold it after it became the established religion of the country.

One would naturally suppose that, going among a people so deeply debased, and so utterly ignorant, of course, of every thing pertaining to Christianity, as the inhabitants of Kongo must have been when they were first discovered by the Portuguese, the missionaries would have taken special pains to instruct them in the principles of the Catholic religion before introducing them into the Church. It is but natural to suppose that they would have translated the Word of God into their language, established schools for the instruction of the youth, and employed all the ordinary means for diffusing Christian knowledge among the people, in connection with the preaching of the Gospel. But the world knows that such a course is no part of the policy of Rome. In all parts of the world where they have attempted to establish their religion, whether in earlier or later times, the baptismal seal has been looked upon as the only thing necessary to convert any heathen into a *bona fide* member of the Romish Church. They pretended, it is true, to catechise their candidates for baptism, but the ordinance, according to their own statements, was administered with so much rapidity,

and in such wholesale style, as utterly to preclude the idea of any thing like thorough catechetical instruction. None but those who have had some experience in training the heathen mind, can understand how slow it is to receive religious instruction. The divinely appointed mode of "giving line upon line, and precept upon precept," and this persevered in for a long period, is indispensably necessary to impart to their minds the first and the simplest principles of revealed religion. But the Kongo missionaries made no allowances whatever for the sluggishness of the heathen mind. They either misapprehended its true character, or regarded religious knowledge as a matter of only secondary importance. Their chief ambition seems to have been to drag as many into the Church as possible; and if their merit is to be measured by the number of their converts, they are the most meritorious and praiseworthy men that ever lived. Father Carli states that during his residence in the capital of Bamba, he seldom baptized less than eight or ten children a day, and not unfrequently fifteen or twenty. During a residence of two years he baptized 2700. One missionary in Chiova-chianza is reported to have baptized 5000 children in a few days. Another missionary baptized 12,000 persons in Sogno in less than a year. Father Merolla states that he had baptized as many as 272 in one day, and in less than five years he had baptized more than 13,000. He mentions the case of a brother missionary who had baptized 50,000; and of another who, during a residence of twenty years, had baptized more than 100,000.

The missionaries, however, did not confine themselves to the single ordinance of baptism. They introduced, as far as they could, all the rites and ceremonies of the Romish Church. The mass was celebrated with all due pomp; the confessional was erected in almost every village; penances of all grades and kinds were imposed; children and adults alike were required to perform the rosary, and the people *en masse* soon

learned to make the sign of the cross, and most readily did they fall into the habit of wearing crucifixes, medals, and relics. There were certain heathenish customs, however, which the missionary fathers found much difficulty in inducing the people to abandon; and they were never entirely successful until they substituted others of a similar character, which the natives regarded as a sort of equivalent for those they were required to give up. One of the missionary fathers has very ingenuously placed the customs which were abolished, and those which were substituted in their place, side by side in his journal, little imagining how forcibly others would be struck by the family likeness of the two. The limits of this chapter will not allow us to extract extensively from his journal, but a brief reference to a few of these customs will be quite sufficient to justify the remark just made. It was a custom of the country, for example, to bind a cord of some kind around the body of every new-born infant, to which were fastened the bones and teeth of certain kinds of wild animals, which was regarded as a sort of a charm to preserve the health and life of the child. This practice was regarded by the missionaries as an offense of high grade; and the mother who had the temerity to present her child for baptism with one of these heathenish cords about it, was scourged in public and in the severest manner. In the place of this the missionaries enjoined, "that all mothers should make the cords with which they bound their infants of palm leaves that had been consecrated on Palm Sunday; and, moreover, guard them well with other such relics as we are accustomed to use at the time of baptism."

Another custom that was regarded as not less objectionable by the missionaries, was the practice of handing over every new-born infant to a native priest or sorcerer to tell its fortune, which they pretended to be able to do by examining its form, its limbs, and countenance. In the place of this, they enjoined "that all mothers, after the birth of their

first-born, should carry it to the church and perform the ceremony of entering into the holy place; and if it be sick, we order its mother to recommend it to the Lord, together with some sort of a vow.”\*

Another custom in Kongo which excited the displeasure of the missionaries, was the habit of interdicting to every person at their birth some one article of food, which they were not, through life, upon any consideration, to put into their mouths. This practice was regarded as specially heathenish, and was unconditionally interdicted. In the place of it, however, they commanded “that the parents should enjoin their children to observe some particular devotion, such as to repeat many times a day the rosary or the *crown*, in honor of the blessed virgin; to fast on Saturdays; to eat no flesh on Wednesdays, and such other things as are used among Christians.”

Another custom of the country, at the root of, which the ax was laid, was that of guarding their fruit trees and patches of grain with fetiches, which were supposed to possess themselves the power of punishing all trespassers. The practice was interdicted, but the people at the same time were recommended “to use consecrated palm-branches, and here and there in their patches of corn to set up the sign of the cross.” These details might be extended to almost any length if it were necessary. A Roman Catholic of discernment may possibly see an essential difference between these heathenish customs that were abolished and those that were substituted in their place, but we seriously doubt whether the simple-minded people of Kongo were ever conscious of any material change in their code of superstitious rites, or derived any essential advantage by the exchange. At the

\* The vow in all such cases was an engagement on the part of the mother that the child, for a specified period, should not eat a certain kind of food, wear clothes of a certain color, or something of a similar character.

same time, wiser heads may well be excused for doubting whether the one is more conformed to the spirit of enlightened Christianity than the other; or whether it is worth the trouble and expense of sending the Gospel to the pagan nations of the earth, if it produces no better results, or lays no surer foundation for salvation. It was the great error of the missionaries, perhaps we should say the grand defect of Romanism, that they presented the benighted inhabitants of Kongo with a system of superstitious observances so nearly allied, both in spirit and form, to the one which they aimed to extirpate. It was utterly impossible that one of two systems so nearly related could ever have supplanted the other; and all, therefore, for which the inhabitants of Kongo were ever indebted to the missionaries, was for a burdensome accession to those superstitious ceremonies that had already crushed them almost into the dust. The new religion had no more to do with their moral and intellectual natures than the old one. It imparted to them no clear views of the sublime truths of the Gospel, and left them in as great ignorance of the true Gospel plan of salvation as it found them. It limited their attention almost entirely to a few driveling expedients to preserve themselves from the evils and accidents of life, without attempting to impart any glimpses of that glorious immortality brought to light in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Instead of relaxing the cords of superstition and conducting them into a wider space and greater freedom, it only drew them the more closely, and chained them down to a heavier burden of idolatrous rites than they or their fathers had ever known. Knowing this to be the case, we are not surprised that this corrupted religion found no permanent lodgment in their hearts, and produced so few beneficial changes in the state of society.

The fact that the people occasionally showed great zeal for the outward observances of their adopted religion, is no proof whatever that they ever possessed any sincere attach-

ment for it, or that they had in the least relaxed their hold upon the old. It was their interest, or they thought it their interest, to make a display of zeal. It was important for them to enjoy the favor of the missionaries, and they had no fears that their own religion would be contaminated by contact with Romanism, and no danger of its being lost from occupying a subordinate or less conspicuous position. If they showed all due reverence for the rites and ceremonies of the Romish Church in the presence of the missionaries, they were not less punctilious in performing the rites of their own in their absence. As but few of the missionaries ever made themselves acquainted with the language of the country, the natives had special advantages for playing off this double game. If the missionaries had studied the character of the people more thoroughly, and adapted their instruction to their wants, instead of endeavoring to make every thing bend to the lifeless and frigid demands of Romanism, the probability is that they would have done them real good, and would not themselves have been so easily duped by their dissimulation. The natives were perfectly aware of their ignorance in this respect, and they did not hesitate to turn it to good account, in acting out one of the most remarkable farces that has ever been recorded. It cost them no effort to appear easy and natural in a character foreign to their own—to maintain their own private views and principles inviolate in strict consistency with the outward exhibition of views and principles of the very opposite character—in other words, to appear to be zealous Roman Catholics, when in reality they were but the most besotted pagans on the face of the earth. The missionaries themselves seem occasionally to have had some misgivings about the sincerity of their converts; they repeatedly expressed apprehensions that they might, at some time, revert to the pagan worship of their forefathers.

The attempt which they made to brace up their authority

and enforce the demands of Romanism, by practicing upon the credulity of the people, did not tend materially to avert this dreaded result. They naturally supposed they were in possession of a field wonderfully promising for the exercise of miraculous powers. What they could not effect by the bare exercise of authority, or by the ordinary powers of persuasion, they hoped to accomplish by the exercise of their pretended miraculous gifts; and great were the marvels they performed in this hidden corner of the world. Devils fled at their approach; trees withered away under their rebuke; the rains descended or held back as they wished; sorcerers fell down dead at their feet in consequence of taking a false oath upon the mass-book; if a comet appeared in the heavens, it was there in obedience to their call, and all were threatened with immediate destruction who would not obey the priests; if the small-pox made its appearance among the people, it was sent to chastise the obstinacy of their chiefs, and great would be the clamor if they did not at once perform the appointed penance. If the eloquence of a holy father was insufficient to draw tears from the eyes of his audience, or wring from them expressions of sorrow for their sins, a curtain is suddenly drawn aside, and an image of the Virgin in *relievo*, with a dagger thrust through her breast, is revealed to their wondering gaze.

These things, doubtless, had a momentary effect upon the minds of the people, but they exerted no lasting influence. The missionaries forgot that the sorcerers, whom they persecuted with so much virulence, not only pretended to work the same kind of miracles, but others so much more wonderful, that their own would appear exceedingly tame by the side of them, and at the same time supported by proofs quite as good as any that the missionaries could adduce. In fact, the imagination is such a predominant element in the mental constitution of the negro, that he cares very little about proofs in such matters; he will more readily ac-

credit a pretended miracle by one of his own countrymen, provided only that it is sufficiently gorgeous to suit his taste, than he would one by the missionaries, which must always have some decent reference to credibility and truth.

The negro feels that in energy of character, in scope of understanding, in the exercise of mechanical skill, and in the practice of all the useful arts of life, he is hopelessly distanced by the white man. Any suggestions of rivalry here never fail to provoke his unbounded mirth. But whenever you enter the precincts of the unknown and the mysterious, the realms where the imagination alone can travel, there is no place where he feels more at home, and the endless variety of fantastic images which he brings forth from these mysterious regions, shows that here he has no rival. The missionaries, therefore, when they addressed themselves to the task of working miracles, little knew how egregiously they were to be outstripped; and perhaps they could not possibly have adopted any course that would more certainly bring themselves and their religion into contempt.

But notwithstanding the multiplied ceremonies imposed upon the people of Kongo by the Church of Rome, for a time and to a certain extent they did not feel it to be burdensome. So long as its requirements were confined to the ordinance of baptism, to saying the rosary, wearing crucifixes, and doing trivial acts of penance, they submitted to it without any symptoms of serious discontent. But in the course of time, when the missionaries set themselves more earnestly to work to root out all traces of the old religion; when they commenced a more vigorous persecution of the priests of that religion; and above all, when they determined to abolish polygamy throughout the land, they assailed heathenism in its stronghold, and aroused hatred and opposition which astounded themselves. In this emergency, when priestly authority and miraculous gifts were of no more avail, they had

recourse for aid to the civil arm, that never-failing resource of Rome. And this they could command without any difficulty. The king and the chiefs, who were indebted to the missionaries for alms and all the power they possessed, could well afford to exert that power in enforcing the commands of the Church. The missionaries could any time pledge the assistance of the King of Portugal to maintain them in authority, and it was as little as they could do in turn to support the spiritual authority of the missionary fathers. And from the moment the missionaries had recourse to the civil arm for aid, they threw aside every other means of promoting the interests of religion. The severest laws were enacted against polygamy; the old pagan religion, in all its forms and details, was declared illegal, and the heaviest penalties denounced against all who were known to participate in celebrating its rites; sorcerers and wizards, by whom were meant the priests of the pagan religion, were declared outlaws; at first the penalty denounced against them was decapitation or the flames, but it was afterward commuted to foreign slavery. For a time the missionaries intrusted the execution of the laws to the king and his chiefs. But if they showed the least dilatoriness or reluctance to punish their subjects, they took the law into their own hands, and administered it with unsparing severity. The Count of Sogno was required on one occasion, as an act of penance, to compel three hundred of his subjects to be married after the Christian manner; and it is mentioned as a proof of the sincerity of his piety, as well as the excellence of the ordinance, that he became so zealous in the cause of the Church that he did not stop until he had compelled six hundred. Corporal punishment was the favorite instrument of discipline, and it was administered without restraint. The slightest deviation from the prescribed rules of the Church was punished by public flogging, and it was not uncommon for females, and even mothers, to be stripped and whipped in public. Sometimes

these castigations were inflicted by the missionaries themselves. Father Merolla relates with no little glee how he had once belabored a wizard with the *cord of his order*, calling upon St. Michael and all the rest of the saints to participate in the sport. He mentions the case of a Father Superior who had boxed the ears of one of the magnates of the land for having expressed some doubts about the efficacy of baptismal regeneration. This had nearly proved a serious matter, however, and it required all the sophistry that Merolla could command to convince the chief that it had been done in love, and was intended only to rescue him from the snares of the devil.

These acts of tyranny could not fail to awaken hatred and resentment in the minds of the people against their religious teachers, and especially so as it was done to enforce the observance of a religion for which they felt no attachment. These wrongs were endured, however, with wonderful forbearance so long as it was apparent that the authority of the missionaries could not be resisted with impunity. But as soon as it became manifest that Portugal could no longer interfere with the internal affairs of the kingdom, the true state of feeling, both among the chiefs and the common people, began to show itself; and it was not long before the tide of persecution began to set in the opposite direction. The Count of Sogno was among the first to resent the indignities that had been heaped upon him, by persecuting the missionaries in the most shameless manner. The common people revenged themselves in several instances by abandoning the missionaries with whom they were traveling in the gloomiest woods, with the expectation that they would be devoured by wild beasts. In several instances of severe sickness, the people refused to let them have any thing that would administer to their relief. In the province of Bamba, once one of the strongest holds of Christianity, six Capuchin missionaries were poisoned at one time; and an unsuccessful attempt of

the same kind was made upon the life of another missionary who was sent there to get the effects of the deceased brethren. Philip da Salesia, another of the missionary brotherhood, fell into the hands of banditti in the character of sorcerers, and by them was killed and devoured. Father Joseph Maria da Sestu was poisoned, and Merolla himself was brought to the verge of the grave in the same way. Indeed the apprehensions of the missionaries became so much excited in this way that they seldom traveled without having an antidote for poison. And it was not long before they had to abandon traveling altogether, and confine themselves to a few localities where the people were more friendly. Ultimately they had to leave the country altogether, and we need be at no loss to account for the almost simultaneous disappearance of all the religion they had propagated in that country. We have no certain information of the process by which it ceased to be the religion of the country. It is not probable, however, that it was abolished in any of the provinces by a formal enactment of government. It is pretty certain that it did not require the force of a political revolution to overturn it. It is quite as improbable that it was rooted out by persecution, for there were none that loved it enough to be persecuted for its sake. We can only compare it to a magnificent edifice that fell to pieces because it had no foundation upon which to rest, or to a beautiful exotic that withered away because it had taken no root in the soil of the country.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## ANGOLA.

Early Settlement of Angola.—Establishment of Roman Catholicism.—The Causes of its Failure.—Angola possesses important commercial Resources.—Ambriz.

THIS name is applied to all the country between the kingdom of Kongo and the 16th degree of south latitude. In a more restricted sense, it is applied to the two Portuguese settlements of Loando and Benguela. The Portuguese exercise jurisdiction over the whole of this region of country. It is the only portion of all their early possessions on the main land of which they have retained possession up to the present time. At one time St. Paul de Loando was wrested from their hands by the Dutch, but it was restored after a few years, and has continued in their hands ever since. Some time after the Portuguese extended their jurisdiction over the interior tribes to the distance of two hundred miles. A line of forts was commenced, which it was intended should extend across the continent to their possessions in Mozambique, but was never completed. One or two expeditions have crossed the continent between these two settlements, but no accounts of these journeys have been published. Indeed it has been the policy of the Portuguese to keep the world in as much ignorance as possible of all their operations on this part of the coast.

St. Paul de Loando is the largest European settlement on the whole of the western coast of Africa, and, in commercial importance, is among the first. It has a white population, including some mixed bloods, of 1600, and a native popula-

tion of something like four or five times as many. It has a fine harbor, and is comparatively healthy. The harbor is protected by a large fort, which, however, is not kept in the best condition. Benguela has a beautiful and commanding situation, but has always been very sickly. The number of whites resident here, as also the amount of commerce, is very small. St. Paul de Loando has been regarded for many years past somewhat as a convict settlement, and many political offenders have been banished to this place by the mother country. As many of these were expelled from Portugal on account of their liberal views, the colony of Angola has been the gainer by so valuable an accession to their population.

From the earliest settlement of the country the most vigorous efforts have been made to propagate the Roman Catholic religion in these parts, but with scarcely any better success than attended similar efforts in Kongo. A bishop and a large corps of priests have always been maintained at St. Paul de Loando, but their influence has scarcely been felt beyond the immediate precincts of the town, thus giving fuller and more conclusive proof that Rome has lost the power, if, indeed, she ever possessed it, of establishing her influence firmly and permanently in the heart of a pagan people. At the same time the native population is just as ignorant, superstitious, and have as little real civilization as they had before the Portuguese came among them. Indeed they are scarcely as well off, for they have superadded many of the vices of civilized life to their own, without having borrowed any virtues from civilized men. This does not arise from any inherent incapacity on the part of the negro for improvement, but to the circumstances in which they have lived. At the older English settlements on the coast, especially at Cape Coast, Akra, and Sierra Leone, a large number of native Africans have risen to a very considerable degree of civilization and respectability. At all the places

just mentioned a large proportion of the population have received a good education ; many read, write, and cipher with the utmost facility ; some are employed as teachers ; others as government officers, both civil and military, and a still larger number are merchants of the highest respectability. Similar results would have manifested themselves among the natives of Angola and at other Portuguese settlements, if the same pains had been taken to give them a sound Christian education. This, all the world knows, is contrary to the principles and policy of Rome ; and unless her course is altered in this respect, she will never be able to elevate a heathen people to any measure of civilization.

Perhaps the great bane of Angola has been her participation in the foreign slave-trade. No other single port on the whole coast, perhaps, has been so long and constantly engaged in this traffic, or furnished a larger number of victims than St. Paul de Loando. Its influence has been felt to the very heart of the continent, and no portion of Africa has felt the effect upon its population more sensibly. During the period when this traffic was carried on without any interference on the part of the British government, caravans of slaves were marched down to Loando from the distance of several hundred miles, and each able-bodied man was required to bring down a tooth of ivory. In this way a double traffic was carried on ; that in ivory by English and American vessels, and the slaves by the Portuguese. The former furnished all the goods necessary to purchase the slaves, and received in exchange the doubloons which the Portuguese paid for the slaves.

By a recent treaty with the British government, the Portuguese have obligated themselves to put an effectual stop to the traffic at Loando. Their own interest, if they rightly understood the matter, would lead them to the same course. Every native shipped to Brazil weakens their own resources ; and, putting all other matters out of the question, we can

scarcely think of any thing more suicidal than their continuance in this traffic. Still, however, the immediate profits on a cargo of slaves is a great temptation; and, as Brazil is so near and accessible, no doubt occasional cargoes will be got off in despite of the triple opposition of Great Britain, Brazil, and Portugal.

Angola has important commercial resources independently of the foreign slave-trade, and a little energy on the part of the people might put a new and encouraging aspect upon the condition of the whole country. The soil is good, and a greater variety of vegetable products might be secured than upon any other part of the coast. The climate is comparatively healthy, and white men may live in the country for the purpose of prosecuting mercantile or agricultural pursuits without any special risk of health or life.

The country possesses, also, important commercial resources. At present ivory is the largest and most valuable article of export. Gum-copal, beeswax, turtle-shell, coconut oil, ground nuts, hides, and other articles, are also exported in considerable quantities, and might be greatly increased if proper attention was given to the subject. The mountains abound in the richest iron and copper ore. If the recent experiments made in Boston upon the iron of Africa can be relied upon, native iron may be found not only in Angola, but in many other parts of Western Africa. The copper ore brought from the mountains of Kongo to Ambriz, and from thence shipped to Liverpool, is of the richest quality. The writer has several specimens of this ore in his possession, which it is estimated must contain at least seventy-five per cent. of copper. Coffee and cocoa may also be grown in large quantities in Angola. Up to the present time a large portion of the trade of Loando, so far as the natural products of the country are concerned, has been engrossed by a single mercantile house in Salem.

Ambriz, a native settlement about half-way between Loan-

do and the mouth of the Kongo River, has a large trade in ivory, copper ore, and, until very recently, in slaves also. The king of the country, like the King of Loango, lives some eight or ten miles from the sea-coast. The trade here also is engrossed in a considerable measure by American traders. Very recent accounts state that the Portuguese have taken forcible possession of this place with the view of erecting a fort and annexing it to the colony of Angola.

## CHAPTER IX.

## SOUTHERN GUINEA.

Islands of Fernando Po, Princes, St. Thomas, and Annobon.

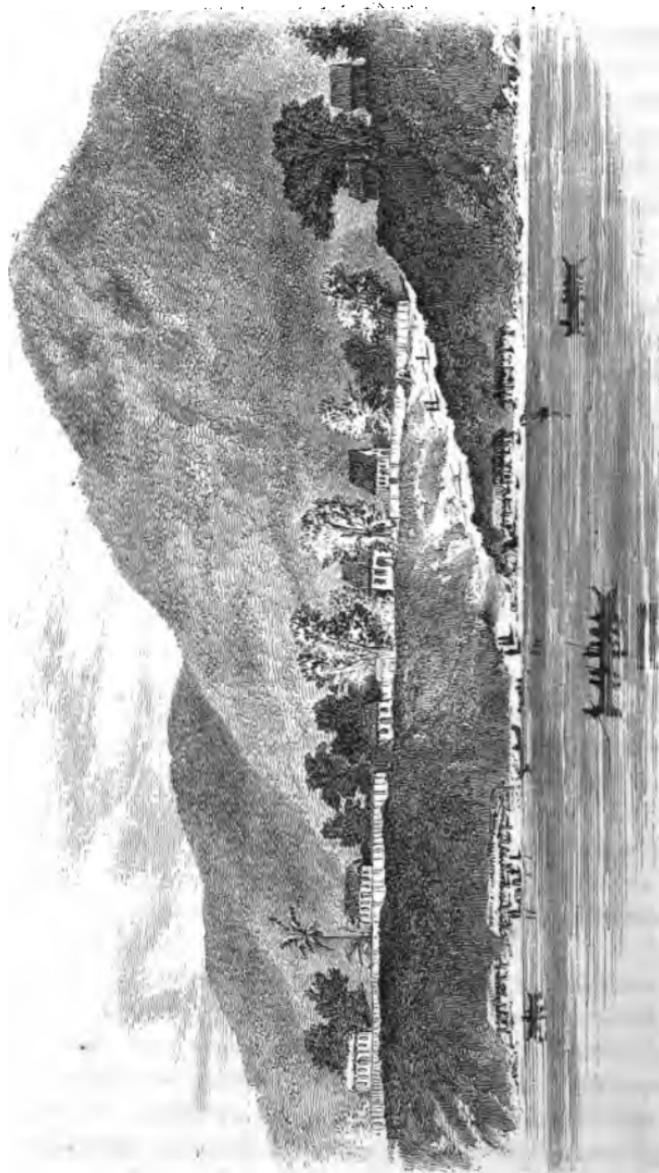
It is worthy of notice that all four of these islands not only stand on a line with each other, but also with the Kamerun peak on the main land; and as they are all mountainous, they would, therefore, appear to be the more elevated summits of one continuous chain. It is equally remarkable that the gradation in the height of these peaks from northeast to southwest is perfectly regular; Kamerun being 14,000 feet high, Fernando Po 10,000, St. Thomas 8000, and Annobon not more than 2000.

No portion of Western Africa presents more varied or more imposing natural scenery than these islands and the adjacent highlands of Kamerun. The mariner, as he approaches the islands of St. Thomas and Fernando Po, is strongly impressed by the bold outlines of their mountains, the rich, verdant drapery in which they are clothed, and the immense height of their graceful and towering peaks.

Fernando Po and St. Thomas are the largest of the chain. They are each twenty or twenty-five miles in length, and about half that number in breadth. Princes is half the size of St. Thomas, and Annobon half that of Princes.

They were all discovered by the Portuguese in 1471, and were colonized by them the following century. Annobon, after having been occupied for a while by some twenty or thirty Portuguese families, with a large number of slaves from the main land, was abandoned, and has since been occupied by some four or five hundred blacks, descendants, no doubt, of the former Portuguese slaves. Fernando Po was





CLARENCE, FERNANDO PO.

transferred to Spain in 1728, in exchange for another island on the coast of Brazil. The other two, Princes and St. Thomas, have been in the hands of the Portuguese ever since their first discovery, with the exception of a few years in which they were held by the Dutch.

Attempts were made, successively by the Portuguese and Spaniards, to colonize the island of Fernando Po, but without success. Whether their failure was owing to the unhealthiness of the climate, or opposition from the native population, is not certainly known. Probably both causes operated against them. Some thirty years since the British Government obtained a lease of the island for a given number of years. Their object was two-fold; to have a place for the recaptives taken on this part of the coast, and for the advantages of the timber trade. It was also hoped that it would prove a health station, where invalid seamen might be recruited. Clarence Cove, on the west side of the island, afforded a safe and pleasant anchorage for vessels, and the adjoining high bluff an eligible situation for a town, and this was accordingly selected as the place for their settlement. It did not prove as healthy, however, as was anticipated, and has never been used as a health station except for sailors of merchant ships trading in the immediate vicinity. Why it was never used as a colony for recaptives is not known. It is quite as healthy as Sierra Leone, and in some respects is a more desirable place for a colony. Several hundred emigrants were brought here from Cape Coast, Sierra Leone, and other places. Accessions have been made from time to time until the population of the place reached some ten or twelve hundred inhabitants. At the expiration of the lease granted to the English, the Spanish government resumed their claim, stopped the exportation of timber, and hoisted the Spanish flag, but appointed Captain Becroft, an Englishman who had been governor of the place for several years previously, as their governor; so that no changes were

made in the place except the substitution of the Spanish for the British flag. After the death of Captain Becroft, Mr. Lynslager, the principal merchant of the place, was appointed governor, and continued in the office until within a year past, when he was superseded by a Spaniard, who had formerly been engaged in the slave-trade, and very much to the annoyance of the British government.

The population of Clarence, as might be inferred from its mixed character, is not of the most intelligent or virtuous class. There are, however, persons among them of education and respectability. Twelve or fourteen years since the English Baptist Missionary Society established a mission among these people, which, it is believed, is doing much to promote the cause of religion and education among them.

The native population of this island, of whom there are not less, perhaps, than 20,000, are known by the name of "Boobies." They are pure negroes, but in their habits, dress, and general appearance are much more like the remote tribes of the interior than those along the sea-coast. They are a healthy-looking people, but render their persons disgustingly filthy from besmearing themselves with oil. It is said they never apply water to their persons, and their appearance would indicate that ablutions were, at least, not very common. Their hair is plaited, and coiled on the back of the head like a cushion, which serves as a sort of portable pillow. They have no covering for their bodies except a narrow strip of bark or grass-cloth. Their houses are nothing but open shades, so that they are scarcely better protected from the weather than the monkeys of their own woods. Taken all together there is no people in the country who occupy a lower place in the scale of human society. And yet the Boobies are a healthy, hardy people, quiet and peaceable in their disposition, and evince as much capacity for intellectual improvement as any other people in the country.

Clarence is growing in commercial importance, and may, in time, become one of the most important marts of the coast. It has become the head-quarters for all the shipping in the Bight of Biafra. The palm-oil collected in the rivers is brought to this place, and from thence reshipped to Europe. It is a convenient rendezvous for men-of-war, and is the terminating point of the line of steamers now plying between the west coast of Africa and England. Should the Niger and Tchadda open a large commerce with the interior, as they probably will, Clarence will become the grand dépôt for all this commerce. The island at present is itself yielding a large amount of palm-oil for exportation. Its yams are considered the best in the country, and few vessels pass within a hundred miles of the place without stopping for a supply, which can be procured from the Boobies at very moderate prices. The island also abounds in the finest ship-timber, which, though restricted for the present, will become an article of export before long.

Princes and St. Thomas are important only for their exports of coffee and cocoa, but especially for the former. St. Thomas is the largest of the two, and has a population of twelve or fourteen thousand, of whom one thousand perhaps are whites and mixed bloods, two thousand free blacks, and the remainder slaves brought from the main land. St. Thomas was colonized in the first instance by Jews banished from Portugal by King John II. These intermarried with native women brought from Angola for this express purpose, and their descendants were for a considerable time the dominant people of the island. The Jewish type of character, however, is scarcely discernible at the present day, having been superseded by the descendants of the Portuguese, who colonized the island at a later period in much greater numbers.

For a long term of years these islands were highly cultivated, and were pet colonies of the mother country. No pains

were spared to make St. Thomas the very garden of all Africa. The culture of the sugar-cane was carried to the highest perfection, and it is said that as many as fifteen large-sized ships have been laded with sugar in a single season. Roads and bridges were constructed in every direction over the island; and the dilapidated remains of not less than ten or a dozen costly churches may be seen at the present day in different parts of the island. Much of the material of which these churches were constructed must have been taken from Portugal, especially the variegated marble with which their floors and altars were constructed. Some of the images with which these churches were once supplied, may still be seen lying in the rubbish, but in a sadly mutilated condition. But these days of thrift have gone by. The culture of sugar was interdicted for the purpose of encouraging the growth of it in Brazil; and after Brazil separated herself from the mother country, it became impossible to restore the culture of the cane. Coffee has taken its place, and for many years past has become the chief and indeed almost the only article exported from the island.

The principal sea-port town at present is St. Anna de Chaves. It embraces a population of several thousand, but does not present a very imposing appearance for a civilized people. All of the dwelling-houses, with a few exceptions, are frail wooden buildings, badly painted if at all, and by no means attractive in their general appearance. A few of the churches of former days are kept in a comparatively good condition, but the people and priesthood alike have fallen behind the times even for Roman Catholics. There was not a single school of any kind on either of the islands a few years ago, and only a few persons who could read or write, and those were either merchants or black priests who had been educated in Brazil. These priests, if the statements of their own people can be relied upon, are the most consummate villains on the whole island, and if

there is any class of men in the world to whom the term "wolves in sheep's clothing" can be applied, it is to them.

Princes island is much smaller than St. Thomas, and the soil is poorer, but the climate is better. This is the chosen residence of the *élite* of the Portuguese population. There are individuals here of large property, living in affluent style, and exemplifying the Portuguese gentleman to as much advantage as any where else in the world.

The town of St. Antonio is situated at the head of an exceedingly beautiful and romantic bay, and is overshadowed at the same time by a high mountain peak standing directly behind it. It is not so large as St. Anna de Chaves, but has some much neater and handsomer dwelling-houses. The people are deservedly reputed for their hospitality and kindness to strangers. Many of the gentlemen residents of St. Antonio have highly-cultivated coffee plantations on the island. The cocoa raised here is considered very fine, and so is the coffee.

But both of these islands are bearing the incubus of a taxation that must utterly break them down if persevered in a few years longer. Not only does every article of import pay a heavy duty, but not a single article of export escapes taxation. Pigs, chickens, vegetables, and even fruit must pay a duty before they can leave the shore.

The island of Annobon is small, and possesses no importance except as a place where ships can touch to get supplies of live stock, vegetables, and fruits for their homeward voyages, for which the people desire nothing so much as old clothes. Among these people, of whom there are not more than three or four hundred, there are men who call themselves Padres, and who, without doubt, have as strong a claim to the regular apostolic succession as any other set of men in the world, but without clothing enough to hide their nakedness, or intelligence enough to raise them above the common standard of savage ignorance. The island nom-

inally belongs to Spain, but how it was transferred from the Portuguese is not known.

It might be turned to a good account in connection with the Missionary work, especially as a health station, but whether the Spanish Government would allow it to be used for this purpose is not known.

## CHAPTER X.

## SOUTHERN GUINEA.

Natural History.—Domestic Animals.—Wild Animals.—The Elephant, and the Mode of hunting it.—The Tiger.—Njena.—The Boa.—Attempt to Swallow a yard Dog.—Two Species of White Ants: their Habits.—The “Drivers:” their singular Habits.

THE domestic animals of this region of country are the same as those of Northern Guinea. Both regions abound with wild animals, and there is not, for the natural historian, a richer field of study any where in the world.

We do not propose to present a systematic or scientific view of the whole subject, but will simply bring together, in the present chapter, such facts as we suppose will be interesting to the general reader.

The wild animals most common and best known are the elephant, the buffalo or wild cow, the tiger, wild boar, monkeys of very many varieties, apes, orang-outangs or chimpanzees, antelopes, gazelles, jackals, the genet, civet-cat, porcupine, hippopotamus, crocodile, boa constrictor, and various other reptiles. The woods of Africa abound with birds of every variety, and of the richest plumage. Among these may be mentioned the gray parrot, the green parrakeet, whydah bird, flamingo, crown bird, trumpet bird, wild pigeon, ring-dove, quail, wild hen, and the Guinea-fowl in its native state. The rivers and bays abound with a great variety of excellent fish, while the entomology of the country is almost illimitable in its extent and variety.

The lion, zebra, camelopard, and ostrich are not found any where near the sea-coast. Grass fields, and less densely wooded countries, are better suited to their nature and hab-

its, and they are to be found, therefore, only in the interior and at the southern extremity of the continent.

Elephants abound in all parts of Southern Guinea, and if not molested, they frequently come down to the sea-coast. They are much hunted by the aborigines, and chiefly on account of their tusks, which are valuable according to their size and weight. It is, however, a dangerous business to attempt to kill one of these monsters of the woods, and none but men of strong nerves and courageous hearts ever venture upon the perilous task. There are those, however, who follow it as their common avocation. The more common and successful mode of attack is to creep up behind and under the animal while he is busy munching a fresh tree-top, which he has just bent down to the ground with his powerful proboscis, and discharge the contents of a trebly loaded musket in some vital organ. The gun is usually filled almost to the muzzle with slugs, spikes, and old nails, so that the discharge is really an explosion. There is always serious danger from the rebound, and the hunter is careful to hold his gun at full arm's length. If the shot has been well directed, the animal sinks down to the ground at once; but if he has merely received a slight wound, he turns upon his assailant with terrible fury. The only escape for the hunter, in such a case, is to fly to a large forest tree, upon which he had previously fixed his eye, and by revolving around its base, he may keep out of reach of his infuriated pursuer until he is wearied out. If he trips up and is caught, he is dashed to pieces in a moment.

Mr. Preston, of the Gabun mission, gives an account of the manner by which the Pangwes destroy whole droves of these animals at one time. A forest vine which is known to be excessively repulsive to the elephant is drawn around them when they are busily engaged in browsing, and, so long as they are not injured, they will not break over it. A fence of upright posts is constructed outside of the vine,



ELEPHANT KILLING.

to give the inclosure additional security. Poisoned plantains are scattered over the ground, and are greedily devoured, and in a short time the animals become so much weakened by their effect that they are prepared to make very little resistance. The people then mount up into the trees, and assail them with spears until they are overpowered. Very fre-

quently, however, one or more persons are killed in this wild and daring sport.

As soon as it is known that one of these animals has been killed, every man in the neighborhood sets off with his knife and basket for the place, and takes home as much of the carcass as he can manage to carry. The flesh is not only eaten when fresh, but it is dried and kept for months, and is then highly esteemed.

At some seasons of the year these animals herd together and go about the country in large droves, often committing the most serious depredations upon the farms of the natives. Very frequently large fields of plantains and bananas are utterly destroyed in a single night. The quiet of villages is sometimes disturbed at the middle of the night, by hearing these animals tearing down the plantain stocks at their very doors. It would be dangerous to attack them with fire-arms under such circumstances. If they should be merely wounded by the assault, they would become furious, and scatter their frail huts in every possible direction, and trample to death every human being that they could overtake. The safer and more peaceable measure of ringing bells and beating old brass pans is resorted to, and seldom fails to drive them away from their villages.

How numerous these animals are, or whether they are on the increase or decrease, it is not easy to determine. They have never been domesticated in Africa as they are in India; whether this is owing to less tractability on the part of the African species, or want of skill on the part of the people, we shall not attempt to decide. The Africans are not afraid of attacking the elephant, and they frequently capture them when young and bring them to their towns, but never train them to any kind of domestic service. It is supposed that not less than one hundred tons of ivory are annually exported from the Gabun and the neighboring districts. The tusks vary in weight from one to one hundred and fifty pounds.

If twenty pounds may be taken as the average weight of a pair of tusks, it would take not less than eleven thousand elephants to furnish the above mentioned quantity of ivory. The annual exportation increases from year to year, from which we might infer that there is either a real increase of these animals in the woods of Africa, or the people have greater skill in destroying them. A tusk of ivory is valuable in the European or American market in proportion to its size. If it is less than twenty pounds it is denominated a *scrivilla*, and is worth from fifty to seventy-five cents per pound. If it weighs more than twenty pounds, it is called "prime ivory," and is worth from one dollar to one dollar and a half per pound.

The African tiger, or leopard, as it may more properly be called, is a formidable animal, and is held in great dread by the people. It is invested with more terror than it would otherwise have by a superstitious apprehension, on the part of the natives, that wicked men frequently metamorphose themselves into tigers, and commit all sorts of depredations, without the liability or possibility of being killed. The real tiger is emboldened by impunity, and often becomes a terrible scourge to the village which he infests. Women are frequently attacked and killed on their way to the springs or farms, and children are sometimes carried off from the very suburbs of the villages. I have known large villages to be abandoned by their inhabitants, because they were afraid to attack these animals on account of their supposed supernatural powers. The tiger annoys more, however, by its depredations upon their live stock. When one is known to lurk about the town, it is common for the people to take their sheep and goats into their dwellings at night. The leopard has great power and agility. I have known one to clamber over a ten feet palisade wall with a full-grown sheep, and run off to the distance of a mile before he would stop to devour it. They are sometimes entrapped or taken with a noose, and

this is always an occasion of great rejoicing in the neighborhood.

But the most formidable of all animals in the woods of Africa is the famous, but recently discovered, *Troglodytes Gorilla*, called, in the language of the Gabun, *Njena*. The writer was the first to call the attention of naturalists to this animal. Toward the close of 1846 he accidentally came across the skull of one, which he knew at once, from its peculiar shape and outline, to belong to an undescribed species. After some search a second skull was procured, but of smaller size. No other portion of the skeleton could be procured for some time afterward. The natives, however, seemed to be perfectly familiar with the habits and character of the animal, gave minute accounts of its size, its ferocity, and the kind of woods which it frequented; they also gave confident assurances that in due time a perfect skeleton should be produced. In the mean time, impressions were taken in this country of the two heads which were procured, and all the information that could be obtained from the natives was published, and served to awaken the liveliest interest among naturalists. Since then perfect skeletons have been taken to England and France, and brought to this country, so that scientific men have sufficient knowledge of the subject to assign this animal its proper place in natural history. It belongs to the orang-outang, or chimpanzee family, but is larger and much more powerful than any other known species. The writer has seen one of these animals after it was killed. It is almost impossible to give a correct idea, either of the hideousness of its looks, or the amazing muscular power which it possesses. Its intensely black face not only reveals features greatly exaggerated, but the whole countenance is but one expression of savage ferocity. Large eyeballs, a crest of long hair, which falls over the forehead when it is angry, a mouth of immense capacity, revealing a set of terrible teeth, and large protruding ears, altogether make it one

of the most frightful animals in the world. It is not surprising that the natives are afraid to encounter them even when armed. The skeleton of one, presented by the writer to the Natural History Society of Boston, is supposed to be five feet and a half high, and with its flesh, thick skin, and the long, shaggy hair with which it is covered, it must have been nearly four feet across the shoulders. The natives say it is ferocious, and invariably gives battle whenever it meets a single person. I have seen a man the calf of whose leg was nearly torn off in an encounter with one of these monsters, and he would probably have been torn to pieces in a very short time if his companions had not come to his rescue. It is said they will wrest a musket from the hands of a man and crush the barrel between their jaws, and there is nothing, judging from the muscles of the jaws, or the size of their teeth, that renders such a thing improbable.

The common African chimpanzee abounds in all parts of Western Africa. Those of Southern Guinea are not so large as those higher up the coast. It is the nearest approximation to the human species of any of the monkey family. It is easily domesticated, is mild and sociable in disposition, and gives unmistakable evidence of strong personal attachments. Its character and habits are so well known that we do not feel it important to give it a more extended account.

Of the reptiles of Western Africa the boa constrictor, or typhon, as it should be called, is the most notable. They are to be found in all parts of the country. Their chosen places of resort are in thick jungles or along the water courses. They are fond of sunning themselves on the branches of trees overhanging the water. They grow to an enormous size. The writer has never seen one more than twenty-five feet long, but it is said that they attain to much greater length. They live upon deer, monkeys, and such other wild animals as they can take; and when they have swallowed a full-sized sheep or deer, they remain in a torpid



THE DOG AND SNAKE.

or inactive state until it is digested, and it is in this condition alone that they can be captured and put into a cage. Sometimes they approach the habitations of men, and prey upon domestic animals. I assisted once in extricating a favorite yard dog from the folds of one of these monsters. The snake had stretched himself across a much frequented path, and the dog, in the act of jumping over it, was caught up and held in his firm grasp for more than half an hour. The snake commenced sliming the body of the dog from the head downward with the intention of swallowing it, and he had more than half completed his work before his victim was rescued. The dog experienced no injury, but it was several

weeks before the varnishing he had got could be removed. The boa has no poisonous fang. Its teeth, both of the upper and lower jaw, hook downward, so that whatever prey it attempts to swallow must go down, or the animal itself perishes under the operation. Some of the tribes of the country eat this species of snake, and consider it delicate food. The more refined among them, however, regard the practice as peculiarly heathenish.

Of the insects of Africa none are more interesting than the ants. We can notice, however, only two varieties.

White ants are known in all tropical countries, but especially in India and Africa, for their very destructive habits. Floors of cement are used almost altogether in India, because these little insects will not allow those of wood to last any length of time. For the same reason framed houses are seldom ever put up.

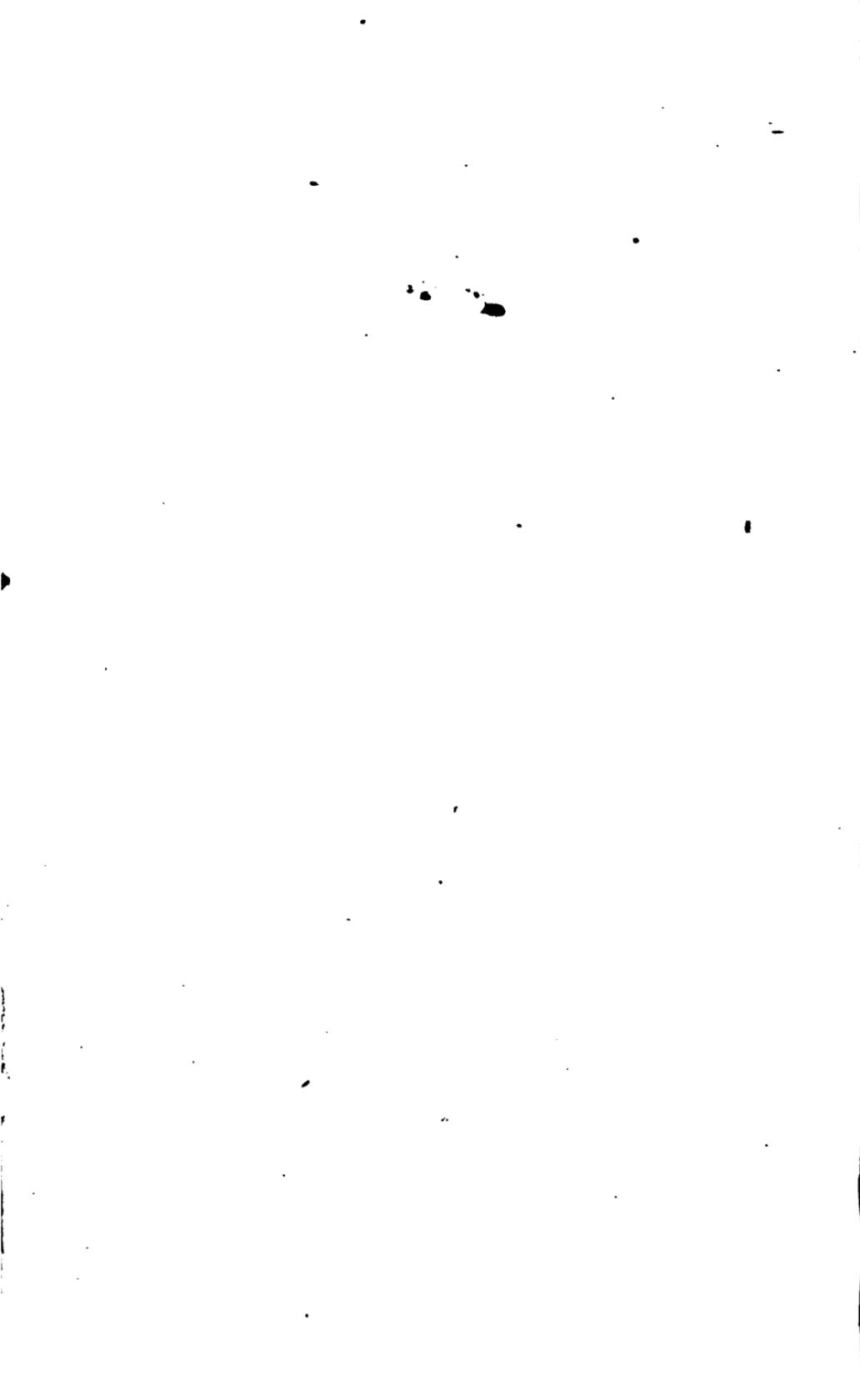
In Western Africa there are at least two varieties of the white ants, which are distinguished from each other by their form, their modes and places of living, and by their peculiar habits. One of these classes is well known to African travelers for building large clay houses or turreted tumuli. These bear so much resemblance to the circular huts of the native inhabitants in some parts of the country, that they have been mistaken for them. The tumuli are eight or ten feet in diameter at the base, ten or twelve feet high, and terminate in a small round point. They are surrounded by half a dozen or more cones or turrets, which terminate in points at different heights along the outer surface. The interior reveals a most wonderful mechanism in the number of its avenues, cross streets, recesses, and in the most perfect arrangement of its innumerable cells. On a level with the base, and about the centre of the mound, is the palace or residence of the queen. She is ten times as large as her largest subject, is of a very uncouth form, and is scarcely capable of locomotion, but is carefully guarded by a band of faithful soldiers. It is very

rarely that a queen can be made a captive. The hill must be demolished with great rapidity, or she will be borne off through some subterranean passage. This species of ant is about the fourth of an inch in length, with a flat, hard head, terminating with a pair of sharp, horizontal pincers, something like the claws of a crab. Their pinch is very sharp, and seldom fails to draw blood. If their habitation is broken into they get exceedingly enraged, and march out with uplifted head to attack their assailant, even should it have been an elephant that run his tusk into their quiet citadel. If one of the small turrets is broken off, a head workman or engineer mounts upon the breach, surveys the damage, and by some means of communication which we do not understand, summons hundreds of laborers to the spot, and in the course of two or three hours, all the injury is repaired. Clay is brought up from the interior, and is laid on, mouthful after mouthful, with all the skill and exactness of a practiced mason. There is no outlet or opening in the mound any where above the ground. Nor are the inhabitants ever seen except when their habitations are broken into. Their migrations are always under the ground, and very little is known of their habits, therefore, except what is found out by demolishing their habitations.

There is another species of the white ant not so belligerent, but better known to European residents by its depredations upon their furniture, clothes, books, and the wooden parts of their dwellings. They are somewhat like the wood-lice of the Southern States, but burrow altogether under the ground. They are smaller than those just described, and are entirely without any natural weapons of defense, except that they can emit a most disagreeable pungent odor when disturbed in any of their operations. They never raise mounds like the other species of white ants, but make their nests under the ground. These subterranean abodes, however, have as much mechanical arrangement as the mounds, and are al-

ANT HILL, WITH THE INTERIOR STRUCTURE





ways established near to a place where, as they have ascertained by previous scrutiny, they will have an abundance of soft wood or other material to feed upon. From this retreat they usually emerge at night, and in myriads, to commence their depredations. A box of cotton or linen clothes, or books, is always a favorite object of attack. They usually enter the box through a crevice in the bottom, and if it is not opened or removed they will carry on their work of devastation until every article is utterly ruined. Their first plan of operation seems to be to cut holes through the whole depth of the clothing in the chest. These holes are of irregular size, and it would look as if they were governed by a desire to render every article in the chest useless to its human owner in as short a time as possible. They can not cut their way so easily through the solid covers of books; but they make their way from place to place by running along the front edges of the leaves. Sometimes they get into the back part of a shelf of books, and feed on the front edges of the books for days without being detected. Not infrequently, however, they betray themselves by emitting a disagreeable odor when they have been accidentally disturbed. It is not safe to set a trunk of books or clothes on the floor for a single night, nor even upon a raised stand, unless the legs are guarded so as to prevent their ascent.

When they direct their aim to some object in an elevated position they always construct a covered archway to it, even if it should be thirty or forty feet high, under which they pass up and down. This arch is constructed for the double purpose of shielding themselves from the light and from the attacks of other insects to which they are particularly exposed. The arch, which is seldom more than a quarter of an inch in diameter, is constructed partly of the fine fuzz collected along the surface over which it is built, and partly by clay brought up from the ground through the arch, their own bodies furnishing the cement necessary to give it adhesion.

I have watched them occasionally, and found that they would raise the arch two or three inches an hour. In the night the work goes forward more rapidly. Indeed they do not work at all in the day, except it be in a place much shaded. They are indomitably persevering. You may make a breach in the arch, or tear down the whole of it, and they will go to work immediately to rebuild. If this is done twenty days in succession they will as often restore it, and generally in a single night. The only thing which will compel them to abandon their track is to drop the smallest quantity of arsenic into it, and they will be sure to abandon it forever. It will not prevent them from building another along the side of it, however, and this they are sure to do if there is an attractive object to be attained.

To keep clothes, books, furniture, and provisions out of the reach of these destructive creatures is one of the most difficult problems for African housekeepers. A little powdered arsenic sprinkled about the edges of a trunk or box, or about the feet of a bureau, will keep them away; but this is too dangerous a remedy for common use. It is common to raise scaffolds on small posts, upon which provisions are laid. By making an application of fresh tar to these posts once in two or three months, they are kept down; but if the tar is allowed to become dry and hard, they go to work and construct their arch right over it. I have known them, when the outer surface of the post was impracticable, to cut their way through the heart of the post up to the very top of the scaffold. Any means or expedient to banish these insects from houses would be one of the richest boons that could possibly be conferred upon the inhabitants of India and Africa.

But there is another species of ants in Western Africa of even greater notoriety. We refer to a species commonly known as the "drivers" (*termes bellicosa*), which are so denominated from the fact that they compel almost every other

species of the animal creation to get out of their way, or submit to the alternative of being devoured. They are a black or dark-brown species which, in size and general appearance, is not unlike the common ant of this country. It has a sharp, flat head, terminating in a pair of horizontal nippers, not unlike one of the species of white ants just described, with which it can give a very severe pinch; and, if it gets hold of a soft part of the skin, always draws blood, but leaves little or no irritation after it is removed.

The "driver" is the enemy and the assailant not only of every other insect, but of every living thing which comes in its way. They traverse the country by day and night in trains of a quarter or half mile long. They form a running stream; and persons about to step over the train, as it glides along under grass, frequently start back under the impression of its being a snake. When moving about in these long files, they are either about to change their residence, or are in search of food. They are always preceded by a few straggling guards, who keep them informed of any dangers or difficulties that may lie in their way. It is astonishing with what rapidity a note of alarm can be transmitted from one end of the line to another. The soldiers, who always keep along the side of the regular column, the moment they receive a note of alarm set off with all possible dispatch for the point of danger, while the main body is either brought to a dead halt, or turned backward; but as soon as the obstruction is removed, or is found not to be insuperable, the main army is set in motion again. They seem to have regular leaders, and there are runners passing backward and forward all the while, as if to keep up a constant communication between the front and the rear. When about to cross a well-trodden path, where they are likely to be disturbed, the soldiers weave themselves into a complete arch, extending across the whole width of the path, under which the females and the laborers bearing the larvæ

pass without the least exposure. The construction of the arch with their own bodies is one of the most singular and interesting things to be met with in the history of insects. One ant is raised entirely above the ground, by having one pair of its feet interlocked with the fore-feet of another standing upright, and the other pair with another in the same posture on the opposite side of the arch. Any number of these are formed, and they are bound together by other ants stretching themselves lengthwise with the arch, and serving as traverse beams to hold the different parts together. The arch, when formed, holds together with the greatest tenacity, and looks like a beautiful net-work of beads. I have frequently put the end of my cane under the arch, and raised it four or five feet from the ground without letting a single ant fall. As soon as they are raised up, however, they begin to unravel themselves from either end of the wreath; but instead of dropping to the ground, they mount up to the end of the cane, and make for the hand which has assailed them. When disturbed in this way, the whole body of soldiers spread themselves over a space of twenty or thirty feet in diameter, over which neither man nor beast can pass without getting some of them upon him and receiving a few sharp nips. A horse can scarcely be forced through them, and a dog never does, except with a bound and a leap, and even then is sure to get one or more about his claws, which are very apt to get hold of his lip in his attempt to remove them from his toes.

If they come across a dead body of any kind, they encircle it, and by the time the whole column comes up, it is completely covered. They will remain by it until every particle of flesh is consumed, even should it be the carcass of an elephant, and require several days to complete their work. They will attack living animals with equal vehemence, and there is nothing of the animal race that can effectually resist them. A horse or cow shut up in a confined

place would be harassed to death in a few hours, and would be eaten up, except the hair and skeleton, in less than forty-eight hours.

They frequently visit dwelling-houses; and if at night, as is generally the case, it is always to the no little discomfiture of the inmates. They enter by some small hole; and, from the point where they emerge, they spread themselves over the floor, along the walls, and over the under-surface of the roof, like a great scouring army. Every nook and corner and crevice in the house is explored, and no other insect, however small, can elude their search. The human inhabitants are generally apprised of their approach by the fluttering of cockroaches and the squeaking of mice which have fallen into their toils. The mouse is usually seized in the first instance by a single ant; but in his foolish attempt to get that one detached, instead of running off with it to a place of safety, he gets half a dozen or more on him. In his distress and agony, he falls down and cries out, and is soon overpowered by a multitude sufficient to destroy a much larger animal. In a very few minutes not a trace of the mouse is to be seen, except a little hair and a few of his larger bones; and in the morning the floor may be seen strewn with the wings of cockroaches that have been destroyed in the night. It is necessary for the human inhabitants to abandon the house during their occupancy of it, which, however, is not more than a few hours, and they are more than repaid for this temporary inconvenience by having the house completely rid of all other insects, which is no small matter in any tropical country. I have known persons to be entirely destroyed by them, who, from sickness or lameness, could not get out of their way, and had no one to remove them. It is said that criminals were once punished on this part of the coast by being laid across the tracks of these insects with fetters on. This would be a refinement of cruelty, for which no parallel can be conceived.

If this ever was the custom of the country, it has long since passed away.

These ants seldom retain possession of any one house more than a few hours; but sometimes it takes them several days to get through all the houses of the same village. There is scarcely any way by which their progress can be arrested; and, as a general thing, it is thought to be the best policy to let them take their regular course. They perform an important service; and the inconvenience which they occasion is temporary, and might well be endured for the advantages which are derived from it.

But in nothing is the ingenuity of these little insects more remarkably displayed than in the expedient to which they frequently resort to cross a little stream on the sand beach after a shower of rain. Sometimes their train is cut in two by one of these little streamlets. To plunge into it singly, they would soon be swept away by the rush of the current. They come to the edge of the water, raise their antennæ, point them from one direction to another, as if they were taking a scientific view of all the dangers of the crossing. They wander up and down the stream with the greatest uneasiness, and finding no other way to cross, form themselves into a compact knot or raft of a dozen or more, and launch themselves upon the stream. They have, by previous observation, made sure that they would strike a projecting point or bluff on the opposite shore, and not be carried by the current into the main river. The moment they touch the other side, they use their claws like anchors, and hold on until the whole company disengage themselves, and march off in single file in the track of those that have preceded them. I have watched them for hours together, and have seen raft after raft of these little creatures go over in safety, when, if they had attempted to get across singly, they would all have been swept into the river.

## CHAPTER XI.

## SOUTHERN GUINEA.

Capacity of the African for Improvement.—The Standard by which the Question should be settled.—His Shrewdness and close Observation.—His intellectual Characteristics.—Native Literature.—Fable of the big and little Monkey.—The Land Turtle and the Black Monkey.

No questions are more frequently asked when Africa and Africans are the subject of remark, than those relating to their capacity for improvement. Is the negro capable of any considerable intellectual culture? Is he capable of self-government? Is he any thing more than a creature of instincts? Will he ever acquire the energy, the enterprise, or the intelligence of the Anglo-Saxon?

We would meet these inquiries with the general remark, that there is the same variety in the intellectual endowments and general characteristics of the great and leading families of men that we find among the individual members of a single household. The diversity of gifts which prevails among the children of the same parents is but a type of what is seen on a larger scale among the great families of the human race; and as no similarity of training could ever establish identity of character in the first case, so no outward influences can ever establish perfect equality in the latter. We do not expect Africans, under any circumstances, to possess the energy, the enterprise, or the inventive powers of the white man. But there are other traits, quite as commendable as these, in which, if he is properly trained, he will greatly excel his white compeer. Naturally the African is social, generous, and confiding; and, when brought under the benign influence of Christianity, he exemplifies the beauty and con-

sistency of his religion more than any other human being on the face of the earth. And the time may come when they may be held up to all the rest of the world as examples of the purest and most elevated Christian virtue.

Looking at the African race, as we have done, in their native country, we have seen no obstacles to their elevation which would not apply equally to all other uncultivated races of men. They are ignorant, superstitious, and demoralized, it is true, but it is the circumstances of heathenism in which they have always lived that have made them such, and not any thing that inherently pertains to them as a race. Compared with the civilized nations of the earth their deficiencies become palpable enough; but compared with the South Sea Islanders, previous to the period when they were brought under the influence of Christianity—the Indian tribes of our own country, who have never enjoyed the blessings of education, or even with the great masses of ignorant poor who throng all the great cities of the civilized world, they do not appear to any disadvantage whatever.

No one can live among them without being impressed with their natural energy of character; their shrewdness and close observation; the skill and cunning with which they can “drive a bargain;” and the perfect adroitness with which they practice upon the unsuspecting credulity of white men. Very few white men have ever had any considerable dealing with them, who can not recount innumerable instances in which they have been overreached, even when they were exercising the utmost vigilance; and such is the closeness of observation of these people, that they will ordinarily find out much more about the general character and disposition of a white man in a few hours, than he will of them in as many months or years.

But these Africans evince force of character in other and better respects. They have long since risen above the hunter life; they have fixed habitations, cultivate the soil for

the means of subsistence, have herds of domestic animals, construct for themselves houses which are sufficient to protect them alike from the scorching heat of the sun and the chilly damps of night; they show a turn for the mechanic arts, and in the fabrication of implements of warfare and articles of ornament they display surprising skill; and, at the same time, they evince not only a decided taste, but an equal aptitude for commercial pursuits. As we see them in their native country, they show none of that improvidence or want of foresight for which they have almost become proverbial in this country, which shows that circumstances here have made them what they are in this respect. They plant their crops with particular reference to the seasons of the year, and they store away provisions for their future wants with as much regularity as any people in the world, so that times of scarcity and want are less frequent among them than among others who pretend to a much higher degree of civilization.

The intellectual faculties of this race, taken as we find them in Africa, are not equally developed; and this, too, must be ascribed to the circumstances in which they have lived. They have little taste for metaphysical distinctions, are scarcely capable of close logical reasoning, and, as a general thing, they eschew all abstract discussions. But they have excellent memories, lively imaginations, much imitativeness, and very close observation.

None of these people along the sea-coast regions, with the exception of the Veys, who have recently invented an alphabet for themselves—a circumstance in itself sufficient to establish the claims of the African race to a respectable position among the different families of men—have any written literature. This, however, is not to be set down as a mark of mental imbecility. Their thoughts, as a matter of necessity, must operate in a comparatively narrow circle, but it does not follow that they are less active on this account. Every thing that comes within the range of their observa-

tion is scrutinized the more closely on this account; and many of these people become good practical botanists, mineralogists, and natural historians, without the aid of any well-defined systems. At the same time, they have abundant stores of what may be denominated unwritten lore, in the form of allegories, legends, traditionary stories, fables, and proverbial sayings. Much of their leisure time is spent in hearing these allegories and legends. They have innumerable fables, and there is scarcely a remarkable feature about one of the wild animals of their woods that is not accounted for by a fable. If a monkey has a short, stubby nose, or a very long tail, it is accounted for by a long story or fable. The following fables will serve as examples of these. I was asked one day, when traveling through a forest of very large trees, if I knew why a certain species of very small monkeys were found only in the tops of the highest trees; and when I confessed ignorance, the first of these was related in explanation of the fact. On another occasion, when an individual was, in my presence, taunted by another upon some personal blemish, he was told to remember the "Black Monkey." When asked the meaning of this allusion, the second of these fables was recited.

#### FABLE OF THE ENGENA AND THE TELINGA.

The Engena is the largest and most powerful of the monkey tribe, the Telinga is the smallest, and is seldom or never seen on the ground, but lives in the branches of the tallest trees. The whole of this small tribe resemble each other so closely, that, upon the minutest inspection, either in size or color, one can not be distinguished from the other.

One day the forest resounded with mirth and laughter, for the Engena had sent heralds in all directions to announce that his young and beautiful daughter was of marriageable age, and he who could drink up a barrel of rum, which stood in a conspicuous place, should be the happy and envied one

to bear the bride in triumph to his home. When all things were in readiness, on the day appointed the elephant, with calm and measured step, approached the forest king, seated on his throne of boughs, and, smiling contemptuously as he eyed the small cask before him, said, "I can take up many such of water, and am, therefore, sure of my prize." But no sooner had he tasted the liquor, than, throwing his proboscis high into the air, he returned to the wood with a quicker gait than he had come from it. The graceful leopard then made his appearance, and, crouching at the feet of the monarch, asked permission to try what the elephant had failed to do. He crept stealthily toward the object that was to prove his triumph or shame, and then sprang upon it with a bound; but no sooner had he lapped up a mouthful, than he fell off, saying his tongue was on fire; and, with drooping head and tail, went growling to his den. The wild boar, with a loud and coarse laugh, now presented himself, and wondered why the great elephant and leopard had been vanquished by *that*—pointing to the cask. He was sure his tongue was not so delicate, nor his brain so easily affected; so, with a bold and swaggering walk, he approached, and took a draught—but only one; it was too strong even for him; so, with many hard words on the man who first invented this "fire-water," he reeled and staggered to his home. Then, to the surprise and amusement of Engena, Telinga was seen timidly approaching. "What do you want, my little fellow?" said the great monarch. "Do you also aspire to the hand of my daughter?" "Yes, sir, I do," he answered, standing demurely at a respectful distance, fearing the long and strong arms displayed by the father; "and I hope you will permit me to try. But as I am a little one, you will, I am sure, allow me to retire for a short time after each glass." Now this artful creature had collected thousands of his tribe, and stationed them in the tall grass for miles around. Having gained permission to drink the liquor at his leisure, he

took a small quantity, and then went away quickly. Another came and took a little, and then another, and another, all being so precisely alike the Engena did not see the trick practiced upon him. When the barrel was entirely drained of its contents, the Telinga who had first spoken to Engena had recovered from the effects of the rum, having had a good sleep, and coming boldly forward, demanded the hand of the lovely bride. The old king did not like to bestow it upon him, but being a man of his word, he was forced to do it. Telinga felt proud, indeed, when he walked at the side of the belle of the woods, and knew that she was his own. So elated was he that he did not heed strange sounds that, from time to time, came from either side the narrow path in which they were walking, till suddenly he was struck to the ground by the elephant, and felt the paw of the leopard upon his breast. They felt indignant, they said, that he—so insignificant a fellow—should be their successful rival. It would be a shame and reproach on them forever if they permitted him to advance farther. So they drove him away. In terror and disgust, Telinga sprang into the nearest tree, and, ascending to its highest boughs, vowed never again to live on the ground, where there is so much violence and injustice.

#### THE BLACK MONKEY AND THE LAND TURTLE.

One fine, warm morning a black monkey was playfully leaping from one branch of a tree to another, when he espied a turtle slowly emerge from a wood to enjoy, in his way, an early walk. He immediately thought he would have some fun with this dull creature, as he called him, and forthwith jumped upon his back for a ride. The turtle made every effort to rid himself of so annoying a companion, but in vain. He could only thrust out his head a little forward, and his arms were too short to defend himself from the enemy. At last he cried out, "Off with you, you *black* monkey." This

had the desired effect, as the monkey never liked to have his color alluded to, and went off determined to be revenged on one who had so grossly insulted him.

A few days after, all the beasts of the forest, as well as the creeping things, were invited by the monkey to a great dinner. When the turtle arrived he saw that the dishes were all placed upon a very high table, so high that it was quite impossible for him to reach it; and as he went round and round, vainly endeavoring to get a mouthful of either of the savory dishes the other guests seemed to be enjoying, the host constantly urged him to make himself at home, and eat and drink freely. He only answered, I wish you would all come and dine with me to-morrow, and then retired amidst the shouts and jeers of his companions. On the morrow the turtle said, "You see I live quite in nature's style; we all eat from one dish; but you, Mr. Monkey, can not be allowed to put your black hand in: go and wash it first." "It is my nature," said the hungry monkey; "I can not make it otherwise." "Here is a piece of the white man's soap, then; try its effects." The white foam that soon covered his hand for a moment made him hope, but on dipping it in the little brook that ran close by, it came out as black as ever. So he went home mortified and ashamed, but with this sage reflection: As none of us are without defects, it is well not to notice them in others.

## CHAPTER XII.

## SOUTHERN GUINEA.

Religious Creed and Superstitious Notions.—General Ideas of a Supreme Being.—The Name for God.—Different classes of Spirits.—Onyambe.—Ombwiri.—Abambo.—Inlâgâ.—Exorcisms.—Bushmen's Demon, called Mwetyi.—Worship of Ancestry.—Use of Images.—Relic Worship.—Spirit of the Woods.—Secret Society among Women.—Witchcraft: the means of detecting it.—Infant Baptism.

THE inhabitants of Northern and Southern Guinea have much in their religious creeds in common. The acknowledgement of one Supreme Being, the belief in a future state of existence, the presence of evil spirits, the belief in witchcraft, and the use of fetiches as a defense against it, as also many Jewish customs, are common to the inhabitants of both of these regions of country. As we have already treated of the most prominent forms of the superstition of Northern Guinea, in the present chapter we shall dwell on those points only which are peculiar to Southern Guinea, and we take those prevailing in the Mpongwe country as the general standard for the country at large.

The inhabitants of Southern Guinea are much the most superstitious of the two races, which is to be accounted for, in a measure at least, by the greater predominance of the imaginative faculty in their mental constitution. Their superstitious notions partake very much of the pliancy, versatility, and complication which characterize both their language and their personal character. Whether these superstitions have given form to their character and language, or the character and language of the people have moulded their

superstitious notions, it is not easy to decide. They have no doubt for a long time exerted a reciprocal influence upon each other, and one may be regarded as the counterpart of the other.

The Mpongwe word for God is *Anyambia*,\* the etymological meaning of which, it is supposed, is "good spirits." This name is constantly upon the lips of the people, but, it is feared, without much reverence for his sacred character. They think of Him as a being like themselves, possessing their own characteristics, good and bad, only in a higher degree. They have a clearer and higher idea of his power and wisdom than of his other attributes, and no doubt because these are more prominent in the works of creation. They have an idea of his goodness also, but this is never unmixed with notions of capriciousness and severity of character, especially in his dealings with men.

Next to God in the government of the world, according to their notions, are two spirits, *Ombwiri* and *Onyambe*, the former good and gentle, the latter hateful and wicked. The people seldom speak of *Onyambe*, and always evince uneasiness and displeasure when the name is mentioned in their presence. His influence over the affairs of men, in their estimation, does not amount to much, and the probability is that they have no very definite notions about the real character of this spirit. The derivation of the word *Ombwiri* is not known. As it is used in the plural as well as in the singular form, it no doubt represents a class or family of spirits. He is regarded as a tutelar, or guardian spirit. Almost every man has his own *Ombwiri*, for which he provides a small house near his own. All the harm that is escaped in this world, and all the good secured, are ascribed to the kindly offices of this guardian spirit. *Ombwiri* is also regarded as the author of every thing in the world which is

\* The probable derivation is *aninla*, spirits, and *ambia*, good, which, run together as their words frequently are, would make *Anyambia*.

marvelous or mysterious. Any remarkable feature in the physical aspect of the country, any notable phenomenon in the heavens, or extraordinary events in the affairs of men, are ascribed to Ombwiri. His favorite places of abode are the summits of high mountains, deep caverns, large rocks, and the base of very large forest trees. And while the people attach no malignity to his character, they carefully guard against all unnecessary familiarity in their intercourse with him, and never pass a place where he is supposed to dwell except in silence. He is the only one of all the spirits recognized by the people that has no priesthood, his intercourse with men being direct and immediate.

Next to these two come two other classes of spirits, the worship of whom forms the most prominent feature in the superstitious practices of the country. One of these is known by the term *Abambo*, and the other *Inlâgâ*. Both terms are of the plural form, and may, therefore, be regarded as forming a class of spirits instead of single individuals. Both of them are the spirits of dead men; but whether they are positively good, or positively evil, to be loved or hated, to be courted or avoided, are points which no native of the country can answer satisfactorily. *Abambo* are the spirits of the ancestors of the people, and *Inlâgâ* are the spirits of strangers, and have come from a distance. These are the spirits with which men are possessed, and there is no end to the ceremonies used to deliver them from their power. Sick persons, and especially those that are afflicted with nervous disorders, are supposed to be possessed by one or the other of these spirits. If the disease assumes a serious form, the patient is taken to the priest or priestess of one or the other of these spirits. Certain tests are applied, and it is soon ascertained to which class the disease belongs, and the patient is accordingly turned over to the proper priest. The ceremonies in the two cases are not materially different—they are alike, at least, in the employment of an almost endless round of ab-

surd, unmeaning, and disgusting ceremonies, which none but a heathenish and ignorant priesthood could invent, and none but a poor, ignorant, and superstitious people could ever tolerate.

In either case a temporary shanty is erected in the middle of the street for the occupancy of the patient, the priest, and such persons as are to take part in the ceremony of exorcism. The time employed in performing the ceremonies is seldom less than ten or fifteen days. During this period dancing, drumming, feasting, and drinking are kept up without intermission day and night, and all at the expense of the nearest relatives of the invalid. The patient, if a female, is decked out in the most fantastic costume; her face, bosom, arms, and legs are streaked with red and white chalk, her head adorned with red feathers, and much of the time she promenades the open space in front of the shanty with a sword in her hand, which she brandishes in a very menacing way against the by-standers. At the same time she assumes as much of the maniac in her looks, actions, gestures, and walk, as possible. In many cases this is all mere affectation, and no one is deceived by it. But there are other cases where these motions seem involuntary and entirely beyond the control of the person; and when you watch the wild and unnatural stare, the convulsive movements of the limbs and body, the unnatural posture into which the whole frame is occasionally thrown, the gnashing of the teeth, and foaming at the mouth, and the supernatural strength that is put forth when any attempt is made at constraint, you are strongly reminded of cases of real possession recorded in the New Testament.

There is no reason to suppose that any real cures are effected by these prolonged ceremonies. In certain nervous affections the excitement is kept up until utter exhaustion takes place; and if the patient is kept quiet afterward, which is generally the case, she may be restored to better health

after a while; and no matter how long it may be before she recovers from this severe tax upon her nerves, the priest claims the credit of it. In other cases the patient may not have been diseased at all, and, of course, there was nothing to be recovered from. If it should be a case of undissembled sickness, and the patient becomes worse by this unnatural treatment, she is removed, the ceremonies are suspended, and it is concluded that it was not a real possession, but something else. The priests have certain tests by which it is known when the patient is healed, and the whole transaction is wound up when his fees are paid. In all cases of this kind it is impossible to say whether the devil has really been cast out, or merely a better understanding effected between him and the person he has been tormenting. The individual is required to build a little house, or temple, for the spirit near his own, take occasional offerings to him, and pay all due respect to his character, or be subject to renewed assaults at any time. Certain restrictions are imposed upon persons who have recovered from these satanic influences. He must refrain from certain kinds of food, avoid certain places of common resort, and perform certain duties; and for the neglect of any of these, is sure to be severely scourged by a return of his malady. Like the Jews, in speaking of the actions of these demoniacs, they are said to be done by the spirit, and not the person who is possessed. If the person performs any unnatural or revolting act, as the biting off of the head of a live chicken and sucking its blood, it is said that the spirit, not the man, has done it.

But the views of the great mass of the people on these subjects are exceedingly vague and indefinite. They attend these ceremonies on account of the parade and excitement that usually accompany them. But they have no knowledge of their origin, their true nature, or of their results. Many submit to the ceremonies because they are persuaded to do so by their friends, and, no doubt, in many cases, with

the hope of being freed from some troublesome malady. But as to the meaning of the ceremonies themselves, or the real influence which they exert upon their bodily diseases, they probably have many doubts, and when called upon to give explanation of the process which they have passed through, they show that they have none but the most confused ideas.

The Shekani and Bakèle people, who live in the adjoining country of the Mpongwes, have a Great Spirit whom they call *Mwetyi*. He is supposed to dwell in the bowels of the earth, but comes to the surface of the ground at stated seasons, or when summoned on any special business. A large, flat house, of peculiar form, covered with dried plantain-leaves, is erected in the middle of the village for the temporary sojourn of this spirit, and it is from this that he gives forth his oracular answers. The house is always kept perfectly dark, and no one is permitted to enter it, except those who have been initiated into all the mysteries of the order, which includes, however, almost the whole of the adult male population of the village. Strange noises issue forth from this dark den, not unlike the growling of a tiger, which the knowing ones interpret to suit their own purposes. The women and children are kept in a state of constant trepidation by his presence; and, no doubt, one of the chief ends of the ceremonies connected with the visits of this mysterious being is to keep the women and children in a state of subordination. He is the great African *Blue Beard* whom every woman and child in the country holds in the utmost dread. Every boy, from the age of fourteen to eighteen years, is initiated into all the secrets pertaining to this Great Spirit. The term of discipleship is continued for a year or more, during which period they are subjected to a good deal of rough treatment—such, undoubtedly, as make a lasting impression both upon their physical and mental natures, and prevent them from divulging the secrets of the order. At the time of matriculation a vow is imposed, such as refrain-

ing from a particular article of food or drink, and is binding for life.

When Mwetyi is about to retire from a village where he has been discharging his manifold functions, the women, children, and any strangers who may be there at the time, are required to leave the village. What ceremonies are performed at the time of his dismissal is known, of course, only to the initiated.

When a covenant is about to be formed among the different tribes, *Mwetyi* is always invoked as a witness, and is commissioned with the duty of visiting vengeance upon the party who shall violate the engagement. Without this their national treaties would have little or no force. When a law is passed which the people wish to be especially binding, they invoke the vengeance of *Mwetyi* upon every transgressor, and this, as a general thing, is ample guarantee for its observance. The Mpongwe people sometimes call in the Shekanis to aid them, through the agency of this Great Spirit, to give sanctity and authority to their laws.

The worship of ancestors is a marked and distinguishing characteristic of the religious system of Southern Guinea. This is something more definite and intelligible than the religious ceremonies performed in connection with the spirits just mentioned.

There is no part of the world where respect and veneration for age is carried to a greater length than among this people. For those who are high in office, and who have been successful in trade, or in war, or in any other way have rendered themselves distinguished among their fellow-men, this respect, in some outward forms at least, amounts almost to adoration; and proportionately so when the person has attained to advanced age. All the younger members of society are early trained to show the utmost deference to age. They must never come into the presence of aged persons or pass by their dwellings without taking off their hats,

and assuming a crouching gait. When seated in their presence it must always be at a "respectful distance"—a distance proportioned to the difference in their ages and position in society. If they come near enough to hand an aged man a lighted pipe or a glass of water, the bearer must always fall upon one knee. Aged persons must always be addressed as "father" (*rera*), or "mother" (*ngwe*). Any disrespectful deportment or reproachful language toward such persons is regarded as a misdemeanor of no ordinary aggravation. A youthful person carefully avoids communicating any disagreeable intelligence to such persons, and almost always addresses them in terms of flattery and adulation. And there is nothing which a young person so much deprecates as the curse of an aged person, and especially that of a revered father.

This profound respect for aged persons, by a very natural operation of the mind, is turned into idolatrous regard for them when dead. It is not supposed that they are divested of their power and influence by death; but, on the contrary, they are raised to a higher and more powerful sphere of influence, and hence the natural disposition of the living, and especially those related to them in any way in this world, to look to them and call upon them for aid in all the emergencies and trials of life. It is no uncommon thing to see large groups of men and women, in times of peril or distress, assembled along the brow of some commanding eminence, or along the skirts of some dense forest, calling in the most piteous and touching tones upon the spirits of their ancestors.

Images are used in the worship of ancestors, but they are seldom exposed to public view. They are kept in some secret corner, and the man who has them in charge, especially if they are intended to represent a father or predecessor in office, takes food and drink to them, and a very small portion of almost every thing that is gained in trade.

But a yet more prominent feature of this ancestral wor-

ship is to be found in the preservation and adoration of the bones of the dead, which may be fairly regarded as a species of *relic* worship. The skulls of distinguished persons are preserved with the utmost care, but always kept out of sight. I have known the head of a distinguished man to be dissevered from the body when it was but partially decomposed, and suspended so as to drip upon a mass of chalk provided for the purpose. The brain is supposed to be the seat of wisdom, and the chalk absorbs this by being placed under the head during the process of decomposition. By applying this to the foreheads of the living, it is supposed they will imbibe the wisdom of the person whose brain has dripped upon the chalk.

In some cases all the bones of a beloved father or a mother are, after having been dried, kept in a wooden chest, for which a small house is provided, where the son or daughter goes stately to hold communication with their spirits. They do not pretend to have any audible responses from them, but it is a relief to their minds in their more serious moods to go and pour out all the sorrows of their hearts in the ear of a revered parent.

This belief, however much of superstition it involves, exerts a very powerful influence upon the social character of the people. It establishes a bond of affection between the parent and child much stronger than could be expected among a people wholly given up to heathenism. It teaches the child to look up to the parent not only as its earthly protector, but as a friend in the spirit-land. It strengthens the bonds of filial affection, and keeps up a lively impression of a future state of being. The living prize the aid of the dead, and it is not uncommon to send messages to them by some one who is on the point of dying; and so greatly is this kind of aid prized by the living, that I have known an aged mother to avoid the presence of her sons, least she should, by some secret means, be dispatched prematurely to the spirit world,

for the double purpose of easing them of the burden of taking care of her, and securing for themselves more effective aid than she could render them in this world.

All their dreams are construed into visits from the spirits of their deceased friends. The cautions, hints, and warnings which come to them through this source, are received with the most serious and deferential attention, and are always acted upon in their waking hours. The habit of relating their dreams, which is universal, greatly promotes the habit of dreaming itself, and hence their sleeping hours are characterized by almost as much intercourse with the dead as their waking are with the living. This is, no doubt, one of the reasons of their excessive superstitiousness. Their imaginations become so lively that they can scarcely distinguish between their dreams and their waking thoughts, between the real and the ideal, and they consequently utter falsehood without intending, and profess to see things which never existed.

The people of Southern Guinea have many secret associations. One of the most prominent among them is the association called *Ndd*, and is confined to the adult male population. It is headed by a spirit of this name, who dwells in the woods, and appears only when summoned by some unusual event, at the death of a person connected with the order—at the birth of twins, or at the inauguration of some one into office. His voice is never heard except at night, and after the people have retired to rest. He enters the village from the woodside, and is so bundled up in dried plantain leaves that no one would suspect him of belonging to the human species. He is always accompanied by a train of young men, and the party dance to a peculiar and somewhat plaintive air on a flute-like instrument as they parade the streets. As soon as it is known that he has entered the village, the women and children hurry away to their rooms to hide themselves. If they should have the misfortune to

see Ndâ, or should be discovered peeping at him through the cracks of the houses, they would be thrashed almost to death. Perhaps no woman has ever had the temerity to cast eyes upon this mysterious being. Ndâ frequently stops in front of the dwelling of a man who is known to have rum in his possession, and exacts a bottle, in default of which his property would be injured. The leading men of the village show the utmost deference to his authority, and no doubt for the purpose of making a stronger impression upon the minds of the women and children. If a distinguished person dies, Ndâ affects great rage, and comes the following night with a large posse of men to seize the property of the villagers without discrimination. He is sure to lay hands on as many sheep and goats as are necessary to make a grand feast, and no man has any right to complain. Many take the precaution to lock up their sheep and other live stock in their dwelling-houses the night before, and in this way alone can they escape the ravages of this monster of the woods, who is sure to commit depredations somewhat in proportion to the importance and rank of the man who has died. The institution of Ndâ, like that of Mwetyi, is intended to keep the women, children, and slaves in subjection. I once heard a man who belonged to the order to acknowledge that there was no such spirit; "but how," said he, "shall we govern our women and our slaves if we do away with the impression that there is such a being."

The women of the Mpongwe country, on the other hand, have an institution called *Njembe*, which is a pretty fair counterpart to that of Ndâ. There is no spirit, so far as is known, connected with this association, but all its proceedings are kept profoundly secret. The women consider it an honor to belong to the order, and no one can be admitted without the payment of an initiation fee, which is very considerable. The ceremony of initiation requires several weeks, and girls at the age of ten or twelve years may

be admitted if their parents will bear the expense of it. During the process of initiation all the women belonging to the order paint their bodies in the most fantastic colors. The face, arms, breast, and legs, are covered over with red and white spots, sometimes arranged in circles, and at other times in straight lines. They march in regular file from the village to the woods, where all their ceremonies are performed, accompanied by music on a crescent-formed drum. The party spend whole nights in the woods, and sometimes exposed to the heaviest showers of rain. A sort of vestal-fire is used in celebration of these ceremonies, and it is never allowed to go out until they are all over.

The Njembe make great pretensions, and, as a body, are really feared by the men. They pretend to detect thieves, to find out the secrets of their enemies, and in various ways they are useful to the community in which they live, or are, at least, so regarded by the people. The object of the institution originally, no doubt, was to protect the females from harsh treatment on the part of their husbands; and as their performances are always veiled in mystery, and they have acquired the reputation of performing wonders, the men are, no doubt, very much restrained by the fear and respect which they have for them as a body.

There is still another association called *Kukwi*, which, however, combines neither the secrecy nor sacredness of either of the other two which have just been described. It is, indeed, a sort of theatrical affair, intended more as a public amusement than any thing else. From a queer-looking house, built chiefly of reeds and leaves, issues a man with a most hideous mask, mounted upon a pair of stilts which makes his whole figure ten or twelve feet high. The mask is immensely large, and presents one of the most hideous faces that can be conceived. He carries a sword in his hand, with which he occasionally menaces the by-standers as he stalks about like a giant in the open space. He is always

surrounded by half a dozen or more young men who sing and clap their hands, and are always ready to hold him up in case he trips or breaks his leg. His gait is most unseemly and grotesque; and when you couple with this the hideousness of the mask, it is not surprising that the women and children always give way as he approaches the place where they are.

Witchcraft, and the use of fetiches as a means of protection against it, is carried to a greater extent here than in Northern Guinea, owing, no doubt, to the greater imaginativeness of the people. The marvels performed by those who are supposed to possess this mysterious art transcend all the bounds of credulity. A man can turn himself into a tiger and destroy the property and lives of his fellow-men. He can turn his enemy into an elephant and kill him. He can cause the clouds to pour out torrents of rain or hold back at his pleasure.

A different article is used here for the detection of witchcraft from that used in Northern Guinea. The root of a small shrub, called *Nkazy*, is employed, and is more powerful than that used in the other section of the country. A person is seldom required to drink more than half a pint of the decoction. If it acts freely as a diuretic it is a mark of innocence; but if as a narcotic, and produces dizziness or vertigo, it is a sure sign of guilt. Small sticks are laid down at the distance of eighteen inches or two feet apart, and the suspected person, after he has swallowed the draught, is required to walk over them. If he has no vertigo, he steps over them easily and naturally; but, on the other hand, if his brain is affected, he imagines they rise up before him like great logs, and in his awkward effort to step over them, is very apt to reel and fall to the ground. In some cases this draught is taken by proxy; and if a man is found guilty, he is either put to death or heavily fined and banished from the country. In many cases *post-mortem* examinations are made with the

view of finding the actual witch. I have known the mouth of the aorta to be cut out of a corpse and shown as unanswerable proof that the man had the actual power of witchcraft. No one can resent the death of one under such circumstances. He is supposed to have been killed by the awkward management of an instrument that was intended for the destruction of others, and it is rather a cause of congratulation to the living that he is caught in a snare of his own devising.

The traces of Judaism here are not less numerous than in other parts of Africa. Circumcision, bloody sacrifices, demoniacal possession, the observance of new moons, mourning for the dead, purifications, and various other observances of a like character, are practiced throughout the whole country. They have also a practice which strongly resembles infant baptism. The moment a child is born it is proclaimed in the streets so that every body may know it. A public crier announces the fact, and claims for it a name and place among the living. Some one else, in a distant part of the town, acknowledges the fact, and promises, on the part of the people, that the new-born babe shall be received into the community, and have all the rights and immunities pertaining to the rest of the people. The population then assemble in the streets, and the new-born babe is brought out and exposed to public view. A basin of water is provided, and the head man of the town or family sprinkles water upon it, giving it a name, and invoking a blessing upon it, such as that it may have health, grow up to manhood or womanhood, have a numerous progeny, possess much riches, etc. Most of the people present follow the example of the head man, and the poor child is pretty thoroughly drenched before the ceremony is ended. Every one who participates in the ceremony pledges himself to be a friend of the child.

The people have no knowledge of the origin of this practice. They do it because their fathers did it, and they sel-

dom trouble themselves with any inquiries beyond this. It is probable that the practice has traveled across the continent from Abyssinia, where the institutions of the Christian religion were planted at a very early period, and where they are still continued, though greatly corrupted and disfigured.

# PART IV.

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## CHAPTER I.

### LIBERIA.

Its Geographical Limits.—Population.—Monrovia.—Trade.—Agriculture.—Encouragements.—Labors of Missionary Societies.—Objects which the Friends of Liberia ought to aim at.—Health Station.—Union of Liberia and the British Colonies of Sierra Leone and Gambia.

AMERICAN readers are familiar with the objects of the colonization scheme, and the history of the Liberian settlement from the earliest period of its existence. It is no part of our design, therefore, to enter into any details connected with either of these. We propose simply to give our impressions of the present state of the Republic of Liberia, and its prospects; and to offer such suggestions as we think will be of importance to those in this country who are engaged in carrying on the enterprise, and to the Liberians themselves.

The extreme points along the sea-coast occupied by the Liberians are Cape Mount and Cape Palmas, distant from each other about three hundred miles.\* The government of Liberia claims jurisdiction somewhat beyond both of these points, but her influence and authority, for the present, at

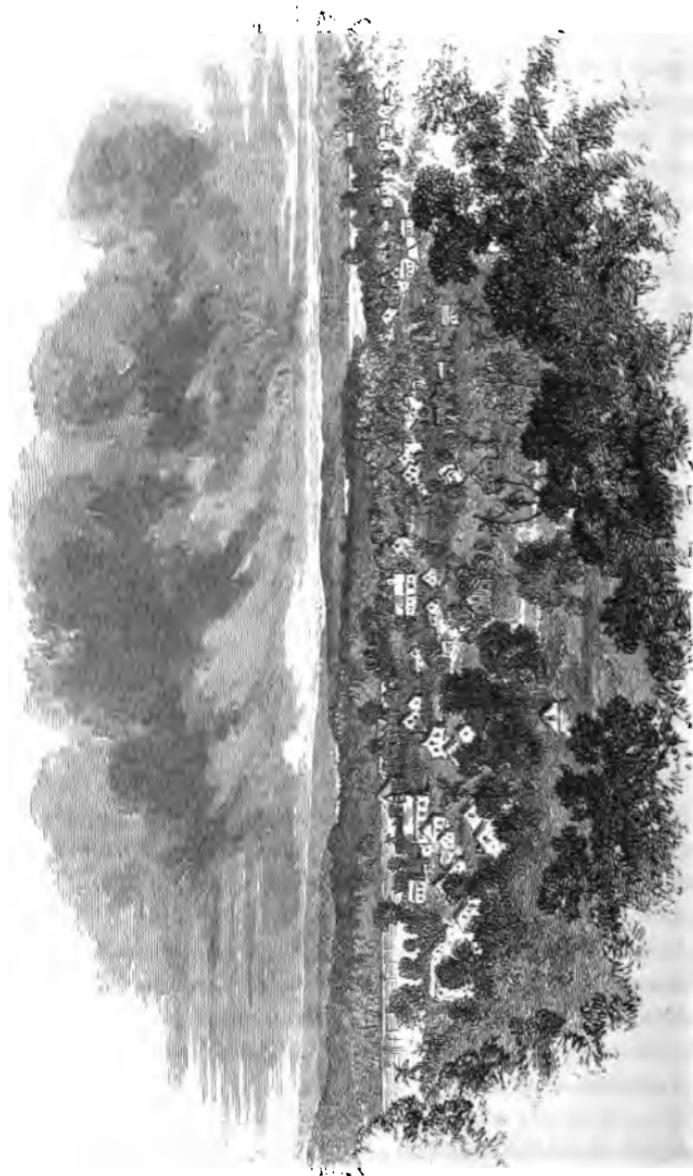
\* Cape Palmas colony was founded by the Maryland Colonization Society, and is still independent of Liberia proper, but we include the whole under the general name.



least, is confined within these limits. Along this line of coast there are six settlements of American colored people; viz., at Cape Mount, Cape Messurado, River Junk, Basa, Sinou, and Cape Palmas, which vary in distance from each other from thirty to one hundred miles. There is little or no intercourse, however, between these different settlements, except by vessels running along the coast.

The settlement at Cape Mount is in the incipient stages of its existence, having been commenced within the year past. The banks of the St. Paul are occupied to the distance of twenty-five miles from the sea-coast; the principal settlements of which are known as New Georgia, Virginia, Caldwell, Kentucky, and Millsburgh. These are all connected with, and somewhat dependent upon Monrovia, the principal sea-port town. Marshall, on the Junk River, is a small village of not more than two or three hundred inhabitants. At Basa there are three principal towns, viz., Edina, Buchanan, and Bexley. The two first are situated on opposite sides of the St. John's River near its outlet, and the third at the distance of six or seven miles up the river. The principal settlement at Sinou is immediately along the sea-beach, but there are farming settlements to the distance of six or eight miles interiorward. At Cape Palmas the colonists have extended themselves over the country to the distance of four or five miles. Monrovia is the largest and the most important of all these communities. Its population is estimated at 1500. Sinou is the next in size, and has a population of something like 1000; and the American population at Cape Palmas is estimated about the same. The entire population of Liberia, inclusive of that at Cape Palmas, is estimated by Dr. Lugenbeel, who lived in the country for some time, at 8000. The aboriginal population of the same bounds, *i. e.*, from Cape Mount to Cape Palmas, over a belt of country of twenty-five miles, is supposed to be about 200,000. Of these we have already given some account.





MONROVIA, THE CAPITAL OF LIBERIA.

The jurisdiction of Liberia extends over this whole region of country, but the native inhabitants manage their own internal affairs as in former times, except that they are not allowed to make war with each other, or carry on the foreign slave-trade. These points were conceded when they placed themselves under the jurisdiction of the government of Liberia; and this is all the authority that it would be safe or practicable for the government to attempt, so long as the relative strength of the two parties is so disproportionately great. The British government has conceded to the Liberians the right of jurisdiction over this region, and their vessels, in consequence, have to pay duties upon all English goods imported into the country. Traders of other nations have tacitly yielded to the same regulations, and these duties on foreign goods form the chief revenues of the government.

It is difficult, in a narrow compass, to give a satisfactory idea of the actual progress which the Liberians have made in the arts of civilization, or in founding for themselves a permanent and flourishing home on the barbarous shores of Africa.

Monrovia, the principal and largest town in the republic, will compare without disadvantage, in general appearance, with most of the inland towns of our own country of similar size and population, but not with the energy and rapid growth which characterize the latter. It is situated on the peninsula of Cape Messurado, is about three quarters of a mile long and half that distance in breadth. Most of the dwelling-houses are framed buildings of one or one story and a half high, raised on a stone or brick foundation of six or eight feet. Most of them are painted or whitewashed, and present quite an air of neatness and comfort. There are also a few brick dwelling-houses of two stories, neat in outward appearance and generally well furnished. There are three substantial brick or stone churches, and the fourth is in process

of erection. Below the high bluff upon which the town stands, and very near to the water's edge, there are six or seven large, substantial stone warehouses, where most of the commercial business of the place is transacted.

Trade is the chosen employment of the great mass of the Liberians, and some of them have been decidedly successful in this vocation. It consists in the exchange of articles of American or European manufacture for the natural products of the country, of which palm-oil, cam-wood, and ivory are the principal articles. Cam-wood is a rich dye-wood, and is brought to Monrovia on the shoulders of the natives from a great distance. It is worth, in the European and American markets, from sixty to eighty dollars per ton. The ivory of this region does not form an important item of commerce. Palm-oil is the main article of export, and is procured along the sea-coast between Monrovia and Cape Palmas. The Liberian merchants own a number of small vessels, built by themselves, and varying in size from ten or fifteen to forty or fifty tons. These are navigated by the Liberians sailors, and are constantly engaged in bringing palm-oil to Monrovia, from whence it is again shipped in foreign vessels for Liverpool or New York. I made inquiry, during a short sojourn at this place in 1852, on my way to this country, about the amount of property owned by the wealthier merchants of Monrovia, and learned that there were four or five who were worth from \$15,000 to \$20,000, a larger number who owned property to the amount of \$10,000, and perhaps twelve or fifteen who were worth as much as \$5000. The property of some of these may have increased materially since that time.

The settlers along the banks of the St. Paul have given more attention to the cultivation of the soil. They raise sweet potatoes, cassava, and plantains, for their own use, and also supply the Monrovia market with the same. Ground nuts and arrow-root are also cultivated, but to a very limited extent. A few individuals have cultivated the sugar-

cane with success, and have manufactured a considerable quantity of excellent sugar and molasses. Some attention has been given to the cultivation of the coffee-tree. It grows luxuriantly, and bears most abundantly. The flavor of the coffee is as fine as any in the world, and if the Liberians would give the attention to it that they ought, it would probably be as highly esteemed as any other in the world. It is easily cultivated, and requires little or no outlay of capital, and we are surprised that it has not already become an article of export. The want of disposition to cultivate the soil is, perhaps, the most discouraging feature in the prospects of Liberia. Mercantile pursuits are followed with zeal and energy, but comparatively few are willing to till the ground for the means of subsistence.

The consequence is, that the community are still dependent upon this country, and the industry of the aborigines around them, for the principal part of their provisions. We were glad to learn, however, that there has been some improvement in this respect within a few years past, and every step taken in this direction is preparing the way for still greater improvement. An unsuccessful attempt was made a few years since to introduce the growth of cotton; but the failure, we apprehend, was owing to its having been planted at the wrong season of the year, so as to ripen in the midst of the heaviest rains. On the Gold Coast, and still farther to the south, experiments have been made which show that it can be cultivated as advantageously in Western Africa as in any other part of the world.

A stranger, in his early intercourse with Liberians, would be likely to meet with traits of character to which he would justly take exception. The air of self-sufficiency, egotism, and absurd pretensions which he would now and then encounter, would be distasteful enough; but he would see little of this among the more respectable and intelligent classes. On the other hand, he would be surprised by the intelligence,

manliness, independence, and honorable bearing of those with whom he would be brought in daily intercourse: and this must be ascribed, in a very great measure, to their present circumstances. Here they have a feeling of national pride; they have been called to the exercise of the rights and privileges of freemen and citizens; they are not overshadowed by a more powerful race, and they have incentives to honorable competition which they could never have had if they had remained in the United States.

After the most mature consideration which it has been in our power to give the subject, we see no reason why Liberia may not, in the course of time, take a respectable stand among the civilized nations of the earth. On this subject we are free to confess that we entertain more hopeful views than we did in the earlier period of our acquaintance with the country.

It will require time, however, and other influences, to bring about any very important results. The material out of which the nation is to be built up, must be energized and refined before it can be made available in the construction of a happy and permanent government. The people must have moral, religious, and educational training; and while this can be accomplished only by a slow process, it is equally true that it can be done nowhere so advantageously as on the soil which is to be their future homes. In working out the great problem of their future destiny the Liberians ought not to be left wholly to their own resources. While there are individuals among them of intelligence and force of character enough to sustain themselves any where, the great mass of them, it can not be denied, are too weak to withstand the influences of barbarism and superstition with which they must be surrounded in their new homes. The commercial activity which has characterized the Monrovia for some years past, must be ascribed, in a great measure, to the friendly interest manifested in them by the people of the United States, by the leading governments of

Western Europe, and the constant intercourse which they have had with the commercial world.

The missionary societies of this country, in their efforts to promote the cause of education and religion among the Liberians, are doing a work of indispensable importance to the welfare of the people. It may be regarded as a providential circumstance, too, that these societies, in consequence of the unhealthiness of the climate, which renders it impracticable to employ a large number of white laborers, are under the necessity of using the agency of colored men chiefly in carrying on this work. These we do not regard as yet qualified to take the principal management of missionary affairs. They may, however, under proper superintendence, render important aid, and ultimately the work may be intrusted entirely to their hands.

Important, however, as the labors of these colored men are to the great objects contemplated by the missionary societies, there is one sense in which the employment of so many of them is a serious detriment to the temporal welfare of the community. The withdrawal of forty or fifty of the most substantial men from agricultural and other secular pursuits must be seriously felt in the infancy of the nation. Here, then, are two very important interests in conflict, and how they are to be reconciled it is not easy to determine. Perhaps if fewer were employed in the missionary work, and those were required to devote themselves more exclusively and heartily to their special calling, the desired object might be attained without injury to the general welfare of the country. We think it very unfortunate that colored ministers and missionaries should consider themselves under the necessity of combining with their appropriate calling those of the politician, the legislator, and the lawyer. If the plan we have suggested were carried into effect, then no plea of necessity could be urged in justification of this anomalous and very objectional practice.

Another thing against which it behooves these missionary societies to be guarded, is that of doing too much for the Liberians, in the way of providing gratuitous education and preaching. We regard it as one of the chief failings of the Liberians, and one of the most serious hinderances to their improvement, that they are too willing to be taken care of. They have no self-supporting schools; very little has been done to support the Gospel among themselves; and there is a disposition to look to the missionary societies to do every thing of the kind for them; and the sooner they are *taught* to depend upon themselves the better.

Another object which ought to be kept constantly before the minds of those who feel an interest in the general welfare of the country is, that the moral and religious improvement of the natives should be cared for as well as that of the Liberians. If one class is educated and improved to the neglect of the other, then the neglected one must be doomed to the task of drawing water and hewing wood all the days of their life; and their fate must be that of all other barbarous tribes who have been brought in contact with civilized men without the intervention of the Gospel.

The directors of the colonization enterprise, we think, have erred in directing their efforts too exclusively to the one object of transporting emigrants to Liberia. Many regard the number actually sent out as the true, if not the only, test of the prosperity of the enterprise. But this is a serious mistake, and if adhered to much longer, may prove the ruin of the cause. It requires something more than mere numbers to constitute a thrifty and flourishing commonwealth. On the other hand, an undue accumulation of idleness, improvidence, and vice, such as would be likely to accrue from thrusting large numbers of these people indiscriminately into the bosom of this infant republic, would certainly result in its entire overthrow. Virtue, intelligence, and sound piety, must keep pace with the growth and extension of the enter-

prise, and these require time and culture to bring them to maturity. Besides which, it is a matter of the utmost importance that something should be done to improve the country and make it attractive to emigrants. If the pecuniary resources of the Society were devoted mainly to internal improvements for five or six years to come, especially in erecting comfortable receptacles for newly-arrived emigrants, in establishing saw-mills, introducing draught animals, and constructing good roads, very little else would be needed to induce colored persons to emigrate, and no doubt quite as fast as it would be compatible with the interest of the community to receive them.

Another great drawback to the prosperity of Liberia is the undoubted unhealthiness of the climate, which, however, it is thought, is confined to the immediate sea-coast region. The process of acclimation must be passed through even by colored persons, and for the first six months it is quite as trying to them as it is to whites. The only difference between the two is, that one may, after a certain time, become inured to the climate, while the other can scarcely ever become so. During the process of acclimation, which is very variable in duration, the emigrant is apt to become very much discouraged, and wishes himself back in the land of bondage. And it is not surprising that he should. To commence life anew in these trying circumstances, without health or pecuniary resources, requires more buoyancy and perseverance than the generality of them possess. Under the deep discouragement engendered by such circumstances many have returned to this country, and done more harm to the enterprise than all its other enemies put together. We are glad to learn that a scheme is on foot to form a health station some distance from the sea-coast, to which emigrants may be taken without tarrying more than a single night in the unhealthy district. The idea is an important one, and it deserves, to say the least, a fair trial. The measure will

be attended with some difficulty, and it is not absolutely certain that a healthy district can be found within fifty or sixty miles of the sea-coast; but the object is one of great, if not indispensable, importance to the success of the whole enterprise, and no time should be spared in bringing the matter to a practical issue.

But the great object which the Liberians and the friends of colonization in this country ought to aim to effect just now, is the union of the Republic of Liberia and the British colonies of Sierra Leone and Gambia under one independent government. This measure is one of the greatest importance to both parties, and without it we do not see how either can ever rise to respectability among the nations of the earth. By this arrangement they would acquire a frontier sea-coast of more than eight hundred miles, which would furnish ample territory for all the emigrants that would go there, either from this country or from the West Indies, for a century to come, and that without crowding or necessarily disturbing the aboriginal population. By the same arrangement they would secure at least three excellent sea-ports, one large-sized navigable river, and at least half a dozen smaller ones, that would afford the means of much internal commerce. To the Liberians this would be a most weighty consideration, especially as they have not along the whole of their present sea-coast a single harbor. In the course of time, if the circumstances of the case seemed to require it, an arrangement might be effected with the French government by which their sea-coast line might be extended to the Senegal.

This proposed expansion would give importance and dignity to the whole enterprise, and would thus command the respect of the free colored man in all parts of the world. It would multiply the nuclei for the formation of civilized settlements, which would gradually extend themselves, and ultimately make their influence felt over the whole country. If the cause of education and religion is promoted among the

aborigines at the same time, these settlements would receive as important and as rapid accessions from this source as from the foreign immigration. The intermingling of these varied elements would be of great value to all parties. The Liberians have certain elements of civilization that would be of great importance to the British colonists; and the colonists, on the other hand, have certain traits of character that the Liberians might borrow with great benefit. For a time it might be important for the governments of Great Britain and the United States to exercise a kind of joint protectorate over this confederate government; and this might be done without interfering with their internal affairs, or hindering in the slightest degree the development of the colored man's powers of self-government. Perhaps the most difficult task would be to induce these two governments to enter into any such arrangement. And yet it would be easy to show that both countries have a deep interest in such a measure.

Every day's experience is furnishing new proof that the United States is not the country for the free man of color. His improvement here, in the higher sense of that term, amounts almost to an impossibility. The feeling, prejudice, or whatever it may be that prevents it, in its origin and effects may be wrong, but still it is there, and it is alike preposterous and absurd to contend with it. The energies of the colored man had better be devoted to a higher and more attainable object. And this conviction, we have no doubt, will ultimately fix as strongly upon their own minds, as it does upon the minds of the great mass of white men at the present time. When this becomes the case, they will probably turn their eyes to Africa as their home. The people of the United States, when they come to look at the subject in its proper light, will feel an interest in the removal of the free colored people to Africa, not only on the score of kind feeling and humanity, but of commercial interest. The resources of Africa have as yet scarcely begun to be developed. The

multiplication of settlements of civilized men along the western coast would give a new impulse to this commerce, and no nation in the world would have a greater interest in it than our own.

The British government ought to be equally interested in consummating the proposed arrangement. The object for which Sierra Leone has been so long sustained is in a great measure superseded. In its present condition it is little else than a tax to the parent country. But under the circumstances that have been suggested, it would soon become self-sustaining. In the proposed enlargement a more extensive market would be opened to her manufacturers. But the great object with the British government undoubtedly would be the culture of cotton, with which the American colored emigrants are acquainted. Where could England find a more convenient or more promising field for the culture of this staple which has become so indispensable to her prosperity as a nation? This consideration alone, we should think, would be sufficient to induce her to lend her aid in removing the free colored people from this country to Africa. Perhaps in no other way can she more effectually promote her own interest, or make amends for the leading part she once took in tearing their forefathers from the land of their nativity.

## CHAPTER II.

## SIERRA LEONE.

Its Boundaries.—Origin.—Reverses.—Three successive Immigrations.—Destroyed by a French Man-of-war.—Its Population.—Introduction of Recaptives.—The Labors of the Church and Wesleyan Missionary Societies.—Improvement made.—Dr. Ferguson's Description of the native Population in Sierra Leone.

SIERRA LEONE is a mountainous peninsula twenty-five or thirty miles long from north to south, and something less than this in breadth. On the west and south it borders on the Atlantic, and on the north and east it is bounded by the river and bay of Sierra Leone. The mountain range forming the backbone of the peninsula varies in height from two to three thousand feet, and slopes gradually to the ocean on the west, and the Sierra Leone River on the east. Its outlines are bold, and the landscape-view on either side is rich and imposing. Free-town, the capital of the colony, is situated on the south side of the river, and is surrounded on the west by a magnificent amphitheatre of hills and mountains. The slopes of the mountain, which are now partially cleared of the original forest growth, are dotted in every direction by neat little villages of recaptives, and, taken altogether, there is no place on the whole coast which presents more striking proofs of civilization and real thrift than Sierra Leone.

The circumstances which led to the establishment of this colony are pretty generally known, and we shall, therefore, restrict ourselves to a few general facts in connection with its origin and subsequent history.

During the war of the Revolution a large number of

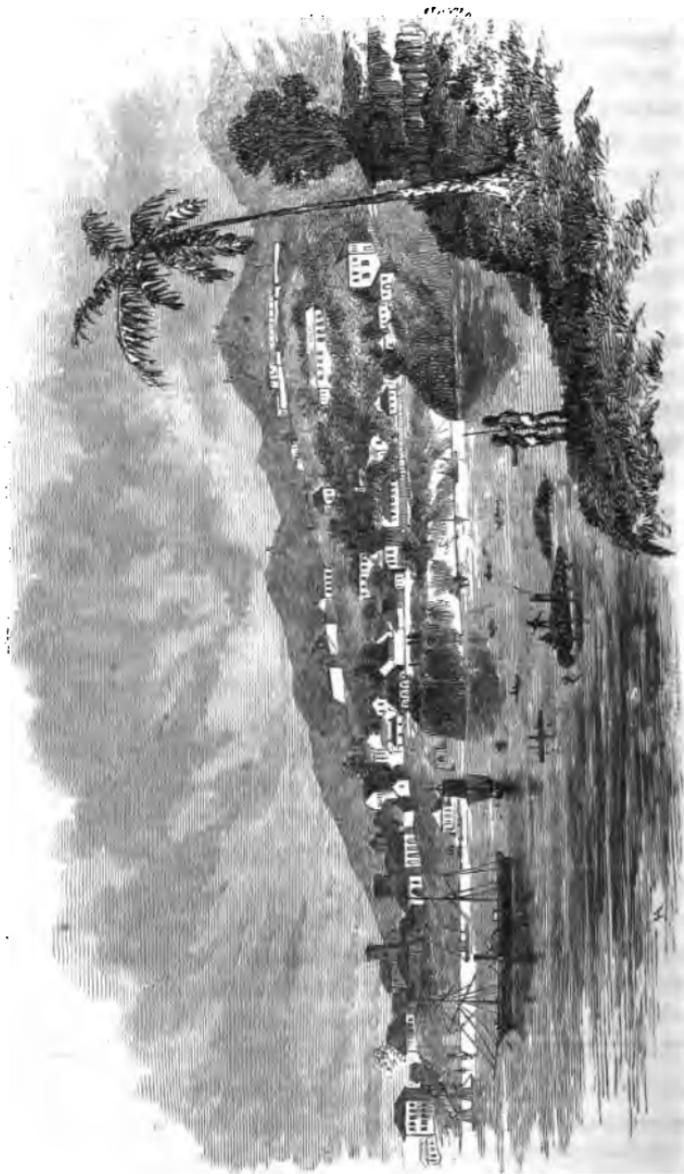
blacks, chiefly runaway slaves, ranged themselves under the British banner. At the close of the war a large number of these betook themselves to Nova Scotia with the view of making that their future home; while others followed the army, to which they had been attached, to London. It was soon ascertained that the climate of Nova Scotia was too severe for those who had gone there; and those who followed the army to London, when that was disbanded, found themselves in a strange land, without friends and without the means of subsistence. In a short time they were reduced to the most abject want and poverty; and it was in view of their pitiable condition that Dr. Smeathman and Granville Sharp brought forward the plan of colonizing them on the coast of Africa. They were aided in this measure by the Government. The first expedition left England in 1787, and consisted of four hundred blacks and about sixty whites, most of whom were women of the most debased character. Strange materials with which to lay the foundation of what was intended to be a Christian colony!

On their arrival at Sierra Leone a tract of land of twenty miles square was purchased from the natives of the country, and they immediately commenced a settlement along the banks of the river. In less than a year their number was reduced more than one half, owing, in some measure, to the unhealthiness of the climate, but more perhaps to their own irregularities. Two years afterward they were attacked by a combination of natives, and had nigh been exterminated.

About this time the "Sierra Leone Company" was formed to take charge of the enterprise. Among its directors were enrolled the venerable names of Wilberforce, Clarkson, Thornton, and Granville Sharp. The first agent sent out by the Company to look after this infant colony found the number of settlers reduced to about sixty.

In 1791 upward of eleven hundred colored emigrants were





FREE-TOWN, SIERRA LEONE.

taken from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone. About the same time as many as a hundred whites embarked in England for the same place. Some of these went out in the employment of the Company, while others were engaged in commercial speculations on their own account. This large accession placed the enterprise upon a broader foundation, and the colony began to assume the appearance of prosperity and independence. About this time, however, they were visited by a French man-of-war which stripped them of all their property and reduced them to the greatest extremity. In the course of a few years they recovered from these losses, and re-established themselves once more upon a good foundation. In 1798 it is said that Free-town had attained to the dimensions of a full-grown town. Its streets were laid out with regularity, and it contained more than three hundred comfortable dwelling-houses. About the same time the colony was farther reinforced by the arrival of more than five hundred Maroons from the Island of Jamaica. These Maroons were no better in character than the original founders of the colony, and no little disorder arose from mixing up such discordant elements.

These were the only emigrations of any consequence that ever joined the colony of Sierra Leone from the Western hemisphere. Its future accessions, as we shall see presently, came from a different quarter.

In 1807 the slave-trade was declared piracy by the British Government, and a squadron was stationed on the coast for the purpose of suppressing it. About the same time the colony of Sierra Leone was transferred to the Government, and has ever since been regarded as a Crown colony.

The slaves taken by the British cruisers on the high seas have always been taken to this colony and discharged there; and this has been the main source of its increase of population from that time.

When the colony was transferred to the Government in

1807, its population was less than 2000, almost all of whom were from Nova Scotia or from the West Indies. In the course of four years it was doubled. In 1820 it had increased to more than 12,000. In 1833 it amounted to very nearly 30,000. Two years afterward (1835) to 35,000. In 1844 it was 40,000. In 1853 it amounted to more than 60,000. Free-town, the capital, is said to have a population of nearly 17,000.

It will readily be imagined that the original American colored population of this colony is, in a great measure, lost sight of in this disproportionably large native population; and this is really the case. The former class regard themselves as the *élite* of the community, and affect great contempt for their more unsophisticated brethren. But the greater industry, economy, and management of the native population places them decidedly in the ascendant; and, in the course of time, the American element, no doubt, will be lost sight of altogether.

We have in the present condition of this colony, regarding it as made up chiefly of the aboriginal element, one of the best illustrations to be found any where, not only of the capacity of the negro for a high degree of civilization, but likewise of the value of Christian missions in developing those capabilities.

This population has been placed by the providence of God just in that position which seems best adapted to its improvement and elevation.

In the first place, these people were suddenly severed from all the scenes and associations of superstition in which they had been brought up. They were placed in new and unfamiliar circumstances, with little to remind them of what they had been accustomed to in their earlier life. They were compelled to mingle freely with others of diverse views and feelings. Life had to be begun over again, and a different style of living, as well as a new mode of labor, had to

be adopted in order to obtain the means of subsistence. They were placed under the control and guardianship of a wise and humane government. Had they been thrown together and left to themselves, nothing but disorder, confusion, and starvation would have followed. But the reins of government were held by steadier hands; all the civil offices were filled by men competent to the discharge of their duties; and for a good many years the commerce of the place was conducted by white men, who were furnishing an example of the manner in which it could be managed to the greatest advantage.

But all this of itself could have been of no avail. A heathen people are not to be lured into the arts and usages of civilized life by the mere exhibition of these things. Before they can make any upward progress their moral and intellectual nature must be called into life—must be cultivated and developed. This want was provided for by the Church and Wesleyan Missionary Societies from the very earliest periods of the colony. The same was done to some considerable extent by the Government also. Schools were established, and almost the whole of the youthful population were gathered into them, and received a thorough training both moral and intellectual. At the same time the Gospel was faithfully and earnestly preached, and its influence was soon seen in elevating the character of the people generally. Every year the standard of intelligence, morality, and industry has been raised until these people have attained to a position of unquestionable respectability and civilization.

The foreign control and supervision, which was so necessary in the earlier periods of their history, is now being superseded. Most of the civil offices are filled by persons from among themselves, or by educated colored' men from the British West Indies. The commerce of the country, which at first was almost wholly engrossed by white men, is rapidly passing into the hands of educated recaptives, who

manage it with remarkable efficiency. The soil is cultivated, and the market of Free-town is well supplied both with meat and vegetables. Many of these recaptives have amassed handsome little fortunes, and live in circumstances of great respectability and comfort.

Equally as much progress has been made in mental and moral improvement. It would be difficult to find larger or better managed schools any where than in Sierra Leone. One high school is maintained, in which there are children of recaptives, whose parents pay as much as sixty dollars for their tuition, when those parents themselves, not more than twenty-five years ago, were set down at Sierra Leone penniless and naked savages. At the same time there is a collegiate institution here, established by the Church Missionary Society, in which there are fifteen or twenty young men studying Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and most of the higher branches of the natural sciences. Many of the educated colonists are engaged as teachers, some of them are preachers of decided respectability, and there are native merchants in Sierra Leone whose credit with mercantile houses in London is good any time for three or four thousand pounds sterling.

During a short visit which I made to this place in 1852, on my way to this country, there were as many as fifteen vessels lying at anchor in the harbor, of which twelve were there for the purpose of trade.

Now when we take into account the circumstances under which this colony was founded, the materials of which it was composed, the reverses which it has experienced from time to time, and compare all these with the actual improvement which has been made, it may be seriously questioned whether any other community in the world have ever made more rapid strides in the march of improvement. It is true that the circumstances in which they were placed were decidedly favorable to this result, but this does not detract one

iota from their capacity for improvement. There is another fact connected with the state and prospects of this colony that should not be overlooked. We refer to its influence upon the country at large. The native population of Sierra Leone is composed of companies of persons from almost every district in Western and Central Africa. These people, having received an education and accumulated a little property, are beginning to return to their native country, and many of them with the view of carrying with them the blessing of Christianity and civilization. It was in this way, to some considerable extent at least, that the foundation was laid for the spread of Christianity in Yoruba. Similar expeditions are feeling their way back to other portions of the continent, and no one can tell to how great an extent the slave-trade, the bane of Africa, may be overruled in the providence of God to her highest good.

We shall conclude this chapter by an extract from the account which Dr. Ferguson gave of the native population of Sierra Leone twelve or fourteen years ago. Dr. Ferguson himself was a colored man, and was the governor of the colony when he wrote this account. Since then these people have made as much progress in wealth and civilization as they had done previously to that period.

“1. Those most recently arrived are to be found occupying mud houses and small patches of ground in the neighborhood of one or other of the villages (the villages are about twenty in number, placed in different parts of the colony, grouped into three classes or districts; namely, mountain, river, and sea districts). The majority remain in their locations as agriculturists; but several go to reside in the neighborhood of Free-town, looking out for work as laborers, farm-servants, servants to carry wood and water, grooms, house-servants, etc.; others cultivate vegetables, rear poultry and pigs, and supply eggs for the Sierra Leone market. Great numbers are found offering for sale in the public market and

elsewhere a vast quantity of cooked edible substances—rice, corn, and cassava cakes; heterogeneous compounds of rice and corn-flour, yams, cassava, palm-oil, pepper, pieces of beef, mucilaginous vegetables, etc., etc., under names quite unintelligible to a stranger, such as *aagedee*, *aballa*, *akalaray*, *cabona*, etc., etc., cries which are shouted along the streets of Free-town from morn till night. These, the lowest grade of liberated Africans, are a harmless and well-disposed people: there is no poverty among them, nor begging; their habits are frugal and industrious; their anxiety to possess money is remarkable; but their energies are allowed to run riot and be wasted from the want of knowledge requisite to direct them into proper channels.

“2. Persons of grade higher than those last described are to be found occupying frame houses; they drive a petty trade in the market, where they expose for sale nails, fish-hooks, door-hinges, tape, thread, ribbons, needles, pins, etc. Many of this grade also look out for the arrival of canoes from the country laden with oranges, kolas, sheep, bullocks, fowls, rice, etc., purchase the whole cargo at once at the water-side, and derive considerable profit from selling such articles by retail in the market and over the town. Many of this grade are also occupied in curing and drying fish, an article which always sells well in the market, and is in great request by people at a distance from the water-side, and in the interior of the country. A vast number of this grade are tailors, straw-hat makers, shoemakers, cobblers, black-smiths, carpenters, masons, etc. Respectable men of this grade meet with ready mercantile credits amounting from £20 to £60; and the class is very numerous.

“3. Persons of grade higher than that last mentioned are found occupying frame houses reared on a stone foundation of from six to ten feet in height. These houses are very comfortable; they are painted outside and in; have piazzas in front and rear, and many of them all round; a consider-

able sprinkling of mahogany furniture of European workmanship is to be found in them; several books are to be seen lying about, chiefly of a religious character, and a general air of domestic comfort pervades the whole, which, perhaps, more than any thing else, bears evidence of the advanced state of intelligence at which they have arrived. This grade is nearly altogether occupied in shop-keeping, hawking, and other mercantile pursuits. At sales of prize goods, public auctions, and every other place affording a probability of cheap bargains, they are to be seen in great numbers, where they club together in numbers of from three to six, seven, or more, to purchase large lots or unbroken bales; and the scrupulous honesty with which the subdivision of the goods is afterward made, can not be evidenced more thoroughly than in this, that, common as such transactions are, they have never yet been known to have become the subject of controversy or litigation. The principal streets of Freetown, as well as the approaches to the town, are lined on each side by an almost continuous range of booths and stalls, among which almost every article of merchandise is offered for sale, and very commonly at a cheaper rate than similar articles are sold in the shops of the merchants.

“Two rates of profit are recognized in the mercantile transactions of the European merchants; namely, a wholesale and retail profit, the former varying from thirty to fifty per cent., the latter from fifty to one hundred per cent. The working of the retail trade in the hands of Europeans requires a considerable outlay in the shape of shop-rent, shop-keepers’ and clerks’ wages, etc. The liberated Africans were not slow in observing nor in seizing on the advantages which their peculiar position held out for the successful prosecution of the retail trade.

“Clubbing together, as before observed, and holding ready money in their hands, the merchants are naturally anxious to execute for them considerable orders on such unexception-

able terms of payment; while, on the other hand, the liberated Africans, seeing clearly their advantage, insist most pertinaciously on the lowest possible per-centage of wholesale profit.

“Having thus become possessed of the goods at the lowest possible ready-money rate, their subsequent transactions are not clogged with the expense of shop-rents, shopkeepers' and clerks' wages and subsistence, etc., etc., expenses unavoidable to Europeans. They are therefore enabled at once to undersell the European retail merchants, and to secure a handsome profit to themselves, a consummation the more easily attained, aided as it is by the extreme simplicity and abstemiousness of their mode of living, which contrast so favorably for them with the expensive and almost necessary luxuries of European life. Many of this grade possess large canoes, with which they trade in the upper parts of the river, along shore, and in the neighboring rivers, bringing down rice, palm-oil, cam-wood, ivory, hides, etc., etc., in exchange for British manufactures. They are all in easy circumstances, readily obtaining mercantile credits from £60 to £200. Persons of this and the grade next to be mentioned, evince great anxiety to become possessed of houses and lots in old Freetown. These lots are desirable because of their proximity to the market-place and the great thoroughfares, and also for the superior advantages which they afford for the establishment of their darling object—‘a retail store.’ Property of this description has of late years become much enhanced in value, and its value is still increasing, solely from the annually-increasing numbers and prosperity of this and the next grade. The town lots originally granted to the Nova Scotian settlers and the Maroons are, year after year, being offered for sale by public auction, and in every case liberated Africans are the purchasers. A striking instance of their desire to possess property of this description, and of its increasing value, came under my immediate notice a few months ago.

“The gentlemen of the Church Missionary Society having been for some time looking about in quest of a lot on which to erect a new chapel, a lot suitable for the purpose was at length offered for sale by public auction; and at a meeting of the society’s local committee, it was resolved, in order to secure the purchase of the property in question, to offer as high as £60. The clergyman delegated for this purpose, at my recommendation, resolved, on his own responsibility, to offer, if necessary, as high as £70; but, to the surprise and mortification of us all, the lot was knocked down at upward of £90, and a liberated African was the purchaser. He stated very kindly that if he had known the society were desirous of purchasing the lot he would not have opposed them; he nevertheless manifested no desire of transferring to them the purchase, and even refused an advance of £10 on his bargain.

“4. Persons of the highest grade of liberated Africans occupy comfortable two-story stone houses, inclosed all round with spacious piazzas. These houses are their own property, and are built from the proceeds of their own industry. In several of them are to be seen mahogany chairs, tables, sofas, and four-post bedsteads, pier-glasses, floor-cloths, and other articles indicative of domestic comfort and accumulating wealth.

“Persons of this grade, like those last described, are almost wholly engaged in mercantile pursuits. Their transactions, however, are of greater magnitude and value, and their business is carried on with an external appearance of respectability commensurate with their superior pecuniary means: thus, instead of exposing their wares for sale in booths or stalls by the wayside, they are to be found in neatly fitted up shops on the ground floors of their stone dwelling-houses.

“Many individual members of this grade have realized very considerable sums of money—sums which, to a person not cognizant of the fact, would appear to be incredible.

From the studied manner in which individuals conceal their pecuniary circumstances from the world, it is difficult to obtain a correct knowledge of the wealth of the class generally. The devices to which they have recourse in conducting a bargain are often exceedingly ingenious, and to be reputed rich might materially interfere with their success on such occasions. There is nothing more common than to hear a plea of poverty set up, and most pertinaciously urged in extenuation of the terms of a purchase by persons whose outward condition, comfortable, well-furnished houses, and large mercantile credits, indicate any thing but poverty.

“There are circumstances, however, the knowledge of which they can not conceal, and which go far to exhibit pretty clearly the actual state of matters; such as—*Firstly*, the facility with which they raise large sums of ‘cash prompt’ at public auctions. *Secondly*, the winding up of the estates of deceased persons. (Peter Newland, a liberated African, died a short time before I left the colony, and his estate realized, in houses, merchandise, and cash, upward of £1500.) *Thirdly*, the extent of their mercantile credits. I am well acquainted with an individual of this grade who is much courted and caressed by every European merchant in the colony, who has transactions in trade with all of them, and whose name, shortly before my departure from the colony, stood on the debtor side of the books of one of the principal merchants to the amount of £1900, to which sum it had been reduced from £3000 during the preceding two months. A highly respectable female has now, and has had for several years, the Government contract for the supplying of fresh beef to the troops and the naval squadron; and I have not heard that on a single occasion there has been cause of complaint for negligence or non-fulfilment of the terms of the contract. *Fourthly*, many of them at the present moment have their children being educated in England at their own expense. There is at Sierra Leone a very fine regiment of co-

lonial militia, more than eight-tenths of which are liberated Africans. The amount of property which they have acquired is ample guarantee for their loyalty, should that ever be called in question. They turn out with great alacrity and cheerfulness on all occasions for periodical drill. But, perhaps, the most interesting point of view in which the liberated Africans are to be seen, and that which will render their moral condition most intelligible to those at a distance, is when they sit at the Quarter Sessions as petty, grand, and special jurors. They constitute a considerable part of the jury at every session, and I have repeatedly heard the highest legal authority in the colony express his satisfaction with their decisions."

## CHAPTER III.

## THE SLAVE-TRADE.

[The following article was written and published in England a few years since, with the view of counteracting efforts that were then being made to withdraw the British squadron from the coast of Africa, under the allegation that nothing had been effected in the way of putting an end to the slave-trade. It comprises all the information on the subject that the general reader will care to have, and we let it appear now in its original dress. The writer has the satisfaction to know that the article contributed essentially to bring about a change in the mind of the British public, and most of his suggestions were adopted by the Government, and resulted in putting a decided check to the traffic. Occasional cargoes of slaves are still carried off from that coast, especially since the partial withdrawal of the British squadron on account of the Eastern War; but the system by which it was so extensively carried on in former times has been broken up; and we do not see how it can ever again be restored to its former ascendancy.]

THERE is scarcely any topic of greater interest before the British public at the present time, than the question of the continuance or withdrawal of the squadron from the coast of Africa. The Committee appointed by Parliament have reported in favor of its discontinuance; but the spirit with which the subject has since been discussed, both in and out of Parliament, shows that there is any thing but unanimity of sentiment in relation to the report. The public mind is fortunately awake to the importance of the subject; and whatever may be the final disposal of it, one thing is certain, the welfare of Africa is deeply involved. In view of this state of things, the experience and observations of one who has lived on the coast of Africa nearly twenty years, who has watched the operations of the British squadron all that

time with the liveliest interest, and who is in no way trammelled by any party views that exist in England, may not be unacceptable, or entirely unavailing, in the present crisis.

If it be true that the efforts of the squadron to suppress the slave-trade have been a failure; that no good or important object has been effected after so protracted a struggle with this monstrous evil; then it is but the dictate of common sense that it should be recalled, and, of course, the sooner the better.

But if, on the contrary, the experiment has not proved to be a failure; if as much real good has been achieved as could reasonably have been expected under existing circumstances; and if the continuance of the same measures for a while longer (with such alterations and improvements, of course, as experience may suggest) promises to accomplish all that was anticipated by the originators of the enterprise, or could now reasonably be demanded by the friends of Africa, then the responsibility of those who advise its withdrawal is no trifling matter.

In settling the question whether there has been a failure or not, we must inquire what was the object proposed by those who were instrumental, in the first instance, in getting a squadron stationed on the coast, and the means by which they expected to effect that object.

Those who will take the pains to read what was written, as well as the speeches which were delivered in Parliament, about the time referred to, will find that the question originally rested on a much narrower basis than it does at present. It did not then, as it has since, involve the subject of emancipation in the West Indies, the question of free and slave-grown sugar, and various other minor topics which have grown out of these.

Whatever importance these collateral topics may possess in themselves, they had little or nothing to do with the plans of those who originated the undertaking under consideration.

The main object of the enterprise was the relief of Africa. It was thought to be but an act of justice and humanity, on the part of Great Britain toward Africa, to put an end to a traffic which not only filled the latter country with perpetual strife and bloodshed, but effectually closed every avenue to her improvement and civilization. The share which the people of Great Britain have taken in promoting this nefarious trade made it obligatory upon her to do something to redress these wrongs ; while her prominence among the great Christian nations of the earth made it entirely proper that she should be the pioneer in rescuing Africa from this terrible scourge.

It was not supposed that this traffic would be entirely and forever broken up by the mere temporary restraints that could be imposed upon it by the presence of the squadron ; much less was it expected that the operations of the squadron on the coast would exert any direct or efficient influence in promoting civilization among the people whom they might shield from this evil. But it was hoped that, by keeping it in check for a time, Christianity and civilization would have an opportunity to put forth their influence, and raise the aborigines to a position of improvement from which there could be no danger of relapsing into their former degradation. These were the views of the distinguished philanthropists who first enlisted the sympathies of the nation in the undertaking. And so long as public attention was confined to this simple original object, the expense of the enterprise was cheerfully borne, and there was no want of exultation at the success which from time to time crowned the efforts of the squadron in this difficult and somewhat perilous service.

Having made these preliminary explanations, we are now prepared to show why this enterprise can not be regarded as a failure. And the emotion which predominates in our mind, since taking up our pen to write, is that of surprise

that the results of this enterprise should be so little understood in England; and, above all, that so many of the officers of the squadron, who have themselves been engaged in this service, should have no higher appreciation of their own success. The views of the latter, however (those of them, at least, who have but little faith in the success of the enterprise), may be accounted for in part by the fact that they have seldom been stationed on the coast for a longer period than two years, and, of course, have not had the advantage, from personal observation, of comparing the present state of things on the coast with what it was fifteen or twenty years ago. Many, too, have been induced to renounce all confidence in the scheme, from the fact that they were placed in command of vessels that were utterly unfit for this kind of service, and were doomed, without any fault of their own, to find their most vigorous and praiseworthy efforts terminate only in disappointment.

Notwithstanding the objections from this source, we propose to show that the squadron has been operating against the slave-trade, directly and indirectly, in a most effectual way; and we rely upon facts to sustain us in this position, which can neither be gainsayed nor denied.

Previous to the period when this traffic was declared to be illegal by the British Parliament and the Government of the United States, it was carried on very much in the same way as lawful trade is at the present time. Vessels which came out for slaves "ran the coast down" (to use the parlance of the country), touching at all the principal native settlements, and purchasing such slaves as were offered for sale, until their cargoes were completed. In some cases whole cargoes were collected by kidnapping the natives who came off in their canoes to trade, and sometimes by capturing other slave-vessels that had completed their cargoes, and were ready to sail, but had not the means of self-defense. Besides, there were a few points along the coast occupied by the British,

as well as other European Governments, intended to facilitate the same trade. In this way the whole coast, from Senegal to Benguela, was, more or less, voluntarily or involuntarily, implicated in it. When the trade became illegal, however, it was banished from most of the European settlements; and the Spaniards, Portuguese, and others, who determined to persist in it, notwithstanding its illegality, had to adopt a new mode of operation. They could no longer perform their usual voyages along the coast without multiplying the chances of being seized as prizes, and having their property confiscated. It became necessary, therefore, to erect barracoons on those parts of the coast where slaves could be collected with the greatest ease and in the largest numbers; and at the appointed time the vessels returned and took away these slaves without being detained on the coast more than twenty-four hours, and in some cases only a single night. The points thus occupied at one time could not have been less than forty or fifty. The English have never had any treaties with the Spanish, Portuguese, or Brazilian Governments that would authorize them to destroy these barracoons. Hence they have been compelled to do what they could by guarding the coast and seizing slave-vessels in the vicinity of these barracoons. But as the number of the places occupied by the slave-trade greatly exceeded the number of cruisers employed to watch them, and were seldom less than fifty or a hundred miles apart, it will readily be seen that the cruisers had a difficult task to perform, and the frequent escape of slavers was inevitable. At the same time the profits of the trade were so great that the escape of a single slaver would cover the loss of three captures.

Notwithstanding all these disadvantages, such have been the diligence and activity of the officers of the squadron, that they have forced this trade out of more than three-fourths of the strongholds which it once occupied. Let any one open the map of Africa and ascertain the places where slaves

are now collected and shipped, and compare the number with what it was twenty or twenty-five years ago, and it can not result in any thing short of profound surprise.

From Senegal, near the borders of the Great Desert, to Cape Lopez, a few miles south of the equator, a distance coastwise of something like 2500 miles, there is now, with the exception of three factories on what is called the Slave Coast, no trade in slaves whatever. In fact, the trade, with the exceptions just made, is now confined to what is called the Congo country, in which there are not more than eight or ten points where slaves are collected, and from which they are shipped.\* If we add to these the three above mentioned, we have, on the whole coast, not more than twelve or fourteen; whereas there were, even within the knowledge of the writer, nearly four times this number. We scarcely know how such results have been overlooked, and yet these are facts that can not be denied. More than 2000 miles of sea-coast, and that forming the frontier of the best and fairest portions of the African continent, has been relieved from this unparalleled scourge; and perhaps more than 20,000,000 of human beings, interiorward, have been restored to comparative peace and happiness by the operations of the squadron along the coast. And how has all this been achieved? We reply, by a process in itself perfectly natural, and in exact accordance with the expectations of those who originated the enterprise. Take, as an illustration, the history of the slave-trade in the Bight of Biafra. All who have investi-

\* It is possible that there is a little of this trade near the Rio Pongos and Bissaos, to the north of Sierra Leone; but, if any at all, it is very insignificant.

[The doubt here expressed by Mr. Wilson is set at rest by the following extract from the last report of the Mixed Commission Court at Sierra Leone: "Not a *single* cargo of slaves has been taken away from *any* part of the coast between Sierra Leone and Senegal in 1849."—Appendix to "Lords' Report, 1850," p. 195. This tract of coast includes the places above specified.—Ed.]

gated the subject know that the rivers Benin, Bonny, Brass, Kalabar, and Kameruns were once the chief seats of this trade. It is through these rivers that the Niger discharges itself into the ocean; and as the factories near the mouths of these different branches had great facility of access to the heart of Africa, it is probable that the traffic was carried on more vigorously here than any where else on the coast. But at present there is none of it. This part of the coast having been subjected for several successive years to a virtual blockade, not only did the Spaniards and Portuguese find themselves under the necessity of relinquishing it, but, at the same time, the natives saw that they could derive a larger and more certain profit from lawful commerce, and consequently turned their attention to the manufacture of palm-oil. The number of vessels now engaged in carrying on a lawful trade in these rivers is between forty and fifty; and so decided are the advantages reaped by the natives from this change in their commercial affairs, it is not believed that they would ever revert to it again, even if all outward restraints were taken away.

Now while we do not expect the truth of these statements to be called into question, we anticipate that some exceptions will be taken as to the amount of real good that has been effected, as well as to the share of credit which we have assigned to the British squadron in connection with the above-mentioned results. It will be said, perhaps, that in forcing the slave-trade out of so many of its strongholds, important aid has been derived from the English Colonies and the Liberian settlements; and that in relation to other parts of the coast, where no such aid has been available, although the slave-trade has been shut up to fewer points, the only consequence is, that it is carried on more vigorously at these, and that the number of slaves still exported is as great as it ever was.

In relation to the first of these objections we would re-

mark, that while it is unquestionably true that important aid has been derived from these settlements in breaking up slave-factories in their immediate vicinity, it is equally true that they could have no such aid had it not been for the countenance and support which they received from the English and other men-of-war on the coast; and for the simple reason that none of these settlements, nor all of them together, have sufficient naval force to contend with a single armed slaver. If they have it in their power to destroy any barracoons that may be established in their immediate neighborhood, by marching a land force against them, their enemies, if not intimidated by the presence of so many men-of-war, could at any time take ample revenge by destroying what little commerce they have, if they did not put in imminent peril the most promising settlements on the coast.

In relation to the other objection, that there has been no material diminution of the number of slaves exported from the coast, we have more than our doubts. The time has been when tolerably accurate statistics might be collected on this subject, but we do not see how this can be done at present. There is no one on the coast of Africa who can furnish any thing like accurate information; and as most of the slaves which reach Brazil are smuggled into places where there is the least likelihood of their being detected, we doubt whether there is any one there that can furnish information upon which more reliance can be placed. It is the policy of those engaged in this traffic to make an exaggerated impression, for they hope to put an end to the efforts of the squadron by convincing the English nation of the hopelessness of the undertaking. Our own impression is, that the number of slaves exported has vastly diminished, perhaps in a ratio very nearly proportioned to the extent of sea-coast which it has lost. It is utterly incredible that the number of slaves now concentrated at a dozen or fourteen points can be compared with what it was when the whole coast was

taxed for this purpose; and it is equally improbable that the number of slave-vessels which escape now can be compared with what they were ten or twelve years ago, when there were fewer cruisers on the coast. But even if this were not the case, still it must be obvious to every man of reflection that very great progress must have been made toward its entire extirpation, by reducing it to such narrow limits; and any special symptoms of life and energy which it may put forth just now can not, to the experienced eye, be regarded in any other light than the desperate struggles of a ruined cause. A very large proportion of the country has already been delivered from its clutches, and, as will be shown in a subsequent part of this article, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, for that trade to re-instate itself in places where it has once lost its power and influence.

The task of managing it, too, along a line of sea-coast of not more than three hundred miles must be easy compared with what it was when as many thousand miles of coast had to be guarded. Let a few improvements be adopted in the operations of the squadron on the coast, and we see no good reason why this traffic may not be brought to a speedy and effectual end.

Thus far we have confined our remarks to the direct influence of the squadron in breaking up the slave-trade.

We propose now to show that it has been operating still more efficiently in an indirect way; and under this head we would specify the influence it has exerted in promoting lawful commerce, the countenance and protection it has extended to the European settlements and the American Colonies on the coast, and especially the indirect aid it has afforded to the cause of Christian missions. In these different ways the British squadron has done more, perhaps, to emancipate Africa from the thralldom of the foreign slave-trade, than by all other methods put together. Without this all the prize-

ships that have been taken, and all the treaties that have been formed, whether with the chiefs of Africa or with the different Governments of Europe, would have been comparatively worthless. It should be borne in mind, too, that all the indirect good secured in these various ways was distinctly anticipated, and did in fact constitute an essential part of the enterprise as it existed in the minds of those who projected it.

Lawful commerce (and by this term we mean trade in the natural products of the country in opposition to the slave-trade) owes its existence almost entirely to the presence and influence of the British squadron. Previous to the period when a check was given to the slave-trade, the lawful commerce of Western Africa consisted of small quantities of gold-dust, ivory, and beeswax, chiefly from the Gold Coast and Senegambia, and did not amount annually, it is presumed, to more than £20,000. The insignificance of this trade, however, did not arise from any poverty in the natural resources of the country at that time, for they were as considerable then as they are now, but to the influence of the slave-trade. During the prevalence of this traffic, the African seas were almost wholly given up to piracy. No vessel could carry on lawful commerce without the constant liability of being plundered. If these vessels were armed for self-defense, as was attempted in some few cases, the expense was so great that it consumed all the profits of the voyage.

Another thing that operated equally to the disadvantage of lawful trade was the fact that the natives of the country were so much engrossed in furnishing victims for the slave-trade that they had neither the time nor the taste for the tamer pursuits of cutting dye-wood or manufacturing palm-oil. Indeed the excitement connected with capturing and selling slaves was always more congenial to savage natures; and had it not been for the obstacles interposed by the presence of the British squadron, we scarcely see how their

attention could ever have been diverted from this to pursuits so different and so much less congenial to their natural tastes.

The presence of so many vessels of war has put an effectual stop to all piracy on the coast; and the impediments thrown in the way of the slave-trade have left the great majority of the natives of the country no other alternative than to betake themselves to the peaceful pursuits of lawful commerce, or give up all intercourse with the civilized world. They chose the former, and we have the fruits of this choice in the unprecedented prosperity of their commerce.

We do not pretend to give precise statistics, but suppose it entirely safe to say that the annual exports from Western Africa at the present time can not be less than £2,000,000; while there is every reason to believe that it will double, if it does not treble, or even quadruple itself in the next twenty years, if it is only protected until it has struck its roots a little deeper in the soil of Africa.

We might bring together a large number of interesting facts to illustrate the very rapid growth of this trade, but must confine ourselves to a limited number of the simplest statements. The island of Fernando Po, which is supposed to contain about 20,000 aboriginal inhabitants, had no lawful commerce whatever twenty or twenty-five years ago. A small quantity of palm-oil was made for domestic use, but not a gallon was exported. At present, however, as we have learned from good authority, more than two hundred tons are annually exported; and judging from the rate of its increase for the two or three last years, it will double itself in the next five. We might mention other places along the coast, as Grand Cestos, Cape Lahu, Jack-a-Jacks, and all the rivers of the Bight of Biafra, where the growth of this trade has been much more rapid, but the particulars of which are not so well known as the case just mentioned. We might arrive at similar results by comparing the number

of vessels now engaged in lawful commerce with what it was twenty-five or thirty years ago. Then there were not more than ten or twelve on the whole coast; at present, however, there are more than two hundred, the aggregate tonnage of which greatly exceeds that of the slave-trade in the days of its most uninterrupted prosperity.

Still, however, we do not attach so much importance to this trade on account of its present value as we do to what it is capable of becoming, and is likely to become, if the agency which called it into existence is not prematurely snatched away. There is no reason to doubt that palm-oil will, in a few years, become one of the largest branches of commerce in the whole world. It can be produced to an almost unlimited extent, and the demand for it hitherto has always been equal to the amount produced. Palm-oil, however, is only one of a great variety of other products of the country, equally as valuable, and capable of quite as much augmentation.

In connection with such commercial results, present, past, and prospective, we do not see how the importance of the squadron on the coast of Africa can well be exaggerated. Regarded merely in a selfish point of view, England will be repaid (and that, perhaps, at no distant day) for every dollar she has expended upon this enterprise, not only in the market she will have created in Africa for her manufactures, but likewise in the immense amount of valuable products that will be brought to her own shores from that country. But if these results acquire importance in connection with commercial enterprise, how must they appear when contemplated in the light of humanity! We can not contemplate this sudden and wonderful development of commerce in any other light than as one of those efficient agencies employed by Providence, not only to raise up Africa from the lowest depths of savagism, but to place her on a footing of respectability with the most favored nations of the earth. And if

this be a sober inference from the improvement already taken place, who will begrudge the price of her deliverance?

Another object of importance effected by the squadron is the protection it has afforded to the various European and American settlements that have been formed along that coast. Of these eight are English, seven are French, four belong to the Liberian Republic, two are Dutch, and one belongs to Denmark. Portugal has possession of most of the islands, but has only one settlement on the main land. Of these settlements Sierra Leone and Liberia are the largest in point of population. The former receives its accessions from the slaves that are recaptured by the British squadron, and contains a population of 60,000 to 65,000. The latter receives its accessions by emigrations of free colored people and emancipated slaves from the United States, and has a population of 7000 or 8000. Liberia has recently assumed the character of an independent republic; while Sierra Leone, with a population nearly ten times as great, continues the relationship of a colony to Great Britain.

Most of the other settlements on the coast are little more than fortified stations, around which a number of traders have rallied for the purpose of carrying on trade with the aborigines. These settlements, though none of them have as yet acquired any very great commercial importance, are nevertheless so many nucleuses of civilization, the influence of which is being every day more and more extended. There are some things connected with the management of these settlements, as well as the manner in which trade is conducted, that are very prejudicial to the improvement of the natives, and they ought to be corrected. Their influence upon the whole, however, is good, and they are doubtless destined to perform an important part in promoting the civilization of the country generally.

Natives are drawn from a great distance in the interior to these settlements for the purpose of exchanging the products

of the country for the manufactures of Europe; while the traders themselves are employing a considerable number of coasting craft for the purpose of extending their commerce along the coast as well as in the interior. At many of these settlements, too, the forms of law, as practiced by civilized nations, are beginning to be introduced, so that the natives who frequent them will not only have all the stimulus to industry which commerce furnishes, but will become familiar with models of government, upon which they may construct their own as the progress of society may require.

But these settlements, which promise so much for the future welfare of Africa, have always had, and still need, the protection of foreign Governments. There are few, if any of them, that could withstand the combinations of hostile natives that would be formed against them, especially when they were instigated and supported by Spanish and Portuguese slave-traders. Foreign residents all along the coast are perfectly aware of this; and there is nothing that would be more heartily deprecated by them than the premature withdrawal of the squadron. It is not supposed that these settlements will always continue in this dependent condition. Some of them are comparatively new, and have not acquired sufficient strength to maintain their own rights, or to enforce the principles of justice and order among the tribes by whom they are surrounded. Others, though much older, sustain a new relationship to the aborigines in consequence of having exchanged the trade in slaves for lawful commerce; and although the people generally are beginning to appreciate the advantages of this, there are, no doubt, evil-minded persons among them that would gladly unite in any hostile measures that might be set on foot as soon as the squadron was withdrawn.

The time will doubtless come when they will need no such aid. But those who have allowed themselves to be persuaded that they have already acquired sufficient strength to protect

themselves, or depend upon them to do any thing effective in putting down the slave-trade without the co-operation of the squadron, will find out ere long that they have leaned upon a broken reed.

All that has been said in relation to the importance of the squadron in developing the commercial resources of the country, and in promoting the cause of civilization, may be applied with equal force to the countenance it has lent to the cause of missions. The writer is not aware that the officers of the squadron have been in the habit of regarding any mission stations on the coast as under their special protection; but the mutual good feeling that has always existed between them and the missionaries; the readiness which they ever have manifested to repress all lawless violence; and especially the peace and quiet which they have restored to those parts of the coast where the missionaries are laboring, are favors and advantages more highly appreciated than the officers of the squadron have any idea of.

At the same time it will readily be granted by all those who have reflected seriously on the subject, that Africa can never be restored to peace and happiness, or enjoy any high degree of internal prosperity, without the aid of Christianity. The highest degree of civilization and commercial prosperity, even if they could be attained without her assistance, would be but a doubtful boon. Christianity is capable of doing for her what no other agency ever can; and the missionary societies, both of England and America, have addressed themselves to the task of giving her the Gospel, with a degree of earnestness and energy which promises the most cheering results. The incipient stages of their efforts were not without difficulties and discouragements, arising chiefly from the insalubrity of the climate; but they have been continued long enough, and with sufficient success, to demonstrate the practicability of the undertaking. To the south of Sierra Leone, and between that and the equator, that

part of the coast where the efforts of the squadron to put down the slave-trade have been most successful, there have been founded, in fifteen or sixteen years, as many as twelve independent missions, at the distance of 100 or 200 miles from each other, embracing three times that number of distinct stations along the coast, and a still greater number of out-stations interiorward. Some of these stations are in the immediate neighborhood of the European and American settlements above mentioned; but others, and the greater part of them, are far off from the abodes of civilization. The Gospel is stately preached to thousands, and hundreds of thousands, not only along the frontier regions, but far in the interior. More than 10,000 youths are now receiving a Christian education in the schools connected with these missions, and will, ere long, be sent forth to spread the blessings of education and Christianity far and near among the benighted inhabitants of this land.

At the same time, as many as a dozen different dialects have been studied and reduced to system, and as many printing-presses are industriously employed in printing books in these dialects for the thousands who have been already taught to read. All this varied agency has been put into operation in the last fifteen years; and as every step gained in this work prepares the way for more accelerated progress, it must be seen at once that Christian missions are destined to exert a vast influence over the future destinies of Africa; and they will therefore receive, as they certainly deserve, the countenance and support of every friend of humanity.

The line of policy marked out for most of these missions is, that while their main object will be to push their operations toward the central parts of the continent, where it is supposed the climate will be more congenial to European constitutions, and where the population is greater and better organized, they must at the outset acquire a firm footing on the sea-coast, without which it would be impossible to main-

tain a line of communication with the interior, or keep up any intercourse with the civilized world.

As yet, the missionaries have done little more than possess themselves of the outposts; but, in accomplishing even this much, they feel themselves greatly indebted to what has been done by the squadron, and they will feel the increased importance of this influence just in proportion as they approach those larger and more powerful kingdoms in the interior, where the agitations caused by the slave-trade are more sensibly felt than even along the sea-coast.

So long as the African seas were given up to piracy and the slave-trade, and the aborigines, in consequence, were kept in constant excitement and warfare, it was almost impossible either to have commenced or continued a missionary station on the coast. And the fact that there was none any where between Sierra Leone and the Cape of Good Hope previous to the year 1832, shows that it was regarded as impracticable. Christianity does not invoke the aid of the sword; but when she can be shielded from the violence of lawless men by the intervention of "the powers that be," or when the providence of God goes before and smoothes down the waves of discord and strife, she accepts it as a grateful boon, and discharges her duty with the greater alacrity and cheerfulness. And while the missionaries cherish the conviction that their strength and reliance is in the unseen arm, there is, nevertheless, no class of men on the coast of Africa who would regret the removal of the squadron with more heartfelt sorrow.

In all these varied ways it does seem to us that the British squadron has rendered important service to the cause of humanity. It has put down piracy on the African seas; has restored peace and tranquillity to a line of sea-coast of more than 2000 miles; has called into existence a large and flourishing commerce, and, at the same time, has thrown the shield of its protection over the cause of Christian missions,

and all the varied agency that has been employed to promote the cause of humanity and civilization among the benighted inhabitants of this great continent. If these great objects are not worthy of British philanthropy, we know not where to find those that are.

The opinion has long been entertained by many sincere friends of Africa that, so long as the demand for slaves in Brazil is so great, it will be impossible to break up the slave-trade by any forcible measures.

More recently, but from a different source, we have heard the opinion gravely expressed that the most certain and effectual way of breaking it up will be to let the Brazilians have unlimited access to the coast of Africa, and so glut their own markets that slaves will become comparatively valueless. We confess we have never heard this latter sentiment avowed without feelings of mingled astonishment and indignation, and have scarcely been able to refrain from exclaiming Treason! as often as we have heard it uttered. What does it amount to when expressed in plain English? Something like this: that, after toiling so long for Africa, we have come to the conclusion that she is not worth contending for, and therefore deliver her over to the destroyer without condition or mercy.

Who can tell how many slaves it will take to glut the market of Brazil? The half of the population of the continent of Africa would scarcely be sufficient to supply the demand that would spring up under such circumstances. Treated as her slaves are, and as the Brazilians think it their interest to treat them, the time will never come when they will dispense with the necessity of fresh importations from the coast of Africa. But let her be forced to adopt a different line of policy in relation to the treatment of her slaves, and be made to rely upon the natural increase of those already in the country, and the time is not far distant when we may reasonably expect the Brazilians themselves to be utterly op-

posed to any farther accessions to her slaves from the coast of Africa. There is in the southern parts of the United States a state of feeling, in relation to slavery, that we may expect to see in Brazil before the lapse of many years. However strenuous planters in the Southern States are in defending the institutions of slavery, it would be difficult to find an individual among them that would consent to receive a fresh cargo from the coast of Africa. And the thing which awakens more serious apprehensions in their minds about the stability of the institution than any thing else, is the unparalleled increase of the slaves among them. This one thing makes it perfectly obvious to every man of reflection, that it can not be controlled for any considerable length of time to come; and the engrossing inquiry now is, What shall we do with our slaves? Let Brazil take the same care of her slaves, the result will be the same, and the inquiry will soon follow, not how we shall wring more slaves from the coast of Africa, but how shall we dispose of those we already have?

A great deal has been said about the expense of this enterprise, and the inseparable loss of life connected with it.

As a matter of expense, we have too little knowledge of financial affairs to speak with confidence; but there has always appeared to us much misapprehension, if not misrepresentation, on this subject. The people of Great Britain are scarcely divided in opinion in relation to the necessity of maintaining a naval as well as a military force in times of peace. Whatever speculations peacemen may entertain on the subject, we fancy it would be a difficult task to persuade the nation at large to abolish either their army or their navy in the present state of the world. And if a navy must be maintained in times of peace, where is the great additional expense of having a small section of it stationed on the coast of Africa? Some additional expense is incurred, it is true, in the way of prize-money, the support of a Court of Mixed Commission, and the temporary support of recaptive slaves,

but nothing in comparison with the great objects which are accomplished by the enterprise. If the resources of Great Britain were really tasked by this comparatively small outlay, it would become a matter of just inquiry how far it should be continued; but so long as this is not the case, it will be difficult to point out any one object more worthy of her care and patronage.

In relation to the exposure of life, it is admitted that much sickness has been endured and many lives lost, but this was in the earlier stages of the enterprise, when the officers of the squadron were inexperienced in relation to the best means of preserving the health and lives of their crews. The practice more recently adopted of employing krumen and other natives of the country to perform all that kind of labor which requires special exposure, has placed this enterprise on an entirely different footing, and made cruising along the coast of Africa nearly as safe as any where else. This fact is already known to the Board of Admiralty; and if the limits of this article would allow, we could prove from our own observations, not only in connection with the operations of the squadron, but likewise that of trading-vessels, the justice and truth of this assumption. Commander Chamberlain, of her Britannic Majesty's brig *Britomart*, informed the writer that he had been cruising on the coast nearly two years without having lost a man, or having had, so far as he knew, a single case of African fever on board his vessel; the United States sloop-of-war *Yorktown*, with a crew of nearly 200 men, cruised on the coast two years without having lost a single man; and the writer was informed by Captain Bell that he had never had a healthier crew in any part of the world. Facts of a similar character without number have come under the observation of the writer in connection with trading-vessels. It has uniformly been observed that where sleeping on shore has been avoided, and where temperance and cleanliness have been enforced, there

has been little or no sickness that could be attributed to the climate. Since these and other measures for preserving health have been adopted on board of the cruisers, there has been little sickness, and still less mortality.

If the Government of Great Britain would give efficiency to this enterprise, and bring the slave-trade to a speedy termination, vessels of a better class should be designated to this service than those which have been stationed on the coast for a few years past. The writer pretends to no personal knowledge of the sailing qualities of vessels; but an article has recently appeared in the *London Times*, by one of the commanders who has been in the service, in which it is conclusively proved that a large number of the vessels in the African service for a few years past have been of the poorer class, and utterly unfit for the kind of service in which they are engaged. None but the fastest sailers can be of any real use. Those employed by the slave-traders are the fastest that can be procured; and to send in chase of them second or third-rate cruisers is but to subject the officers of the navy to disappointment and mortification. A small number of the fastest sailers would be more effective, and accomplish the undertaking with much more certainty. We do not pretend to define any particular length of time that it will be necessary to keep a squadron on the coast—this must, of course, be determined by circumstances; but, for our own part, we do not suppose that the period will be long before these exertions may be gradually diminished, until no farther necessity will exist.

In conclusion, we would suggest also the importance of forming a larger number of military and commercial stations along the coast, like those of Cape Coast and Akra. They might be erected on a small and economical scale, and being garrisoned by black soldiers, as they ought to be, the expense of maintaining them would be comparatively small. These stations, while they would form important centres for

the promotion of commerce and the spread of Christianity, might be rendered very efficient in putting down the slave-trade. Treaties for this purpose might easily be formed with the African chiefs more immediately concerned; and if they were thrown open to the free trade of all nations, as the English settlements on the Gold Coast are at the present time, very little jealousy would be felt in relation to any new territory which Great Britain might acquire for this purpose. The importance of such establishments is enhanced, too, by the necessity which is felt for consular agents to adjudicate differences between captains of trading-vessels and the chiefs of the country; and this necessity will increase just in proportion to the increase of lawful commerce.

## CHAPTER IV.

## LANGUAGES OF AFRICA. — COMPARISON BETWEEN THE MANDINGO, GREBO, AND MPONGWE DIALECTS.

Too little is as yet known of the numerous and diversified dialects of Africa to determine with certainty the precise number of families to which they belong. The Mountains of the Moon, which divide this great continent into two nearly equal portions, also form an important dividing line between two great branches of the negro race, who, it is probable, emigrated to Africa at remote periods and from different parts of the old world.

In the northern half of the continent, or that part of it occupied by the black race, the number of languages is very great, the different branches of which show very little if any affinity for each other; while in the southern division one great family prevails over the whole, even to the Cape of Good Hope. As there is a tendency to the multiplication of dialects in all countries where there are no written standards, the above fact furnishes a presumptive argument in favor of the opinion that the northern portion of the continent must have been settled by the negro race at a much earlier period than the southern; or that the present inhabitants of this portion of the country overran and rooted out its original occupants at no very remote period. However this may be, the languages spoken on the opposite sides of these mountains, show as conclusively as any argument drawn from this source can, that these two families of blacks, whatever physical resemblances there may be, must have had different origins.

In the northern half of the continent the number of dia-

lects is incredibly great. Those spoken along the western coast, *i. e.*, between the River Senegal and the Kameruns in the Bight of Biafra, which is, no doubt, the western termination of the Mountains of the Moon, may be grouped into five distinct families, the boundaries of which are not inaccurately defined by the established geographical divisions of the country.

The Mandingo, including the Jalof, the Fulah, the Susu, and other kindred dialects, may be regarded as forming one of these principal families. Those of the natives who speak these dialects are Mohammedans, and no doubt a greater or less number of Moorish or Arabic words has been incorporated with all of them. These dialects are spoken along the coast from Senegal to Sierra Leone, and in the interior as far as the head waters of the Niger.

From Sierra Leone or Cape Messurado to the mouth of the Niger, in what is called Northern Guinea, a distance coastwise of twelve or fifteen hundred miles, there are four distinct families, showing very little if any affinity for each other. The first extends from Basa to St. Andrews, embracing the Basa, Kru, Grebo, and other dialects, all of which belong to one general family called the Mena or Mandu language. The natives who speak these dialects are pagans, and though, physically considered, they are one of the finest races in Africa, they are less intellectual than the generality of tribes along the coast.

From Frisco to Dick's Cove, along the Ivory Coast, we have another language, usually called the Kwakwa or Avëkwöm, which possesses very little affinity for any other language along the coast.

From Dick's Cove to Badagri we have the Fanti, called by the natives themselves *Fantyipim*, which includes the Ashanti, Dehomi, Popo, Akra, and other dialects. Among the dialects of this family there is more diversity than among those of either of the preceding. The natives here discover

considerable mechanical skill and much more versatility of character than the inhabitants of the Grain Coast.

On the great rivers of the Gulf of Benin, Bonny, Benin, and Kalibar, we find another distinct family of languages, possessing some striking peculiarities entirely unknown to any of the dialects either west or south.

How nearly related these different families along the sea-coast may be to those of Central and Northern Africa is not known. While there is a constant tendency to a multiplication of the dialects of the same family, the different families themselves have preserved their distinctive features without essential change or modification. The want of written standards accounts for the first of these facts, while the fixed habits of the natives, in opposition to the roving character of most barbarous nations, account for the other.

Crossing the Mountains of the Moon we find one great family of languages extending itself over the whole of the southern division of the continent.\* The dialects of this family, though they differ essentially from each other, have too many striking affinities to allow any doubt of their having a common origin.

Many of these dialects, especially those spoken along the sea-coast, have incorporated with themselves a greater or less number of foreign words, according as the tribes have had more or less commercial intercourse with foreign nations. Those along the western coast have borrowed largely from the Portuguese, those in the vicinity of the Cape of Good Hope, it is probable, have borrowed from the English and Dutch, those of Mozambique have adopted many words from the Madagascar people as well as the Portuguese, with both of whom the natives have had long and extensive intercourse; while those still higher up the coast have drawn

\* It has been ascertained that this range of mountains does not extend entirely across the continent, but probably does over a great portion of it.

quite as freely from the Arabic. The Sooahelee or Swahere language, spoken by the aboriginal inhabitants of Zanzibar, is very nearly allied to the Mpongwe, which is spoken on the western coast in very nearly the same parallel of latitude. One fifth of the words of these two dialects are either the same or so nearly so that they may easily be traced to the same root.

This great family of languages, if the Mpongwe dialect may be taken as a specimen, is remarkable for its beauty, elegance, and perfectly philosophical arrangements, as well as for its almost indefinite expansibility. In these respects it not only differs essentially and radically from all the dialects north of the Mountains of the Moon, but they are such as may well challenge a comparison with any known language in the world.

It is impossible to ascertain from what particular stock the different dialects of the same family have sprung, nor is it important to establish this point. We have selected as the subject of comparison, one dialect from three different families, viz., Mandingo, the Grebo, and the Mpongwe; as two of these are from the northern part of the continent and the other from the southern, we shall be able not only to see all the points of agreement and disagreement between the languages of those who are supposed to be separate races, but likewise how much divergence there may be in the languages of those who are supposed to have had a common origin.

The Mandingo is spoken chiefly between Senegal and the Gambia; the Grebo at Cape Palmas and in that vicinity. The distance between these two places is six or eight hundred miles. The inhabitants of these two regions have had little or no intercourse with each other, and therefore may be regarded as strangers. The Mpongwe is spoken on both sides of the Gabun, at Cape Lopez, and Cape St. Catharine, in Southern Guinea. The distance from Cape Palmas

to the Gabun is ten or twelve hundred miles, and that between the latter and Senegambia is eighteen hundred or two thousand.

Our object in this chapter will be to mention all the important points in which these dialects differ from each other, as well as those in which they agree, although the latter are regarded as purely accidental, and such as would be as likely to arise by comparing them with the Indian dialects of North or South America, or with those of Polynesia, as among themselves. The principles of the Mpongwe will be more fully developed than either of the others, not only on account of its great superiority, but because it possesses some very remarkable characteristics for an uncultivated language, and evinces a degree of skill and precision in its grammatical arrangements that may challenge for itself a comparison with any known language whatever.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

Before entering into a minute analysis of the grammatical principles of these dialects, it will be important to offer a few remarks of a general nature.

The first thing that would be sure to arrest the attention of one who has had an opportunity to study the character and habits of the people in connection with their languages, is the remarkable correspondence that will always be found between the character of the different tribes and the dialects which they respectively speak.

The Grebo tribe, physically considered, are one of the finest races in Western Africa. They are stout, well formed, and their muscular system is remarkably well developed. They stand erect, and when not under the influence of excitement, their gait is measured, manly, and dignified. When engaged at work or in play, they are quick, energetic, and prompt in all their bodily evolutions; they are fond of work, are capable of enduring great hardships, and, compared with

most of the tribes of Western Africa, are really courageous and enterprising. But they are destitute of polish, both of mind and of manners. In their intercourse with each other they are rude, abrupt, and unceremonious; when opposed or resisted in what is their right or due, they become obstinate, sullen, and inflexible. They have much vivacity of disposition, but very little imagination. Their songs have but little of poetry, and are unmusical and monotonous; besides which, they have very little literature in the form of ancestral traditions or fabulous stories. Their dialect partakes very largely of these general outlines. It is harsh, abrupt, energetic, indistinct in enunciation, meagre in point of words, abounds with inarticulate nasal and guttural sounds, possesses but few inflections and grammatical forms, and is withal exceedingly difficult of acquisition.

The Mpongwe people, on the other hand, are mild in their disposition, flexible in character, courteous in their manners, and very deferential to age and rank. But they are timid, irresolute, and exceedingly averse to manual labor. They live by trade, are cunning, shrewd, calculating, and somewhat polished in their manners. Their temperament is of the excitable or nervous character, and they are altogether the most imaginative race of negroes I have ever known. They have inexhaustible stores of ancestral traditions and fabulous stories, some of which, if embodied in suitable language, would bear comparison with the most celebrated novels and romances that have ever been presented to the world. These general outlines of the character, habits, and disposition of the people are no bad counterpart to their language. It is soft, pliant, and flexible; clear and distinct in enunciation, pleasant to the ear, almost entirely free from guttural and nasal sounds, methodical in all its grammatical forms, susceptible of great expansion, and withal very easy of acquisition.

The same correspondence might be pointed out between

the Mandingo dialect and the people by whom it is spoken, but enough has been said already to illustrate our general remark. Whether the disposition and habits of the natives have been modified by the character of their language, or whether, on the other hand, these dialects have been moulded so as to suit the disposition, character, and pursuits of the people, are points that can not easily be determined. Most probably they exert a reciprocal influence upon each other. It must not be presumed, however, that the comparative perfection of these dialects is to be regarded as an infallible criterion of the relative improvement of the different tribes. This would bespeak for the Mpongwe tribe a degree of improvement and civilization far above the others, which the actual and known condition of that people does not authorize.

One general characteristic of the Grebo, and one which establishes at the outset an essential difference between it and the other dialects, is that it is made up in a great measure of *monosyllabic words*. It has a considerable number of dissyllabic words, a few trisyllables, and a very few words of four and five syllables. But a very cursory glance over a few printed pages of Grebo will show a vast disproportion of monosyllabic words. The names of most of the objects with which they are familiar belong to this class; for example, *na*, fire; *ni*, water; *tu*, tree; *kai*, house; *ge*, farm; *yau*, sky; *bro*, earth; *nu*, rain; *twe*, ax; *fa*, knife; *kbi*, fence; *lu*, head; *kwa*, hand; *yi*, eye; *mě*, tongue; *kĕ*, breast; *kě*, back; *bo*, leg; *wěnh*, sun; *hni*, fish; *gi*, leopard; *ná*, rum; and so also most of the verbs in common use; as, *di*, eat; *na*, drink; *pě*, sleep, lie down; *na*, walk; *di*, come; *mu*, go; *hĕ*, speak; *la*, kill; *bi*, beat; *ya*, bring; *kba*, carry; *ni*, do; *wá*, hear,\* etc., all of which are not only monosyllables, but most

\* We have adopted a more simple mode of orthography here than has been used in writing the Grebo; *h* final is used to distinguish words whose meanings are different, but whose orthography would

of them may be spelled with two simple letters of the Roman alphabet.

Both the Mandingo and the Mpongwe have a goodly number of auxiliary and connecting particles; but they are not sufficiently numerous to constitute a striking feature in either. In the Mandingo about one fifth of the verbs are monosyllabic words, but the nouns, with very few exceptions, are words of two or more syllables.

In Mpongwe there are not more than a dozen monosyllabic nouns, and perhaps not more than two or three monosyllabic verbs in the entire language. In relation to those enumerated above, with the exception of a single noun and verb, they are all words of two, three, or four syllables.

Another observation of importance is, that there is no one word that is common to the three, or any two of these dialects,\* except the letter *m*, which is used as a contracted form of the personal pronoun *I*, in the Mpongwe and Mandingo, and the particle *ne*, which is used in the sense of *is* in the Grebo and the Mpongwe, though in the latter it is evidently a contraction of *inle*, which does not always have the force of *is*. Even when some new object is presented to these people, and it is their evident intention to confer upon that object a name corresponding with the sound or some other attribute belonging to it, they do not always employ the same word; a bell in Grebo is *bikri*, in Mpongwe it is *igalinga*, and in Mandingo *talango*; a saw in Mandingo is *sero*, in Grebo *griká*, and in Mpongwe *gúvígasa*. When the be the same. So *nh* is used to indicate the nasal sound of the final vowel, but is omitted in the above examples for the sake of simplicity.

\* The writer is indebted to MacBrair's Mandingo Grammar for all the knowledge he possesses in relation to that language. The vocabulary embraced in that Grammar contains seven or eight hundred words, and it is upon these, and a few other specimens of Mandingo in the same volume, that his inferences and observations are drawn.

foreign word is retained, it is differently modified to suit their dialects. A plate in Grebo is *plélé*, in Mandingo *pélo*, and in Mpongwe *péle*. Tobacco in Grebo is *tama*, in Mpongwe *tako*, in Mandingo *taba*, and in some other dialects it is *tala-kwa*. This discrepancy shows that there is not only a material difference in the development of the organs of speech among these tribes, but an equal difference in their powers of discriminating sounds.

The Grebo has few or no contractions or coalescences, but the people speak with so much rapidity, and their words are so completely jumbled together, that a whole clause may sometimes be mistaken for a single word: the phrase *é ya mu kra wudi*, it has raised a bone in my breast (a figurative expression for great anger), is pronounced *yamukroure*.

The Mandingo and Mpongwe both abound with contractions, and they compound their words so as out of three or four to make but one; but in both cases the elementary parts of each compound word or phrase are preserved with so much distinctness that they can always be easily analyzed. In Mandingo the word *mbadingmuso*, sister, is made up of *mi*, my, *bado*, mother, *díngo*, child, *muso*, female; i. e., "my mother's female child." So in Mpongwe, the word *onwángiwam*, my brother, is made up of *onwana*, child, *ngi*, mother, *wam*, my; and so *omantwé*, his wife, is compounded of *oma*, person, *anto*, female, *wé*, his, i. e., "his female person" for his wife; so the phrase *arombia* is compounded of *e*, he (which disappears before *a*), *are*, is, *oma*, person, *mbia*, good. These combinations though frequent in the Mpongwe, and perhaps as much so in Mandingo, are not sufficiently numerous to constitute a leading feature in either, as they do in some of the Indian dialects of North America.

There are certain words and phrases in the Grebo dialect which it is almost impossible for a foreigner ever to pronounce so as to be understood by the natives. For example, the

phrase *hani na nyene ne?* 'What is your name?' is one that is extremely difficult, and not less so is the phrase *kbuné-nyini-yidu*, bad habit. The word *imu*, five, and all the reduplicated forms into which it enters are too completely nasal to be fairly represented by any combination of articulate sounds whatever.

In Mpongwe, on the other hand, there are not more than three or four words that are at all difficult of utterance; and there is scarcely a sentence in the language which a foreigner may not, with very little care, speak at the first trial so as to be universally understood by the natives. It is probable that the Mandingo, in this respect, partakes of the character of the Mpongwe and not of the Grebo.

In the Grebo and Mpongwe there is a large number of words whose significations, though entirely different, have an orthography very nearly the same. In all such cases the Grebo distinguishes between them: first, when they are monosyllables, by a certain pitch of the voice or accent; it is thus that the first and second persons of the personal pronoun *má* and *máh* are distinguished from each other; and so also the first and second persons plural *a* and *ah*.

When cases of this kind occur in dissyllabic words the accent rests on one or the other syllable as a mark of distinction, as in the words *nyína*, day, and *nyína*, woman. The Mpongwe, on the contrary, never uses the accent as a means of distinguishing words whose orthography is very nearly the same, but relies wholly upon the clear and distinct sounds of its vowels.

In all three dialects almost every word terminates in a vowel sound. In Grebo *nh* final is employed to designate the nasal sound of the vowel; and it is possible that *ng* final in MacBrair's Mandingo grammar may serve the same purpose. *M* final occurs in a very few Grebo words; and the vowel sound after *m* in certain Mpongwe words is scarcely

audible. In relation to the incipient syllable the usage is variable. In Grebo, with the exception of a few of the personal pronouns, which are simple vowels, as is the case in both of the other dialects, every word commences with one or more consonants. In Mandingo perhaps one fifth of the verbs and nouns commence with vowels; whereas in Mpongwe at least one half of the nouns and verbs, if we take into the account the derivative parts of the verb, have vowels for their initial letters. Almost every noun in the Mandingo terminates in *o*; in the other two languages the final termination is variable. The prevalence of initial vowels in Mpongwe accounts for the great number of contractions and coalescences which are to be met with in that language.

#### ORTHOGRAPHY.

The same alphabet of simple sounds has been employed in writing all three of these dialects, but it must not be inferred that the same system is equally adapted to each. The sounds in the Mandingo and Mpongwe are generally easy and natural, and are accurately represented by Mr. Pickering's system of orthography. The Grebo, on the contrary, has a great many difficult sounds that can not accurately be represented by any combination of articulate sounds. Each vowel in this language has, besides its natural power, a corresponding long and short as well as nasal sound. The vowels in Mpongwe and Mandingo have none but their natural sounds and such variations as are common to most European languages. The letters *v* and *z* are entirely wanting in the Mandingo and Grebo dialects, but are of more frequent use in the Mpongwe than almost any other consonants.\*

\* It may be remarked that although *v* is but once used in Grebo and *z* never, yet both of these letters are freely used in the Basa dialect, which is closely allied to the Grebo.

There are a good many consonant combinations, chiefly at the beginning of words, that deserve to be noticed. Some of these are common to all three of these dialects; some are peculiar to one.

#### ETYMOLOGY.

Neither of these dialects has an article, definite or indefinite, the place of the indefinite article in the Mpongwe and Grebo, and probably in the Mandingo also, being supplied by the numeral for *one*. Thus, in Grebo, *gnebwi du á nede*, man one lived there, for a man lived there; and in the Mpongwe *oma mári*, person one, for a person. The want of a definite article in Grebo is supplied by the personal pronoun for *he*; thus, *gnebwi ná*, "person he," for the person, and by the demonstrative pronouns *nénu*, this, and *náná*, that. In Mpongwe this deficiency is variously supplied by the definite pronoun *yi*, and more frequently by the demonstrative pronoun for *this* and *that*, as *oma yiná*, this man, or *oma yáná*, that man, for the man. The article, as a distinct part of speech, is perhaps wanting in all the dialects of Western Africa. We notice in the following remarks only the leading parts of speech.

#### NOUNS.

There are no inflections in either of these languages to distinguish gender or case; but each has an inflection to distinguish the singular from the plural number.

The gender in every case is made by coupling the word for *man* and *woman* with the noun; thus, *nyare nomi*, man-cow, for bull; *idámbe nyanto*, woman-sheep, for ewe. The nominative and objective cases are always of the same form, and can be distinguished from each other by their relative position to the verb. The possessive case is formed in the Mandingo and Grebo by inserting the personal pronoun *his* between the nominative and the possessive, the nominative case

always occupying the second place, *Dwě-a-yu*,\* *Dwě*, his son, for *Dwě's* son. In Mpongwe the definite pronoun, of which we shall have occasion to speak presently, is the connecting link, but the arrangement of the two cases is directly the reverse; thus, *Onwa-wa-Dwě*, i. e., the child it of *Dwě*, the definite pronoun always agreeing with the nominative case. This is a point of important distinction between the Mpongwe and the other two dialects, the more so as the usage on both sides is uniform and invariable.

In Grebo the plural is formed from the singular, generally, by a change in the final vowel; thus, *hya*, child, pl. *hyě*, children; *bli*, cow, pl. *blě*, cows, etc. Sometimes there is not only a change of the final vowel but an additional syllable also suffixed; thus, *kai*, house, in the plural, *keyě*, houses; the plural of *yu*, child, is *iru*. Both these examples must be considered exceptions, of which, however, there are very few. In general the distinction between the singular and plural of Grebo nouns is very slight, and many nouns are the same in both numbers; thus, *blablě*, a sheep, pl. *blable*, sheep; and so *wudě*, goat, pl. *wudě*, goats, etc.

In Mandingo the plural is derived from the singular by suffixing *lu*, when the termination of the singular is in *o*; thus,

Singular.	Plural.
<i>Muso</i> (woman)	<i>Musolu</i>
<i>Yiro</i> (tree)	<i>Yirolu</i>

When the final letter of the singular is not *o*, it is changed into it; thus,

Singular.	Plural.
<i>Mansa</i> (king)	<i>Mansolu</i>

In some cases the adjective takes the inflection of the plural, while the noun to which it belongs remains in the singular number; thus,

\* In Grebo *a* is the same as *á*, his, but modified for the sake of euphony.

Singular.	Plural.
<i>ke bette</i> (a good man)	<i>ke betteolu</i>
<i>fane kuoiring</i> (a white cloth)	<i>fane kuoiringolu.</i>

This is a peculiarity that does not belong to either of the other dialects.

This dialect forms verbal nouns in several ways; the noun of instrument is formed by suffixing *rango* to the verb; thus,

<i>do</i> , work	<i>dorango</i> , a working instrument
<i>muta</i> , hold	<i>muterango</i> , a holder, peg, etc.

The noun of agency or office is formed from the verb by suffixing possessive pronouns for *his* or *he*; thus, from *kanta*, to keep, comes *kantala*, a keeper.

There is another verbal noun formed by suffixing *ro*; thus, from *sunya*, to steal, comes *sunyaro*, theft.

The points of resemblance between Grebo and Mandingo nouns, are, 1st, that the inflections to form the plural are always on the last syllable; and 2d, that both of them can form a noun of agency by suffixing the personal pronoun to the verb.\* The points in which they differ are, 1st, that Mandingo nouns generally terminate in *o*, whereas those of the Grebo are variable; 2d, that Mandingo nouns generally have one well-marked mode of forming the plural, and that by affixing a separate syllable; whereas in Grebo, the plural, with few exceptions, is made by changing the final vowel, into another vowel, and in many cases the distinction between the two numbers is scarcely perceptible; and 3d, that the Mandingo has a much greater variety and number of derivative or verbal nouns than the Grebo. These facts in connection with those already mentioned, viz., that there are no nouns common to both, and that the greater part of the Grebo nouns are monosyllables, while those of the Mandingo, with scarcely a single exception, are words of two, three, four,

\* The Grebo does form a noun of agency in this way; thus, from *nu*, did, comes *nuá*, the doer; but this is not much used.

and five syllables, show that there can be but little affinity between these two dialects.

But the Mpongwe branches off still farther, and shows conclusively, not only in relation to her nouns, but also in reference to her adjectives, pronouns, verbs, and grammatical construction, as will appear from the sequel, that it possesses no affinity with either.

All the changes which take place in Mpongwe nouns, except such as result from the laws of contraction and coalescence, are invariably on the *incipient syllable*.

An abstract verbal noun is derived from the verb by prefixing the letter *i*; thus,

<i>noka</i> , to lie	<i>inoka</i> , a lie
<i>jufa</i> , to steal	<i>ijufa</i> , theft
<i>sunginla</i> , to save	<i>isunginla</i> , salvation.

The noun of agency is formed by prefixing the letter *o*, which may be regarded as a sort of relative pronoun; thus,

<i>noka</i> , to lie	<i>onoka</i> , or <i>onoki</i> , a liar
<i>sunginla</i> , to save	<i>osunginla</i> , or <i>ozunginla</i> .

There are some exceptions and variations from the above rules not important to be mentioned.

In Mpongwe there are *four* modes of forming the plural from the singular, which furnish the basis for a classification of its nouns as well-marked and as complete as a similar classification of Latin and Greek nouns.

For the sake of convenience these classes are called *declensions*, although this term is not strictly or philosophically correct.

The *first declension* embraces all those nouns which commence their singular number with one or more consonants; and the plural is formed from the singular by prefixing *i* or *si*; thus,

Singular.	Plural.
<i>nago</i> , house	<i>inago</i> , or <i>sinago</i>
<i>nyare</i> , cow	<i>inyare</i> or <i>sinyare</i> .

Derivative nouns which begin with *i*, belong to the plural only of this declension.

The *second declension* comprises all those nouns which commence with the letter *e*, and form their plurals by dropping *e*. If the first consonant should be *z*, *e* is not only dropped, but *z* is changed into *y*; thus,

Singular.	Plural.
<i>egara</i> , chest	<i>gara</i> , chests
<i>ezâma</i> , thing	<i>yâma</i> , things
<i>ezango</i> , book	<i>yango</i> , books.

The *third declension* embraces all nouns whose incipient letter is *i* (except the derivative nouns, which commence with *i*, and belong to the plural of the first declension), and forms its plurals by changing *i* into *a*; thus,

Singular.	Plural.
<i>idâmbe</i> , a sheep	<i>adâmbe</i> , sheep
<i>ikândâ</i> , plantain	<i>akândâ</i> , plantains.

If the first consonant should be *v*, it is changed into *mp*; thus,

Singular.	Plural.
<i>ivanga</i> , law	<i>ampanga</i> , laws.

The *fourth declension* embraces such nouns as have *o* for their incipient letter, and form their plurals by changing *o* into *i*; thus,

Singular.	Plural.
<i>olamba</i> , cloth	<i>ilamba</i> , cloths
<i>omamba</i> , snake	<i>imamba</i> , snakes.

The *fifth declension* embraces such nouns as commence with *a*, and have both numbers of the same form; thus,

Singular.	Plural.
<i>angingo</i> , water	<i>angingo</i>
<i>alugu</i> , rum	<i>alugu</i> .

This *declension* may belong to the plural of the *third*.

This classification of Mpongwe nouns does not rest, however, entirely or chiefly on their different modes of deriving

the plural from the singular number; but it is rendered much more conspicuous and necessary from the different modes in which they receive their adjectives, as will be seen presently.

Some changes take place on the final syllable of nouns, as has already been mentioned, in obedience to the laws of contraction or for the sake of euphony; the following are some of these changes, viz., a final followed by *y* incipient is changed into *i*; thus, *swaka yam* (my knife) becomes *swaki yam*; the same change takes place before *w* incipient; thus, *olambi wam*, and not *olamba wam*; *o* final before *y* are both superseded by *w*; thus, *ndego wam* is used for *ndego yam*, etc., etc.

#### ADJECTIVES.

In relation to this part of speech there are a few particulars in which there is some general resemblance among these dialects, not such, however, as would be so likely to arise from any existing affinity, as from the uncultivated state of these languages.

In the first place this class of words are not numerous in either, but much less so in the Grebo and the Mandingo than in the Mpongwe; secondly, the Mpongwe is the only one that has degrees of comparison; and thirdly, neither have inflections for number except the Mpongwe.

The deficiency of adjectives in these languages is made up by the use of a substantive and verb; thus, in Grebo, *kani ni ná*, hunger works him, for hungry; *á ká te plande*, he has many things, for rich; and so in Mpongwe, *e jágá njana*, he is sick with hunger, for he is hungry; *are naniva*, he has money, for rich, etc. A similar usage prevails in all three to express the relative qualities of things; thus, in Grebo, to say "his knife is better than my knife," they would say *á fa hio na fa*, i. e., excels or passes my knife. To express the superlative degree they would connect with the word *hio* anoth-

er, viz., *pépé*, which means "all" so as to make the phraseology *hio pépé*, i. e., excel all.

Their modes of counting differ. The Grebo counts up to five, and then there is a reduplication up to ten, and then another up to twenty; after which they count by twenties up to ten twenties, which is *huba*, or two hundred. The Mpongwe and Mandingo have what may strictly be called a decimal system; each counts to ten, where there is a reduplication; eleven is ten and one, twenty is two tens; ten tens is one hundred, for which each language has a word.

The Grebo has no ordinals; the Mandingo forms its ordinals by a suffix, the Mpongwe by a prefix. In all three the derivatives are formed simply by repeating the numerals.

Having noticed the points of difference and resemblance between these dialects, as far as they go, we proceed now to point out some very remarkable peculiarities of the Mpongwe adjective, which are entirely unknown to the others, and perhaps are unknown to any other language in the world.

#### MPONGWE ADJECTIVES.

Under this head are included adjectives of every description, viz., possessive, demonstrative, distributive, numeral, and a species of pronominal adjective that is denominated, for the sake of convenience, the definite pronoun. All of these are included under one head, because they are all governed by the same general rules of inflection.

Though they have no inflection to indicate gender or case, they have a singular and plural, and a species of *declensional inflection* by which they accommodate themselves to nouns of all declensions; thus, the same adjective has one form for a noun of the first declension, another for a noun of the second declension, etc. This will be better understood by an example; thus,

1. DEC. { Sing. *nyare mpolu*, a large cow  
Plur. *inyare inpolu*, large cows.
2. DEC. { Sing. *egara evolu*, a large chest  
Plur. *gara volu*, large chests.
3. DEC. { Sing. *idámbe ivolu*, a large sheep  
Plur. *idámbe ampolu*, large sheep.
4. DEC. { Sing. *omamba ompolu*, a large snake  
Plur. *imamba inpolu*, large snakes.

Here then, without any thing that can be demoninated case or gender, we have as many as seven different forms for the adjective *large*, viz., *mpolu*, *inpolu*, *evolu*, *volu*, *ivolu*, *ampolu*, and *ompolu*, in the use of which the natives are governed by the strictest and most uniform principles of grammar.

Adjectives again are to be divided into *three distinct classes*, not according to the classification of our grammars, into demonstrative, possessive, distributive, etc., but according to the peculiar mode which each adopts of being inflected through the declensions. Before entering into a description of these different classes it is necessary to give some explanation of the definite pronoun.

*Definite Pronoun.* This particle, *yi*, *ya*, or *yo* (it assumes these different vowels according to rules that will be mentioned presently), is a part of speech peculiar to the Mpongwe, but is so intimately interwoven with the whole structure of the language, and is used for such a variety of purposes, that it is difficult to assign it a place under any of the established divisions of speech. It partakes of the nature of the personal pronoun, is used as a relative pronoun, and points out its antecedent with admirable precision; and serves as a connecting link between the nominative and the possessive cases. These different forms of it incorporate themselves with the initial vowel of all verbs of the past tense; they serve as an auxiliary in forming the infinitive mood; sometimes they exercise the function of a preposition; they serve to indicate the

nominative to the verb when it is preceded by more than one; they incorporate themselves with all adjectives whose incipient syllable commences with a vowel, and are indispensable to the inflection of the great mass of adjectives in the language; they form the incipient syllable of all ordinal numbers and are used in various other ways too numerous to be mentioned. This pronoun is inflected through the different declensions like any other adjective; indeed it is the basis of the two principal classes of adjectives, without which, they can not be inflected. This may be better understood by an example; thus,

- |         |   |                                                      |
|---------|---|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. DEC. | { | Sing. <i>nyare yi re</i> , the cow it is there       |
|         | { | Plur. <i>inyare si re</i> , the cows they are there. |
| 2. DEC. | { | Sing. <i>egare zi re</i> , the chest it is, etc.     |
|         | { | Plur. <i>gare yi re</i> , " " "                      |
| 3. DEC. | { | Sing. <i>idámbe nyi re</i> , the sheep, etc.         |
|         | { | Plur. <i>adámbe mi re</i> , " "                      |
| 4. DEC. | { | Sing. <i>omamba wi re</i> , the snake it, etc.       |
|         | { | Plur. <i>imamba yi re</i> , " "                      |

All the parts, singular and plural, being *yi, si, zi, nyi, mi, wi*. If it is united to a word, no matter whether it be a noun, adjective, or verb, that commences with a vowel, it drops its own vowel and incorporates itself with the following word, in the same manner as the French article with a noun which commences with a vowel or a silent *h*. The vowel is superseded by *a* before certain consonants, but under what particular circumstances is not known. When it takes *o* it is either in the objective case, or it is a nominative possessing something of a demonstrative character; thus, *ininla nyi denda mpani mbe, nyo be juwa*, i. e., "the soul that sins, it (the very same) shall die," etc. It differs from adjectives and nouns, but agrees with personal pronouns in having an objective case.

Having now explained the nature and office of this somewhat anomalous particle, which makes a marked, if not a

radical difference between this and the other two dialects, we may complete the classification of adjectives.

The *first class* of adjectives embraces all those which receive the definite pronoun as a prefix, which they may do in two ways, 1st, when the ground-form, commencing with a vowel, incorporates the prefix with itself without forming an additional syllable; thus, 'am is the ground-form for *my*, but is never used by itself; by receiving the prefix it becomes *y'am*, *s'am*, *z'am*, etc.; and 2d, when the ground-form commences with a consonant and receives the prefix as an additional syllable; thus, *ngulu*, strong; *y'ingulu*, *s'ingulu*, according to the number and declension of the noun to which it belongs. Before the word *tenatena*, red, and some other words, the vowel of the prefix is *a*, as *yatenatena*, etc.

The *second class* embraces those adjectives whose initial changes are analogous to those that are produced on the incipient syllables of so many nouns in the different declensions successively; i. e., they assume, reject, or change their initial vowel according as nouns of the different declensions would. The word *mpolu* belongs to this class; and the example already given under the head of the inflection of adjectives generally, will explain the characteristic just mentioned.

The *third class* embrace such adjectives as combine both of the above peculiarities in their own inflections; this occurs in the words *enge*, much, and *ango*, little; neither of which is ever used by itself. With nouns of the first declension it is *nyenge*, pl. *sinyenge*; in the second declension it is *ezenge*, pl. *yenge*; in the third, *inyenge*, pl. *amenge*; and in the fourth it is *onyenge*, pl. *inienge*, etc.

The ordinal numbers are derived from the cardinal by simply prefixing the definite pronoun, all of which, as well as the cardinal numbers themselves, are to be arranged under the different classes of adjectives according to their incipient syllables respectively.

## VERBS.

There are but few points of resemblance among the verbs of these three dialects. Neither has any inflections to indicate the person or the number, *i. e.*, the first, second, and third persons, singular and plural, are of the same form.

The second person plural of the imperative mood in Mpongwe verbs has a form different from the singular which is almost the only exception to the above principle that is worthy of notice. Another circumstance common to all is that they use conjunctions, and other auxiliary particles, to express the various shades of meaning of the different tenses and moods; and some of these particles are the same in two or more of them, which can not justly be regarded in any other light than an accidental circumstance.

*Grebo verbs* are exceedingly meagre in point of inflections. They have an indicative, an imperative, and an infinitive mood. The subjunctive mood is little else than the indicative, having the conjunction *ne* (if) placed before it; and the potential mood is likewise dependent upon auxiliary particles.

*Tense* is well defined in *Grebo verbs*, perhaps much more minutely than in either of the other two dialects. With the aid of auxiliary particles there are as many as *thirteen tenses*; viz., the present, indefinite past, imperfect indefinite past, the past tense of to-day, the imperfect past tense of to-day, the past tense of yesterday, the imperfect past tense of yesterday, the past tense of time previous to yesterday, the imperfect tense of time previous to yesterday, the indefinite future tense, the future tense of to-day, the future tense of to-morrow, the future tense of time subsequent to to-morrow. This remarkable minuteness in defining the precise time of an event or action is not effected, however, by changes wrought upon the radical word, but by the use of auxiliary particles, which are seldom used except in this capacity. There is not, strictly speaking, any future tense; the only way by which they can

express future action is by employing the verb *minio* or *mi* (to go) as an auxiliary, and the infinitive mood; thus, to say, "I will do it," they say, *mi nē numu*, i. e., "I go it to do." And so *miē nē numu*, "I am going it to do, presently, or some future part of the day." And in all these cases the auxiliary verb receives the inflections, while the infinitive mood of the principal verb remains unchanged. No Grebo verb is capable, of itself, of more than twelve or fifteen different forms; for all the accessory ideas or shades of meaning it is indebted to the use of auxiliary particles, many of which are inflected instead of itself.

It has a passive voice which is made by affixing the letter *ē* to the active form; but it is never used when it can be avoided by circumlocution. Instead of saying *he was killed*, they would say, *he*, or *they*, or *somebody killed him*. Instead of saying, *he was killed in war*, they would say, *war killed him*. The want of passive verbs characterizes the Mandingo, the Basa, the Fanti, the Akra, and perhaps all the dialects of Northern Africa. The particles *ne* (is) and *māna* (was) are the only parts of a substantive verb used in the Grebo. A reciprocal form is produced by a reduplication of the incipient syllable.

#### MANDINGO VERB.

The Mandingo verb possesses but little more completeness or system than the Grebo. It seems to be equally dependent upon auxiliary particles, and, like the Grebo, but not to the same extent, it defines the time of an action with considerable minuteness. The radical or ground-form is capable of but few inflections, even less than the Grebo. It has a causative form, which is made by the aid of a suffix, which the Grebo has not; but, on the other hand, it wants a reciprocal form, which the Grebo has. It differs essentially from the Grebo, in its not being under the necessity of employing the verb *to go* or *come*, to aid in expressing a future tense. It is

said<sup>o</sup> to possess seven tenses and four moods, but strictly speaking there are, perhaps, not more than three moods, the conditional being expressed by aid of conjunctive particles. It uses a greater variety of particles in the sense of substantive verbs.

#### MPONGWE VERB.

The Mpongwe verb has *four moods*, the indicative, the imperative, the conditional or subjunctive, and what may be denominated the *conjunctive mood*. By the aid of auxiliary particles it forms a potential and an infinitive mood.

The conjunctive mood has only one form, and is used as the second verb in a sentence where the two verbs would otherwise be joined by a copulative conjunction. Although not inflected itself, it is joined with verbs of all moods, tenses, and persons.

The conditional mood has a form of its own, but uses conjunctive particles as auxiliaries at the same time. Different conjunctive particles are used with the different tenses.

The imperative mood is derived from the present of the indicative by the change of its initial consonant into its reciprocal consonant; thus, *w̄nda*, to love; *r̄nda*, love thou; *denda*, to do; *lenda*, do thou. These changes will be noticed more fully presently.

The potential mood is made, like the subjunctive, by the aid of auxiliary particles.

The tenses in Mpongwe are a present, past or historical, perfect past, and future. The perfect past tense, which represents the completeness of an action, is formed from the present tense by prefixing *a* and by changing *a* final into *i*; thus, *w̄nda*, to love; *at̄ndi*, did love. The past or historical tense is derived from the imperative by prefixing *a* and changing *a* final into *i*; thus, *r̄nda*, love; *ar̄ndi*, have loved, etc. The future tense is formed by the aid of the auxiliary particle *be*; as, *mi be w̄nda*, I am going to love. It must be care-

fully noted, however, that this same combination of words, if the nominative follows, expresses past time; thus, *ne be tōnda Anyambia Ebreham*, i. e., God loved Abraham. When it is future, the nominative goes before the verb in the order of construction. When an action is immediately to take place, the present tense is used as a future; thus, *mi bia*, I am coming immediately; but, *mi be bia*, I am coming after a while, or at some indefinite future time.

The passive voice is formed from the active, simply by changing a final into *o*; thus, *mi tōnda*, I love; *mi tōndo*, I am loved. In the historical and perfect past tense, which terminate in *i*, *o* is simply adjoined; thus, *arōndi*, have loved; *arōndio*, to have been loved. This passive form, which is so simple in itself, may be found in every mood and tense which properly belongs to the active.

There is another feature in the Mpongwe verb equally simple and remarkable; there is a negative for every affirmative form of the verb, and this is distinguished from the affirmative by an intonation on the first or principal vowel of the verb, which is characterized in writing by the use of an italic letter. The negative form belongs to the passive as well as the active voice; thus,

ACT.	}	Affir. <i>mi tōnda</i> , I love
		Neg. <i>mi tōnda</i> , I do not love.
PASS.	}	Affir. <i>mi tōndo</i> , I am loved
		Neg. <i>mi tōndo</i> , I am not loved.

Having now treated of the moods and tenses of Mpongwe verbs, of which there is nothing remarkable, except the very simple manner in which the passive voice is formed from the active, and the equally simple process by which the negative form is distinguished from the affirmative, we proceed now to point out another characteristic of Mpongwe verbs, which is wholly unknown to other dialects, and which certainly constitutes a most wonderful feature in this.

All the verbs in the language, with the exception, perhaps,

of ten or a dozen, may be regarded as *regular verbs*, inasmuch as they are all governed by the same fixed principles of inflection; they are such as are of two or more syllables, the final letter of which is always *a*, and the incipient consonant of which must be *b*, *d*, *f* (which is closely allied to *fw*), *j*, *k*, *p*, *s*, *t*, and *sh*, each of which has its reciprocal consonant, into which it is invariably changed to form the imperative mood and such of the oblique tenses of the verb as are derived from it. Such verbs as commence with *m* or *n*, which have no reciprocal consonants, retain these two letters throughout all their inflections; but, in other respects, are perfectly regular. The following example will illustrate what we mean by the change of these consonants into their reciprocal letters: thus, the invariable reciprocal letter of *b* is *v* or *w*; so the imperative is derived from the present of the indicative, in all verbs which commence with *b*, by changing *b* into *w* or *v*; thus, *mi bōnga*, I take; Imp. *wōnga*, take; after the same manner, and with invariable uniformity, *d* is changed into *l*, *f* into *v* or *fw* into *vw*, *j* into *y*, *k* into *g*, *p* into *v*, *s* into *z*, *sh* into *zy*, *t* into *r*; thus,

<i>mi bōnga</i> , I take	<i>wōnga</i> , take thou
<i>mi denda</i> , I do	<i>lenda</i> , do thou
<i>mi fwema</i> , I err	<i>wvema</i> , err thou
<i>mi jona</i> , I kill	<i>yona</i> , kill thou
<i>mi kamba</i> , I speak	<i>gamba</i> , speak
<i>mi panga</i> , I make	<i>vanga</i> , make
<i>mi songa</i> , I follow	<i>zonga</i> , follow
<i>mi tōnda</i> , I love	<i>rōnda</i> , love
<i>mi nunguna</i> , I help	<i>nunguna</i> , help thou
<i>mi sheva</i> , I play	<i>eyeva</i> , play, etc.

Having now explained what a regular verb is, we proceed a step farther, to explain what may be denominated the different *conjugations* of every regular verb.

Every regular verb in the language may be said to have as many as five simple, and as many as six compound conjugations.

These conjugations are, 1st, the radical, *kamba*, I speak; 2d, the causative, which is derived from the radical by changing a final into *iza*; thus, *kamba*, to speak; *kambiza*, to cause to speak; the 3d, frequentative or habitual conjugation, which implies habitual action, is derived from the radical by suffixing *ga*; thus, *kamba*, to speak; *kambaga*, to speak habitually; 4th, the relative conjugation, which implies performing an action for or to some one, is derived from the radical by suffixing *na*; thus, from *kamba*, to speak, comes *kambana* or *kambina*, to speak to or with some one; and 5th, the indefinite, which is derived from the radical by suffixing the imperative to the present of the indicative; thus, from *kamba* comes *kambagamba*, to speak at random.

By combining these simple derivative conjugations, as many as six compound conjugations may be formed. Thus, by uniting the habitual and the causative, we get *kambizaga*, i. e., to cause to talk habitually, etc. The following table will exhibit all these conjugations; thus,

Simple Conjugations.	
Radical,	<i>mi kamba</i> , I talk
Frequentative,	<i>kambaga</i> , to talk habitually
Causative,	<i>kambiza</i> , to cause to talk
Relative,	<i>kambina</i> , to talk to, or with some one.
Indefinite,	<i>kambagamba</i> , to talk at random.

Compound Conjugations.	
	<i>kambizaga</i> , to cause to talk habitually
	<i>kambinaga</i> , to talk habitually with some one
	<i>kambinaza</i> , to cause to talk with some one
	<i>kambagambaga</i> , to talk at random habitually
	<i>kambagambiza</i> , to cause some one to talk at random
	<i>kambagambina</i> , to talk with some one at random.

These compound tenses might be still farther multiplied, by combining three or more of the simple conjugations into one; thus, *kambinazaga*, to cause to speak with some one habitually, but such extended combinations are seldom used.

Now, in relation to the above simple and compound forms of the verb, each one of them has, according to principles already mentioned, not only an affirmative active and negative active voice, but also an affirmative and negative passive voice, each one of which is inflected through all the moods and tenses according to the same rules as the radical conjugation, thus giving to the verb a variety and a number of inflections that is surpassed by no language in the world. The number of different forms into which every regular verb may be wrought, not including those which require auxiliary particles, is upward of two hundred, which must appear astonishingly great when it is remembered that the verb is not inflected on account of person or number. The whole number of tenses or shades of meaning which an Mpongwe verb may be made to express, with the aid of its auxiliary particles, is between twelve and fifteen hundred. It is not pretended that any one Mpongwe verb is habitually or frequently used in all of these varied and almost interminable ramifications; for this would imply a degree of mental activity to which no native tribe in Africa has attained; but we mean to assert that some parts of every conjugation are more or less frequently, and that the most remote ramification may at any time be used, and convey a precise idea to the mind of the native, even had it been the first time he had ever heard it so used.

It is farther important to mention that the natives do not always confine themselves rigidly to the idiom which is implied by the character of the verb; that is, instead of using these complicated combinations, they may express their same ideas by the use of two or more independent words; thus, instead of saying *e kambizé*, he caused him to speak, they may say *e pangé e kamba*, i. e., he makes him to talk.

It will be borne in mind too, that, although the inflections of the Mpongwe verb are exceedingly complicated, it pre-

serves a most marked method, and by committing to memory a few very simple principles, every part may easily be traced up to its root.

It has been remarked that the Mandingo has no passive voice, and that the Grebo, if it really has one, seldom uses it. The Mpongwe, on the other hand, uses the passive voice much more freely than the active; and it may be said with truth, that it never uses an active verb when it can use a passive one. The great partiality which is felt for the use of the passive voice, leads to a species of idiom which is very remarkable indeed. For example, they would be much more likely to say *mi tōndo n'anlaga*, I am loved by people, than to say *anlaga wi tōnda mie*, the people like me; so *mi tōndo ndé*, I am loved by him, in preference to *e tōnda mie*; they say *e bōngo n'akugu*, i. e., "he is taken or overcome by rum," for he is drunk; *e nya inyama si jono ndé*, i. e., he eats the venison which is killed by him, instead of, which he killed; *olōngá w'inya wi tōndo ne reri yé*, i. e., the kind of food that is liked by his father, instead of that which his father likes. The phrase, "your coming to this house," is expressed thus, *ibia s'ibio nuwe*, literally, "the coming which is comed by you;" and again, the death which we die in this world, is thus rendered, *ijuwa sijuwu zuwe ntye yind*, i. e., "the death which is died by us in this world."

## CHAPTER V.

## CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN WESTERN AFRICA.

Roman Catholic Missions.—First Efforts of the Moravians.—English Baptist Mission.—United Effort of the Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London Missionary Societies.—Church Missionary Society.—Wesleyan Missionary Society.—English Baptist Missionary Society.—Basle Missionary Society.—United Presbyterian Synod of Scotland.—Missionary Societies of the United States.—Baptist.—The Methodist Episcopal Church.—American Board of Foreign Missions.—Protestant Episcopal Mission.—Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions.—The American Missionary Association.—Southern Baptist Missionary Board.

THE Church of Rome deserves great praise for the zeal she displayed in following up all the Portuguese and Spanish discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with efforts to extend the Christian faith. The Portuguese government itself, at the commencement of these enterprises, was influenced as much by a desire to propagate the Catholic faith, as by any expectations of commercial gain. In the course of time, when unexpected sources of wealth were opened up by these discoveries, she lost sight, in a great measure, of the former of these objects, and gave herself up wholly to an absorbing pursuit of the latter. The Church of Rome, however, was not diverted from her purpose by any such motives. She addressed herself to the one great object of converting these newly-discovered tribes to the Romish faith, and she pursued her calling with an energy, zeal, and perseverance worthy of a better cause. Had Protestant nations and the Protestant Church pursued the same work with half the zeal and steadiness, the moral aspect of the world at the present time would have been very different from what it is.

We have already given a detailed account of the efforts of the Church of Rome to establish her faith in the kingdom of Kongo, and pointed out the causes of her failure. Her labors in that portion of Africa were commenced almost simultaneously with the first discovery of the country, and were continued, with a few slight interruptions, for more than two centuries, but without any permanent or abiding results. This, however, is but one of very many other enterprises of a similar nature that were undertaken on different parts of the coast, but in almost all cases with similar results. At one time, she had her missions at Angola, Loango, Cape Lopez, the islands of St. Thomas, Princes, and Fernando Po, Waree, Benin, Whydah, Elmina, Asaini, Sierra Leone, Goree, and Senegal; but at none of these places, except the few that have been retained by the French or the Portuguese governments, can any traces of this religion be found at the present day. It is true that, at some of the above mentioned places, these efforts were continued only for a few years; sickness and other untoward influences operated against them; but, judging from the results of the Kongo mission, it is doubtful whether a more prolonged effort would have resulted in any thing more important.

Toward the close of the eighteenth century, a renewed effort was made by French Catholics to establish the Romish faith, especially at Asaini and Loango. But these efforts proved still more futile. On the arrival of the missionaries at Loango, they found that the people had not only abandoned all the outward forms of the Romish religion, but were sunk as deep in paganism as they had ever been. At the same time they found them so treacherous and savage that they could not live among them without constant peril of their lives.

About fourteen years since, Rev. Messrs. Barron and Kelly—the former being Vicar-General of Philadelphia—arrived at Cape Palmas with the view of establishing a mission at

that place. Their first impressions were most favorable, and the Vicar, after only a few months' residence, sailed for Europe, with the view of obtaining a reinforcement of missionaries. His mission was regarded with great favor at Rome. He was constituted Bishop of both Guineas, and, after a few months' delay, returned to Cape Palmas, having been preceded by seven priests and three brothers of the congregation of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

Soon after the arrival of this company, one of their number died of the fever, and several others were taken ill but recovered. In consequence of this, and also on account of difficulties that had arisen between the colonists and the natives, which, in their opinion, made it an unpromising field of missionary labor, the mission to this place was given up. Mr. Kelly returned to this country, two of the French missionaries went to the French settlement at Grand Bassam, two to Asaini (near Axim), and the remainder of the company were sent by the bishop to Gabun. Those who went to Grand Bassam and Asaini, in the hope of finding a less deleterious climate, made a great mistake. More than this, they found no suitable houses at either place to shelter them from the inclement rains, and in consequence of exposures and trials of this nature, all four of these missionaries died, after a residence of only a few months in the country. The party who went to Gabun found a healthier climate, and this mission is still sustained, but as yet without having made any decided impression on the people for whom it was organized.

.. We have no knowledge of any attempt on the part of the Protestant Church to establish Christian missions in Western Africa earlier than 1736. At that time the United Brethren sent out a converted mulatto, of the name of Christian Protten, to the Gold Coast, to make known the Gospel to the aborigines in that part of the country. He was accompanied by one of the brethren, of the name of Huckuff, and they

located themselves at a place they called Christianborg, not far from Akra. Huckuff died soon after his arrival in the country, but Protten continued to labor here for more than thirty years, but without any important results. He died in 1769. The year previous to his death, Rev. Jacob Meder and four assistants were sent out to reinforce the mission; but the principal and two of his assistants died in a very short time after their arrival in the country. Four other brethren went forward to supply the vacancy; but all of these, with the two survivors of the previous company, were removed by death before the year 1770. The mission was then abandoned as an impracticable undertaking.

In 1795, the English Baptist Missionary Society sent two missionaries out for the purpose of forming a mission at Sierra Leone. But in consequence of the imprudence of one and the ill health of the other, the enterprise was abandoned.

Two years subsequent to this, the Scotch, Glasgow, and London Missionary Societies united for the purpose of establishing a mission among the Fulahs, a large and powerful Mohammedan tribe residing on the confines of Sierra Leone. Neither of these societies had been organized more than two years, and their limited resources at the time no doubt suggested this union of action. Each one furnished two missionaries for the enterprise. Henry Brunton and Peter Greig went forth under the auspices of the Scotch Missionary Society, Peter Fergusson and Robert Graham under the Glasgow Society, and Alexander Russel and George Cappe in connection with the London Missionary Society. This united action appeared well in theory, but it proved to be unadvised. The mission was made up of discordant elements, and it was ascertained before they reached the place of their destination that they could not carry on their work harmoniously. It was also ascertained on their arrival at Sierra Leone that the Fulah country was involved in war, render-

ing it impossible for them to establish a mission among them under such circumstances, even if they had been united among themselves. In view of these unexpected emergencies, it was resolved that three stations should be formed instead of one. Accordingly it was determined that the missionaries of the London Missionary Society should form a station on the Bullom shore, those of the Glasgow Society at the Banana Islands, and the Edinburgh missionaries at the Rio Pongas, in the Susu country. Messrs. Brunton and Greig carried on their labors among the Susus for some time under circumstances of great encouragement; but when the rains set in, they both suffered extremely from the fever, and both had to return to Free-town with the view of recruiting their health.

On their arrival at Sierra Leone they learned that one of the brethren of the London Missionary Society, and both of those of the Glasgow Society, had died.

After recruiting, Mr. Greig returned to the Susu country for the purpose of resuming his labors, while Mr. Brunton remained at Sierra Leone as chaplain.

Soon after the return of Greig to the Susu country, he was murdered by a band of Fulahs passing through the neighborhood.

Mr. Robert Alexander, who had been sent out to be associated with Greig in his labors among the Susus, on his arrival at Sierra Leone, hearing of the murder of his associate, determined to remain there for the time being, and do what good he could until he could receive instructions from the Society. But his health becoming affected, both he and Mr. Brunton returned to their native country, which terminated unsuccessfully this third attempt to plant the Gospel among the benighted millions of Western Africa.

... These trials and reverses were undoubtedly intended to try the faith of the people of God. The commencement of the present century witnessed the renewal of these efforts; and, although heavy losses and severe ordeals had to be en-

dured for a time, the triumphs of the Gospel are becoming every day more brilliant, and the results already show that the cause is of God, and can not fail. We propose to give a mere outline of the labors of those Missionary Societies which have entered upon this field of labor since the beginning of the present century, and which are still actively engaged in this great work.

The first and most prominent place among these undoubtedly belongs to the Church Missionary Society. Their first mission was to the Susus. Two missionaries were sent out in 1804 for the purpose of founding this mission. But on their arrival at Sierra Leone one of them left the service of the Society, and the other remained in the colony as chaplain until a reinforcement could arrive. Two other missionaries arrived in 1806, and, with the one who had been acting as chaplain, entered the Susu country, and at once formed two missionary stations, one of which had been previously occupied by the lamented Greig. These stations were reinforced in 1809 by the arrival of two other missionaries, one of whom, however, died after a very short residence in the country.

These brethren prosecuted their work with energy; but finding the great mass of the adult population so much absorbed in the slave-trade, and so much debased by it, they directed their efforts almost entirely to the children. At one time they had as many as thirty boys in a school at one of the stations, and twenty-eight girls in another at the other station.

In 1813, Mr. Butcher, one of the missionaries who had arrived in the country in 1806, visited England, and on his way back, with his wife and seven other persons, was shipwrecked. By this disaster the Society lost \$13,000 worth of goods.

About this time two additional stations were formed, one on the Bullom shore, and the other on the Gambia River.

In 1815 the mission was farther reinforced. The year following the brethren were visited by Rev. Edward Bickersteth, the Secretary of the Society, when it was resolved, in view of the disturbances occasioned by the slave-trade, the frequent fires that had occurred at the missionary stations, and also in view of the fact that the British cruisers were bringing in large numbers of recaptives into the colony of Sierra Leone, who greatly needed religious instruction, that all the missionaries, and, as far as practicable, all their pupils, should be transferred to the colony. From that period up to the present the labors of the Church Missionary Society on this part of the coast have been confined almost exclusively to the colony. The missionaries justly regarded Sierra Leone as a sort of missionary nursery, where they could train missionaries for all parts of the country; and their expectations in this particular, as we shall presently see, were not ill-founded.

From the commencement of the mission in Sierra Leone, in 1816, up to 1823, the labors of the missionaries were attended with the most remarkable success. The labors of Messrs. Johnson and During—the former at Regent's Town, and the latter at Gloucester—were attended with special blessings. In 1818 Mr. Johnson had received to the communion of the church 263 members, the school contained 500 pupils, and the usual attendance at church was not less than 1200 or 1300. In 1823 there were as many as eight stations maintained among the different settlements that had been formed by the recaptives, and the missionary work, in every aspect of it, was most encouraging.

But the following three years were disastrous to an unprecedented extent. During the spring and summer of 1823 the Society lost as many as eleven of its missionary laborers, one of whom (Mr. Johnson) died at sea on his way to England, two (Mr. and Mrs. During) were supposed to have been shipwrecked, and eight were carried off by an epidemic in the colony.

The following year seven additional laborers were sent out; but before the close of it as many more were removed by death, and three returned to England. The next year six returned home and three were removed by death. These losses and reverses had nigh put an end to the mission. By many in England it was contended that the work should be abandoned, but wiser counsels prevailed. Some very important measures were adopted about this time for the preservation of the health of the missionaries, and, among others, the rule of allowing them to visit their native country once in six years for the improvement of their health. At the same time the general health of the country had improved by a more extended and thorough cultivation of the surrounding lands; so that, at the present time, the risk of health and life by a residence in Sierra Leone is small compared with what it formerly was. At the same time the manifold blessings which God has vouchsafed to the labors of his missionary servants here, show most clearly that the work is his, and must therefore be sustained.

The directors and agents of this enterprise seem to have had before their minds, from a very early period of the work, four great objects, which they have pursued with steadiness, and thus far with the most decided and happy effect. The first of these has been the preaching of the Gospel, with the view of converting souls and forming Christian churches; second, the establishment and maintenance of schools and seminaries, with the view of training young men to be teachers and preachers; third, the translation and circulation of the Scriptures and other religious books in the languages of the surrounding country; and, fourth, that of founding branch missions in more remote portions of the country. A very few facts of a statistical nature will show that all these objects are being accomplished to a very encouraging extent.

According to the Annual Report of the Society for 1855

the mission, in the Sierra Leone Colony alone, numbers fifteen stations, connected with which there are 3354 communicants. Nor will their educational operations appear less remarkable when it is known that they have now in active service as many as eighty-eight native teachers, as many as fifty-nine common schools, one grammar-school for boys, another for females, and one seminary in which the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages are successfully taught—the whole number of pupils in these various schools being nearly six thousand. The work of translation has been going on at the same time. Portions of the Scriptures, and some elementary works, have been translated into the Bullom, Timneh, Housa, Yoruba, and Susu languages, and into some of these the Liturgy has also been translated. More attention has been given to this department of labor during the two last years than ever before, but as yet we have no particular reports of what has been effected.

A mission was established in the Timneh country at a place called Port Lokkoh, in 1840. Three missionaries were detailed for this service, and their labors were carried on for some time, but without any very marked results. The station is still kept up by a native missionary; but the people, who are Mohammedans, show but little disposition, as yet, to conform to the requirements of the Gospel.

But the most important branch mission that has grown out of the Sierra Leone enterprise is the one at Abeokuta, in the Yoruba country. Many of the recaptives, who were brought to Sierra Leone in former years, were from this district. They were known at Sierra Leone as an active, industrious, and, compared with other tribes among them, an enterprising people. Some of these, after they had acquired an education and amassed a little property, formed the purpose of returning to their native country, which was carried into effect by one company in 1843. Mr. Townsend, one of the missionaries at Sierra Leone, seeing this disposition

on the part of the people, and feeling that something might be done to promote the cause of the Gospel in that part of the country, visited Abeokuta for the purpose of examining the place, and seeing on what terms these enterprising colonists might be permitted to return to their native country. His report being favorable, a much larger number of emigrants availed themselves of the first opportunity to return to the land of their nativity. Rev. Messrs. Thompson, Golmer, and Crowther, and their wives, sailed for Badagry, the nearest point on the sea-coast by which they could reach Abeokuta, and arrived there in January, 1845. In consequence of the death of the King of Abeokuta, who had received Mr. Townsend with so much kindness, and the disturbances in the country growing out of it, the missionaries were detained eighteen months at Badagry. They carried on their missionary labors here during their detention with so much success that it was determined that Badagry should be constituted a permanent missionary station. Subsequently, however, the town was nearly destroyed in war, and the mission was transferred to Lagos, thirty-six miles to the eastward, and a more convenient point by which to reach Abeokuta.

The missionaries, on their arrival at Abeokuta, were received with the utmost cordiality, and they found that much had already been done in the way of preparing the people to hear the Gospel by one of the native converts who had accompanied the first set of Sierra Leone emigrants. Some account has already been given of this mission; and we only add here, that it has thus far been greatly blessed, and gives a practical illustration of what the Gospel may do for Africa when its glorious truths are more extensively proclaimed among the people. This branch of the mission now numbers six principal stations, thirteen schools, in which there are upward of 775 pupils, and the number of its converts, in 1853, was 536.

The next missionary society, whose labors in Western

Africa claim our attention, is that of the Wesleyans of England. It is difficult to say at what particular period the labors of this society were commenced. Dr. Coke united with other philanthropists in England in sending out a company of mechanics to the Fulah country in 1795, with the view of promoting civilization, which was regarded at that time as an indispensable preparation to the introduction of the Gospel. Several of these mechanics were members of the Wesleyan Church, and, no doubt, went out under the advice of Dr. Coke, but they can not be regarded as missionaries, or their enterprise as a strictly Christian mission. The undertaking was based upon a misapprehension of the character and motives of the agents they employed, as well as the character of the people to whom they were sent, and it fell through, therefore, before any fair test was made of the principles upon which the enterprise was based. Subsequent attempts have repeatedly been made to accomplish the same object in other parts of the world, but, without a single exception, they have uniformly failed. No fact is better established at the present day than this, that Christianization must take the precedence of civilization in raising up any people from the depths of heathenism.

Among the first emigrants to Sierra Leone, especially from Nova Scotia, were a goodly number of Methodists, which led to the appointment of two missionaries by the Wesleyan Conference in 1797 to that field. Very little is known about the labors of these missionaries, or even whether they ever went to Sierra Leone.

A native minister, of the name of Mingo Jordan, seems to have labored faithfully here, in the Wesleyan connection, between the years 1805 and 1808. At the last-mentioned date he reports 110 converts. In 1811 Rev. George Warren was sent out by the Wesleyan Conference to labor in this field, and this has usually been regarded as the period when this Missionary Society commenced its labors in Western

Africa. It is foreign to our purpose to give any thing like a detailed account of the labors of this or any other missionary society in Western Africa in the present chapter. Like its predecessor in this great and perilous work, it has had its trials and reverses, but has gone forward with unfaltering steadiness, and has realized the most glorious results. The general plan of the Wesleyan Society, of respiting its agents after two years' service in this trying climate, has had both its advantages and disadvantages. If it has rescued some from danger by transferring them to healthier climes, after a sojourn of only two years in the country, it has exposed a larger number to the trying process of acclimation. But if severe trials have been endured, great blessings have also been shared. At the commencement of their labors in 1811, they had three local preachers, 110 church members, and about 100 pupils in school. In 1852 they had 21 chapels, 7 missionaries, 107 local preachers, more than 6000 church members, 3608 pupils in school, and more than 11,000 persons under the pastoral care of their missionaries.

A second mission was established by the Wesleyan Missionary Society, on the Gambia River, in 1821. The Gambia is one of the two great rivers of Senegambia, and is navigable for ordinary-sized vessels to the distance of three or four hundred miles. The British Government have two important commercial establishments on this river—one, called Bathurst, on the Island of St. Mary's, near its mouth; and the other at M'Carthy's Island, about two hundred and fifty miles in the interior. The first mission established by the Wesleyan Society was at Bathurst. A second principal station was established, twelve or fourteen years afterward, at M'Carthy's Island. The principal laborers in this mission were Rev. Richard Marshall, Rev. William Moister, and Rev. W. Fox: the two last have published extended accounts of their missionary labors in this part of the world. Mr. M'Brair, formerly a missionary of the same society in

Egypt, spent some time at M'Carthy's Island, and published a grammar of the Mandingo language. This mission has been blessed in a very high degree, as well as that at Sierra Leone. In 1852 they report six chapels, 817 church members, and 534 pupils in their schools.

The third, and, in some respects, the most important of all the missions of the Wesleyan Society, was established on the Gold Coast about the 1st of January, 1835. The first point occupied was Cape Coast. The way had been somewhat prepared here by a large school that had been kept up in the fort by the Government, in which the Bible had been used as a text-book, and also by a religious movement that had actually taken place among many of the pupils of the schools from having read the Bible. A church was organized very soon after the arrival of the first missionary, and the work has been extending itself in almost every direction since that time. Rev. Thomas Freeman, a colored man of education, intelligence, and enterprise, was sent out to take the superintendence of this mission in 1838, and has continued in this charge ever since. He has not only visited and formed missionary stations at all the principal settlements on the Gold Coast, but has made missionary tours to the capitals of Ashanti, Dehomi, and Yoruba, and done something to spread the knowledge of the Gospel in all these distant and dark portions of the African continent. The society has, at the present time, its stations and chapels at Cape Coast, Annamabo, Dix Cove, Akra, Domonasi, Kumasi, Badagry, and Abeokuta. It reports 64 native teachers, 23 local preachers, 817 full accredited church members, 28 day-schools, and upward of 1200 pupils in school.

The English Baptist Missionary Society, as has been mentioned above, made an attempt to establish a mission at Sierra Leone in 1795; but having failed in this, nothing more was done until 1841. At that time Rev. John Clarke and Dr. Prince, both of whom had been missionary

laborers in Jamaica, were sent out to explore the island of Fernando Po and the adjacent country of the main land, with the view of establishing a mission on that part of the coast. They commenced their labors at Clarence, on the island of Fernando Po, and were enabled in a very short time to organize a Christian church at that place. Two stations were also formed on the main land: one at Bimbia, and the other at the Kamerun River. Their labors were carried on with great encouragement until 1846, when they were ordered away from the island by the Spanish government, and two Roman Catholic missionaries were left to take their place. The latter, however, after a very few months' residence, withdrew from the country, when the Baptist missionaries resumed their labors on the island, and have continued them without interruption ever since. At the present time they have flourishing stations at the places above mentioned. Something has been done to reduce the dialects of the natives of the island, and also of the main land, to writing, and into the latter some portions of the Bible have been translated.

The Basle Missionary Society had their attention directed to Western Africa as early as 1826. It was not until 1828 that their first company of missionaries reached Christianborg, near Akra, the place which the United Brethren had attempted to occupy more than thirty years previously. These brethren, like their predecessors, fell victims to the climate. Four years subsequent to this another band of three missionaries came out to the same post, two of whom shared the same fate as their predecessors. The third, Mr. Riis, has continued to labor in this field up to the present time. In 1835 he removed to Akropong, a large town in the mountains of Akwapim to the northeast of Akra. In 1843 this mission was reinforced by a company of twenty-four Christian negroes from the island of Jamaica. Since then the affairs of the mission seem to be in a prosperous

condition. They have now prosperous stations at Akropong, Christianborg, and Ussu.

The United Presbyterian Synod of Scotland commenced a mission on the Old Kalabar River, in the Gulf of Benin, in April, 1846. Mr. Waddell, formerly a missionary in the West Indies, accompanied by a few other missionary laborers from the West Indies and Scotland, laid the foundation of this mission, and has continued to labor there ever since. The Old Kalabar is a broad river or estuary, open and navigable to the distance of sixty or seventy miles from the sea-coast, and probably communicates by some of its branches with the Niger. It seems to afford a comparatively healthy climate. Some of the missionaries have had to return to Europe for the purpose of recruiting their health, but as yet, so far as is known, none have been removed by death. The people among whom this mission was founded, though addicted to many revolting heathenish practices, are nevertheless somewhat above the common standard of ignorance and degradation of the country generally. Many of the native traders speak the English language with fluency, and have considerable property. The missionaries were received with cordiality, and have been treated with kindness. There were ten European laborers in 1853, and three stations are maintained with efficiency. The language has been reduced to writing, and the scholars, of whom there are more than two hundred, are trained to read both in their own and in the English language.

The missionary associations of the United States have not been unmindful of the Christian duty of making known the Gospel to the perishing millions of Africa. If they were not as early upon the ground as some of their sister associations of Great Britain, they have, at least, since girding on the Gospel armor, prosecuted their work with unsurpassed zeal and steadiness. As many as seven of the leading missionary societies of this country have their missions in West-

ern Africa. We can do little more than glance at the operations of these different societies, and indicate the places where they are carrying on the missionary work.

The first of these, taking them in the order in which they commenced their work, is the American Baptist Union. This society commenced its work simultaneously and in connection with the founding of the Liberian colony. Rev. Lott Carey and Rev. Collin Teage, both of them colored men, were ordained in Richmond, Virginia, and sailed soon after for Africa. They founded a church in Liberia in 1822, which, in the course of a few years, numbered more than one hundred members. Something was done also to make known the Gospel among the natives of Cape Mount, and a school was conducted among them for a few months. Lott Carey was a very able and devoted missionary, and his influence was felt both by the colonists and the aborigines of the surrounding country. He lost his life by an explosion of gunpowder, after a residence of only a few years in the country. Rev. Calvin Holton was sent out to take charge of the mission in 1825, but died after a very few months. Five years after, Rev. Benjamin Skinner was sent out to take his place, but his health failed also, and he had to withdraw, and died on the voyage back to the United States. From the commencement of this mission in 1822 to 1835, when Rev. Messrs. Crocker and Mylne were sent forth to this field, the mission was carried on by colored emigrants chosen by the Church itself. Messrs. Crocker and Mylne went up to Millsburgh to pass their acclimation process. Mrs. Mylne died here, and the brethren soon after transferred the mission to Edina, near the mouth of the St. John. After a few months' residence here, Mr. Crocker, leaving Mr. Mylne in charge of the station at Edina, removed to a place among the natives in the interior called Madebli. Here all his subsequent labors in Africa were performed. In 1838 the mission was reinforced by the arrival

of Rev. John Clark and Mrs. Clark. Mr. Myline, not long after, on account of enfeebled health, was compelled to withdraw from the field, and after his return to this country dissolved his connection with the Board of Missions. Messrs. Crocker and Clark carried on the mission conjointly until 1841, when the former was compelled to return to this country with the view of recruiting his health. He returned to Africa two years afterward, but died in consequence of the rupture of a blood-vessel before he reached his proper field. Mrs. Crocker proceeded to Basa and joined Mr. and Mrs. Clark, and continued to labor with them until they were all compelled, in 1848, to return to this country on account of health. From 1838 to 1848, the time when Mr. Clark left for the United States, was a time of great prosperity to this mission. The language was studied out and reduced to writing; as many as three schools, embracing in all nearly a hundred pupils, were organized and taught in a great measure by the missionaries; preaching was maintained steadily at three places, and occasionally at a great many more; and large portions of the New Testament were translated into the Basa language. Mr. Clark died on his way home. The four years following, the mission was sustained in a great measure by young men who had been trained by the missionaries. In 1852 other missionaries were sent out to reinforce the mission. But this was an unsuccessful effort. Since then it has been sustained by two native preachers, who are said to be very useful.

Many of the reverses of this society, in the loss of its missionaries, is to be ascribed, we have no doubt, to the injudicious choice of location for their missionary head-quarters. The African climate every where is more or less unfavorable to the European constitution; but there are certain districts peculiarly unfavorable to health, and too much care can not be exercised in selecting places that are least unhealthy.

The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions was the next to enter upon the difficult and perilous work of planting the Gospel upon the shores of Western Africa. Rev. Messrs. John B. Pinney and Joseph Barr were the first missionaries designated to this work. The latter died before he left the shores of his native land. Mr. Pinney arrived in Monrovia in February, 1833, and after a few months' residence in the country, which he employed in examining the field of his future labors, he returned to the United States, for the purpose of laying before the Board the results of his observations, and procuring a reinforcement of missionaries. This mission, with occasional interruptions caused by the death or absence of its missionaries, has been continued until the present time. The mission was reinforced in 1834 by Rev. Messrs. Cloud and Laird, and Mrs. Laird; again, in the latter part of the same year, by Mr. J. F. C. Finley; in 1839, by Rev. Messrs. Canfield and Alward, and their wives; in 1841, by Rev. Robert Sawyer and Mrs. Sawyer; in 1844, by Rev. James M. Conelly; in 1850, by Rev. David A. Wilson and Mrs. Wilson; and in 1853, by Mr. John White and Mrs. White. Of these sixteen white missionary laborers nine are still living, only two of whom, however, are now actively engaged in carrying on this work. During the same period, an equal number of colored missionaries have either been sent out by the Board, or been employed from those of the emigrants sent out by the Colonization Society. At the present time there are connected with this mission twelve laborers, five principal stations, four churches, and five schools, of which one is a classical institution. A second mission was established at the island of Corisco, in Southern Guinea, fifty miles north of the equator. This island is not more than four or five miles in length, and something less than this in breadth. The population does not exceed 2000; but the island is a very eligible point from whence to reach the surrounding population of the main land, and thus far has proved health-

ier than most places along this coast. This mission was founded by Rev. Messrs. J. L. Mackey and George W. Simpson, in 1849. Mrs. Mackey died before the mission site was fixed upon. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson were lost at sea very soon after. For more than a year after this sad visitation, Mr. Mackey labored on the island single-handed and alone.

Since then the mission has been reinforced three times, and there has not been in all this time a single death, or even a case of severe sickness, among the missionaries. There are now nine white laborers on the island; two stations have already been formed, and the third is contemplated; two schools have been in active operation for some time; the language has been studied out, and several books have been published in it for the use of the schools.

The Methodist Episcopal Church commenced their first missionary labors in Western Africa only a few months after the Presbyterian Board. Their chosen field was the Liberian Colonies. Rev. Melville B. Cox, the pioneer in this work, was appointed to this field in 1832, but did not reach Monrovia until March, 1833. He entered upon his work with zeal, and soon infused life into the Methodist Church that had been organized by the emigrants previous to his arrival. His career, however, was very short. After only a few months' residence in Liberia, he was summoned to his final account, and died in the triumphs of the Christian faith.

Rev. John Seys was sent out to take charge of the mission in 1834. His life was spared, and much was done by his zeal and energy to extend the influence of the mission, both among the colonists and the aborigines.

The influence of this mission has been mainly directed to the Liberian settlers. Several stations were formed at different times among the natives of the country, but in consequence of the frequent changes of their agents and the want of a knowledge of the language of the people on their part,

no very permanent or important results have been effected. But among the Liberian settlers and such natives as have been received into their families, their labors have been more blessed than that of any other missionary society. At present they have nine stations or circuits, twenty day-schools, and upward of five hundred pupils, and their church-membership exceeds twelve hundred. The present superintendent, Rev. Francis Burns, is a colored man, of fine talents and much cultivation, and conducts the affairs of the mission with as much prudence and efficiency as any of his predecessors.

The American Board of Foreign Missions, though not quite as early on African ground as some of the other missionary societies of the country, were the first and almost the only body to carry on their labors through a long term of years without any suspension whatever of their work. The writer was the founder of their first mission. He was sent out in the autumn of 1833, accompanied by Rev. Stephen R. Wyncoop, an esteemed friend and college classmate, to explore the country and fix upon a suitable place for the commencement of a mission. They returned in the spring, and reported in favor of Cape Palmas as a suitable place to establish the first station. The country had the appearance of being healthful, the native population was very large, and the people seemed really desirous of enjoying the advantages of Christian education. Some fears were expressed lest difficulties and collisions would arise between the natives and the newly-planted colony at this place that would unfit the former to receive any salutary influences from the labors of the mission. But, upon the whole, this seemed to be the most inviting field that presented itself to the missionary explorers, and the Prudential Committee concurred in their recommendation. The writer and his family arrived at Cape Palmas on the 25th of December, 1834, and immediately entered upon their labors. The mission was

continued here for more than seven years, and for the most part under circumstances of great encouragement. During that time seven stations and out-stations were formed, at each of which a day-school was established, and stated preaching was commenced; a church was organized at the first and principal station, which at one time embraced more than thirty members, of whom more than four-fifths were natives; a large boarding-school for both sexes, was kept up for more than six years; the language was reduced to writing, of which a Grammar and a Dictionary, in part, were published—the Gospels of St. Matthew and Mark, the Life of Christ, and various other religious books, were translated into it for the use of those who had been taught to read.

In consequence, however, of frequent collisions between the colonists and the natives, which kept the minds of the latter in an unfit state to receive religious impressions; the jealousy with which the colonists looked upon the efforts of the missionaries to raise the natives in the scale of civilization and intelligence, and in consequence of legislation which had the tendency to embarrass the labors of the missionaries, the mission was transferred to the Gabun in 1842, where it has been carried on efficiently ever since. The writer became pioneer the second time, and continued to labor in this new field for more than ten years, when he was compelled by a failure of health to withdraw and leave the work entirely to other hands. The results of this mission may be stated in a few words.

When the missionaries first arrived at the Gabun the people were immured in the profoundest heathenism. They had no Sabbath, no sanctuary, no Bible, and had scarcely heard of the name of the Saviour of the world. Now the Sabbath is known and outwardly observed by a large proportion of the people in the vicinity of the older stations. The Sabbath bell brings together a goodly assembly of orderly worshipers. More than one hundred youths have received a Christian

education, some of whom are employed in promoting the cause of religion and education.

Two interior stations have been formed, one at the distance of twenty-five and the other one hundred miles from the sea-coast, at each of which schools have been formed, and preaching is steadily maintained. Two dialects have been reduced to writing, and the third is being studied out; into the first, the Gospels of Matthew and John have been translated and published, as well as other religious books. To all of which it may be added, that many thousands of immortal beings in this region of country have acquired sufficient knowledge of the Gospel to be saved.

The Protestant Episcopal Foreign Missionary Society appointed Mr. James M. Thompson and his wife as their first missionaries at Cape Palmas. They did not open a school, however, until 1836. In the following spring Rev. Thomas S. Savage, M. D., arrived at Cape Palmas with the view of making preparation for the reception of a larger reinforcement that was expected in the summer. He was followed by Rev. Messrs. Minor and Payne, and Mrs. Payne, who arrived at Cape Palmas the 4th of July, 1837. Dr. Savage continued to labor in connection with this mission until the spring of 1847, when, in consequence of enfeebled health, he returned to this country. Mr. Minor died at his post of labor in 1842. Mr. Payne (now bishop) and Mrs. Payne still continue to labor in this field, in the enjoyment of comparative good health, after more than eighteen years of hard toil in an insalubrious climate. This mission, like all similar enterprises, has passed through many severe ordeals, but has been prospered in very many respects, and may be regarded as one of the most effective on the whole coast.

Bishop Payne estimates that not less than fifteen hundred youths have been connected, for a longer or shorter term, with the schools of this mission. One hundred colonists

have been received to the communion of the Church, and since the formation of the mission, as many as ninety-one natives have been baptized and received to the Church, of whom seventy-two are now living and exemplifying the power of the Christian religion. Very recent letters report that there is a very general religious movement among the Grebos, to whom the labors of this mission have been specially directed.

The American Missionary Association had its origin in connection with the release of the Amistad captives, whom they took under their charge, and through whom they proposed to form their first station in Western Africa. The Sherbro country, lying between Sierra Leone and Grand Cape Mount, being the native country of the Mendi captives, was fixed upon as the place for the commencement of the mission. Rev. James Steele and Rev. William Raymond, and Mrs. Raymond, were appointed to accompany them and lay the foundation of a mission in their native country, all of whom embarked for Africa in the autumn of 1841; it was a year after, however, before the station was established. Many of these emigrants disappointed the expectations of the missionaries and their friends in America; the mission, however, went on. A church was organized in 1845, and the mission is represented as being in a flourishing condition. It has three stations, two churches, forty church members, two schools, and eighty pupils.

The Southern Baptist Convention has missions in Liberia and in the Yoruba country. In Liberia their missionaries, of whom there are eleven, are all colored men. They have also eleven churches, and a church-membership of one hundred and fifty-three.

The mission in Yoruba was commenced in 1853, by Rev. Messrs. Bowen, Lacy, and Dennard. Their first and principal station is about one hundred and fifty miles from the sea-coast. Lagos is the nearest sea-port, and Abeokuta lies



on the direct route between the two places. The prospects of this mission are quite as encouraging as any other on the coast. It is located in a populous district, in a comparatively healthy climate, and is no doubt the first link in a missionary communication between the sea-coast and the heart of the great country of Soudan.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE AGENCY DEVOLVING ON WHITE MEN IN CONNECTION WITH MISSIONS TO WESTERN AFRICA.

Is it *practicable*, and is it the *duty* of the Christian Church, to carry on missionary operations in Western Africa by the agency of *white men*?

I answer this question affirmatively; and I do so after mature deliberation and with unhesitating confidence.

I wish it borne in mind that I attempt no argument in behalf of missions generally. So far as I know, there is no special occasion for any thing of this kind. What I have to offer is in defense of West African missions in particular.

It may be stated farther, that while I advocate the duty and the expediency of sustaining missions in Western Africa by the agency of white men, it is not expected that the churches in this or in any other country will have it in their power to furnish missionaries for all parts of that great continent. This can not be expected in relation to any heathen country, much less for Africa. All that we can reasonably hope to accomplish will be to give Christianity a firm footing there, to train up men on the ground who may be relied upon to carry the glad tidings of salvation to the darker and more remote corners of that great continent. In accomplishing this task, however, I believe that the presence and superintendence of white missionaries are indispensably necessary; and it must be a long time, judging from the present aspect of affairs, before their agency can safely be dispensed with.

It should be premised still farther, in order to prevent misapprehension, that no objection is felt to the agency of

colored men from these United States, or from the West Indies, in carrying on this work, provided men of the right stamp can be found. They have physical qualifications to labor in that climate which white men have not; and if colored men of education, intelligence, and of humble and undoubted piety could be found willing to engage in this work, those who are now on the field would not only give them a hearty welcome as fellow-laborers, but if they were sufficiently numerous, would cheerfully commit the whole work into their hands, and seek some other sphere of labor for themselves. But it is in view of the fact that so few colored men of suitable qualifications have come forward to engage in this work, and in view of the fact, likewise, that the future presents no near prospects in this respect brighter than the past, that we are to inquire what are our duties to the perishing millions of Africa.

Shall they, because of the remissness, or as yet unpreparedness of the colored people of the United States to become missionaries, be permitted to remain in all the wretchedness and misery of heathenism, and go down to their graves, as their fathers have done, without one ray of Gospel light? Are we to hesitate about what is duty, at a time when the hand of God may be clearly seen in removing obstacles to the conversion of that people, and bringing every portion of that vast continent within our reach? These questions involve a responsibility of the most solemn interest, and no friend of the Redeemer will treat them with indifference.

I have been particular in stating that colored men, in order to be useful missionaries in Africa, must be men of high moral and intellectual qualifications, and of tried and undoubted piety. On this point we feel that we can not insist too strongly. Every observing person must have seen, that it is neither wise nor economical to send out men to the heathen who have not the capacity to exert a commanding

influence in their native country. If there is any place in the world where thorough piety and mental energy are indispensable to success, it is on heathen ground. How can it be otherwise? To look into all the windings and intricacies of heathen character; to render one's self familiar with the habits, feelings, and motives of a class of men who have no sympathies with ourselves; to acquire the art of exerting an influence over the minds of men who have been trained up in heathenism; to lay hold of an unwritten, barbarous language, spend months and years in developing its rules and principles, and acquire that language so as to use it with perfect ease; to call into exercise energies that have slumbered for centuries; and to endure patiently the reverses, trials, and disappointments incident to missionary life, require the best and the ablest men the Church can furnish. If the number of colored men in this country capable of meeting these high demands is considerable, we know it not. There is a small number of such now in the African field, and we cheerfully award them the praise of great self-denial and extensive usefulness. But the idea of gathering up colored men indiscriminately in this country, and setting them down upon the shores of Africa, with the design or expectation that they will take the lead in diffusing a pure Christianity among the natives, deserves to be utterly rejected by every friend of Africa. A proposition to transport white men, in the same indiscriminate manner, to some other heathen country, with the view of evangelizing the natives of that country, would be regarded, to say the least, as highly extravagant.

The question, as stated at the head of this chapter, presents itself in a two-fold character: First, as to the *practicableness* of carrying on missionary operations in Africa by the agency of white men; and, secondly, as to the *duty* of the churches in relation to this enterprise.

We shall have but little to offer on the latter of these

topica. If the former can be established—that is, the *practicability* of the undertaking—then the *duty* of the churches to engage in this work follows as a necessary consequence. In other words, if it can be shown that it is possible to carry on missionary operations in Western Africa by the agency of white men, and that it can not now be carried on extensively without them, then every argument that can be offered in behalf of missions to other parts of the heathen world may be applied to this with two-fold force.

If what has frequently been affirmed be true—that white men can not live in Africa—then Christians are exonerated from their obligations to contribute to the support of such, and ministers of the Gospel are released from obligation to devote themselves to this work; for God does not require the former to waste their property, or the latter to throw away their lives, for the attainment of an object that is beyond their reach.

If, on the other hand, it can be shown that existing difficulties have been unduly magnified; that no obstacles exist greater than those which the providence of God permits to interpose themselves in the way of nearly every good and great undertaking in this world, and only such as may be surmounted by a persevering and courageous faith; then our obligations continue with unabated force, and it becomes a question of solemn interest, how we may most efficiently discharge those obligations.

But what are the difficulties that have been brought forward to prove this undertaking impracticable?

So far as I am aware they may be summed up in two things—the insalubrity of the climate, and the savage habits of the natives of the country.

The argument amounts to something like this: The climate of Western Africa is too inimical to European constitutions to allow white men to live and labor there for any considerable length of time; and farther, if such were not

the case, yet the aborigines of Africa are so turbulent and savage in their habits that no missionary could live among them, except so far as he could enjoy the countenance and protection of some civilized power, which the natives would hold in fear.

We do not suppose that the latter of these objections can have much weight with men of sober reflection.

It has its origin in such low views of the nature and power of the Gospel; it so dishonors the promise of the Saviour to be with his disciples to the end of the world; and is withal so completely refuted by the history of missions in almost every portion of the habitable world, that it might safely be thrust aside as an argument unworthy of serious consideration.

It is, in reality, but the revival of that oft-refuted idea, that civilization must precede Christianity in reclaiming the heathen tribes of the earth; and the argument is specially unfortunate when applied to Africa, inasmuch as her history furnishes many of the most striking illustrations of the utter impotency of all secular power to benefit a heathen people. And while there is no set of men in the world whose situation and circumstances naturally lead them to set a higher value upon the blessings of enlightened governments than the missionaries of the cross, in the majority of cases, nevertheless, they find themselves in circumstances where duty to the heathen compels them to protest against the measures and designs of these very governments.

But, apart from all speculation, what is there, it may be asked, in the history of missions in Western Africa, to warrant the opinion under consideration?

No one, who has given attention to the subject, can be ignorant of the fact that, of the numerous missionary stations established in that country during the last fifteen years, the majority of them are located, not only beyond the jurisdiction of all civilized governments, but many of them in sit-

uations where no civilized government on earth could render them aid, however urgent might be their distress.

And yet, we ask, what one of those stations has been cut off by native violence? What spot of African soil has been stained with the blood of these missionaries? Is there an individual in whose mind are not called up associations of unparalleled cruelty in connection with the names of Ashanti, Dehomi, Badagry, and Kalibar? And yet in these dark abodes of cruelty Christian missions have been planted, the Gospel is stately preached, missionaries live in peace and security, and pursue their work with the confident assurance that, ere long, even these dark habitations will be filled with the light and the blessings of the Gospel.

As there seems to be general misapprehension in relation to native character as found in Africa, I may be excused for introducing personal experience in illustration of the subject.

During my residence in that country I have traveled many thousands of miles among these people; sometimes on water and sometimes by land; among tribes to whom I was known, and among those who had never seen a white man. I have gone among them in times of peace, and in times of war. I have visited them at their homes, and I have met them on the way to shed the blood of their fellow-men. And yet in all these journeyings among remote, and to me unknown tribes, I never thought it necessary to furnish myself with a single implement of defense, nor was I ever placed in circumstances where there would have been any just cause for using such weapon, even if I had been supplied.

Among those of the natives to whom I was known as a minister of the living God, I have generally traveled alone, and on many occasions when called upon to visit the sick or to perform some other errand of mercy, I have passed through the largest villages, alone, and in the middle of

the night, with a feeling of as much security as I could possibly have felt in traversing the streets of any city in these United States under similar circumstances. And so far from finding it impossible to live among them, I may farther add, that, during the whole term of my residence in that country, I scarcely remember to have heard a single syllable from the lips of one of these people, which could, in any just sense, be construed as an intentional insult to myself.

It is far from my intention to leave the impression that the natives of Africa are perfectly inoffensive in their habits. They are *heathen*, in the full sense of that word, and no missionary can live among them without finding ample cause of perplexity and annoyance. But when it is affirmed that the missionary can not live among them on account of their turbulence and lawlessness, the assertion is without foundation.

I readily allow that the difficulty arising from the unhealthiness of the climate presents a more serious obstacle.

On this subject I have no convictions I would wish to conceal. The insalubrity of the climate has been, and I presume ever will be, to a greater or less extent, a serious hinderance to the progress of the Gospel in Western Africa; and this difficulty exists, be it known, irrespective of the kind of agency that may be employed in carrying it on. For the *colored man* from these United States is as sure to feel the effects of the climate as the *white man*; and if the physical constitution of the former possesses some advantage in adapting itself more readily to the climate, I am not sure but the other will have equally as much advantage in his superior discretion and the precautionary measures which he will practice to preserve his health.

The difficulty in either case, however, has been unduly magnified; and, so far as it has had the practical effect to turn away the attention of candidates for the ministry from

Africa, it has had the tendency, not only to unsettle their own moral courage, but greatly to aggravate the wrongs of an oppressed and injured people.

I have remarked that the unhealthiness of the climate has been exaggerated, and have now to show the foundation upon which this opinion rests.

The Christian public in this country has had no means of forming a judgment on the subject, except by the number of deaths that have occurred among their missionaries; and these have been paraded before the public mind by the opposers of African missions with such studied care that no one case has failed to produce its full effect.

Now while no one can be more sensible than ourselves of the extent and severity of these losses, we feel that it has been specially unfortunate for the cause of truth and humanity that the attendant circumstances and collateral causes of most of these calamities have not been made equally prominent at the same time.

And first, there are certain points along the coast of Africa, as in all other countries, that, by local causes, have been rendered more unhealthy than the country generally. Of these none are supposed to be more so than Sierra Leone and Cape Messurado. I do not remember ever to have heard a dissent from this opinion by a single individual whose judgment was entitled to respect; and yet it is from statistics of sickness and mortality that have occurred at these two places chiefly, that the public, both in England and America, have derived their impressions of the unhealthiness of the country at large.

But there are other and still weightier considerations.

I allude to the peculiar difficulties and trials in which most of the missions to Africa have had their origin.

It will be borne in mind that all of them, except those of Sierra Leone and Gambia, have been founded within the last twenty-five years. The places selected for most of these were

not only on new and unbroken ground, so far as all missionary influence was concerned, but many of them were located in the bosom of heathen tribes who had enjoyed scarcely any intercourse with the civilized world. Most of the missionaries were pioneers in a difficult undertaking. They were unfurnished with missionary experience, and in many instances they were without the aid of Christian counsel. They found themselves, at the commencement of their labors, among a people who could not comprehend the object of their mission, and who regarded all their professions of friendship and disinterestedness with distrust. They were ignorant of the native character, and it required much labor to master their barbarous languages, through which alone they could arrive at correct knowledge of their character, or hope to influence their minds. In many instances they were without medical aid, and in others, when physicians were at hand, those physicians themselves were inexperienced in the treatment of African diseases; and in every case the missionaries were pressed down by the cares, anxieties, and responsibilities incident to all new missions. So that when all these things are taken into the account, we almost wonder that the mortality has not been greater; we almost marvel that any have escaped.

But this perilous crisis, we believe, has been passed. The most formidable obstacles have been removed, and the missionary work, it is believed, will henceforth move forward more easily and with less sacrifice of life. Missionaries in that country, notwithstanding their losses, their reverses, their afflictions and bereavements, have been sustained in their work, and obtained a firm footing on many points along that coast. A large amount of missionary experience has been acquired; the roughness of native character has been smoothed down; the habits, customs, and feelings of the natives are better understood by the missionaries, and the objects of the missionaries are better understood by the na-

tives. Many of the most difficult dialects of the country have been reduced to writing, and now serve, not only as easy and direct channels of conveying religious truth to the minds of the people, but will serve as a cl w to the acquisition of all other languages in the country. Missionaries going to that country hereafter, will find missionary brethren on the ground to welcome them and give them all needed counsel and aid. In this way they will escape much of the wasting care and anxieties that were unavoidable at the commencement of this undertaking. They may now go to Africa with the reasonable prospect of living, and if they can not calculate upon enjoying the same amount of vigorous and elastic health that they would in their native country, they may at least expect to have strength enough to proclaim the unsearchable riches of the Gospel to thousands of their fellow-men who are perishing for the want of it. There is a reasonable prospect that white missionaries, provided they are endowed with the faith, the courage, and the perseverance befitting their high calling, may live in that country to establish Christian churches there, which will be able, in due time, not only to sustain themselves, but to communicate their blessings to the remotest regions of that benighted continent. This is all we can promise. This is the view of the subject upon which we base our arguments. We believe that no obstacles lie in the way of this undertaking as thus stated, except such as have been permitted by God to try the faith and courage of his people. The bare existence of trials and difficulties, provided they are not insuperable, is never a sufficient cause for abandoning any great and good undertaking. No great result, fraught with blessings to mankind, has ever been achieved in this apostate world of ours except by a triumph of patient perseverance over difficulties and discouragements. Human probabilities have always been arrayed against the promises of the Bible; and if missionaries were to look at the former, without regard to

the latter, every field of missionary labor would have been abandoned long ere this. Who needs to be reminded that the redemption of mankind itself was wrought out by the patient endurance of unparalleled sufferings? How hopeless were the prospects of Christianity to human eyes when it was first ushered into the world! What an endless and unnumbered variety of sufferings, self-denials, and discouragements had the Apostles to pass through in the fulfillment of their mission! If there ever was a task that appeared hopeless to the judgment of men, it was theirs; if any set of men ever had a plausible pretext for abandoning their work on account of its difficulties and its perils, they were the men.

Need we recount the trials, perils, sufferings, and reverses of the Reformers, to show that Christians may be acting in strict accordance with the divine will, though their pathway, for the time being, may be enveloped in clouds and darkness? How often was their work, to human appearance, on the point of ruin? but when most endangered in appearance, most secure in reality.

Nor has the history of modern missions been characterized by fewer or less varied trials. Who has forgotten the many tedious years of apparently fruitless labor spent by the servants of God in Greenland, and in the islands of the South Seas? And were not these devoted men all the while acting in accordance with the divine will, although they did not enjoy one ray of encouragement, except what they found in the Word of God?

Nor are the difficulties of the missionary work essentially modified in any part of the heathen world even at the present day. If all the attendant difficulties and discouragement of any one mission were brought together, and especially of one of the missions in the maritime regions of Southern India, as well as in some portions of the Eastern Archipelago, where the mortality of missionaries has scarcely been less than in Africa—so as to present at one view the debilitating

influence of the climate, impaired health and broken constitutions of missionaries, frequent removals by death, the expense of going and coming from those distant regions, the amount of time spent by missionaries in seeking to recruit their health, the number who had to leave the field permanently, the firmly entrenched idolatry against which war must be waged, and the all-powerful influence of caste—we should be furnished with a picture quite as appalling as any that can fairly be drawn from the early history of African missions. If, therefore, we are called upon to abandon one field as hopeless, why not the other? why not every missionary field in the world?

That an unhealthy climate should be the particular instrument which Providence may choose to try the faith of Christians in their attempts to evangelize Africa, furnishes a problem which we can scarcely be expected to solve. That difficulties of some kind should present themselves at the threshold of our labors there, is what all past experience would lead us to expect, and we may, without prying needlessly into the counsels of heaven, find an obvious reason for this particular arrangement. The inhabitants of Africa, taken together, are the most defenseless race on earth. We stop not to inquire what has made them so. We speak of a well-known and undeniable fact. It is equally well known that Providence has assigned them a country too rich in natural resources not to tempt the cupidity of other and more powerful races. Had this inheritance not been guaranteed to them by just the means that have been used, long ere this it would have been wrested out of their hands, and themselves reduced to the lowest depths of debasement, if indeed their name and memory had not ere this perished from the earth. We rejoice, therefore, that God has thrown a shield around this defenseless people. It is a guarantee of their perpetuity as a race, and it greatly enhances the importance of their moral and religious culture.

But while we believe that this insalubrious climate with which Providence has surrounded this people is a barrier sufficient to baffle all the designs of avarice and ambition, it interposes no insuperable obstacles to the introduction of Christianity into that country. The herald of the cross may station himself upon those shores, and by practicing such rules of prudence as experience has furnished, by maintaining a calm and tranquil frame of mind under all circumstances, and, above all, by casting himself upon the care of Him who hath said, "The sun shall not smite by day, nor the moon by night," may accomplish his work with unfailing certainty; while disappointment and discomfiture assuredly awaits every enterprise that has no higher aim than to rob Africa of her rich patrimony.

Having answered the objections usually urged against this enterprise, we may now adduce some direct arguments in favor of its practicability.

And that which we would place foremost, but without enlarging materially upon it, is the command of our Saviour, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." No Christian, certainly, will ask for an argument to show that the African race were included among those to whom our Saviour commanded that his Gospel should be preached; nor will any sober-minded man admit that our Saviour could have enjoined a work upon his followers, without having foreseen all the difficulties in the way, and made ample provision for its accomplishment. *Here*, then, in *our* hands, is that Gospel; *there*, on the shores of Africa, are the people to whom it is to be preached; and so long as others refuse to go, or are as yet unprepared to go, whose duty but ours is it to go and carry them the Gospel? Is it befitting our high calling, is it consistent with our obligations to our Saviour, to spend our time in constructing theories that never have succeeded, and probably

never will, while the inhabitants of Africa are perishing by thousands for want of the Gospel? To those who rely upon training colored men in this country for this great work, we bid them God-speed; they have our best wishes and most earnest prayers for their success; but we can not avoid the belief that the labors of white men are not only perfectly practicable, but indispensable to the early and successful spread of the Gospel over the regions of Western Africa.

Admit that many invaluable lives have been sacrificed to the African climate, and what then? Is this a novelty in the divine government? Is this the first time that the friends of the Redeemer have been required to lose their lives for his and the Gospel's sake? Is that providence which permitted Christians to fall beneath the sword of persecution less mysterious than this? Can it be supposed that God has less power over the elements of nature to disarm them of their noxious qualities and preserve the lives of his servants in Africa than he has over the moral world to stay the persecuting sword, when it is his will that it should drink no more of the blood of his saints? May not He who made the blood of martyrs, "the seed of the church," overrule those calamities which have pressed so heavily upon our hearts for the furtherance of the Gospel in Africa?

Self-denial and personal sacrifices, on the part of the friends of the Redeemer, are the chief, and almost the only, means by which his kingdom is advanced in this world. No great and good object is ever attained without them. The history of Christianity, in all past ages, is little else than one continued illustration of this fact. And is it reasonable to suppose that the continent of Africa may be redeemed without cost or sacrifice on the part of the friends of Christ? Is nothing to be periled for the recovery of her one hundred millions from ignorance and heathenism?

We appeal, in the second place, *to the success of missions in*

*Western Africa*, not only as proof that they are practicable, but likewise that it is the duty of the Church to maintain them, notwithstanding the difficulties and sacrifices that must be incurred.

That these missions have been decidedly, and, in some cases, pre-eminently successful, any one can have ample evidence who will take the trouble to examine well-authenticated facts on the subject.

What, for example, has been the history of missions to Sierra Leone? Unhealthy as has been this particular place, a mission has been maintained there for more than half a century in efficient operation; and, with the exception of those to the Sandwich and South Sea Islands, and perhaps a few others, it is questionable whether another can be pointed out that has been equally successful. Are we told that many valuable lives have been lost? our reply is, that thousands of souls have been saved. If the career of many of those servants of Christ who went to that country was short, the fruits of their labors were most abundant, and eternity may disclose that they lived to greater purpose than thousands who have been spared to reach the ordinary term of human life.

“That life is long which answers life’s great end.”

Nor have some of the other missions to that country, of more recent origin, had fewer or less decided evidences of the divine favor. It is freely admitted that they have been severely tried. They have all, at some time or other, passed through the deep waters of affliction. Several of them, on more than one occasion, have been brought, humanly speaking, to the very verge of destruction, and yet not one of them has been discontinued or cut off. Not one of these twinkling lights has disappeared from that dark horizon. Like the burning bush, they have been enveloped in the flames, but not consumed. The storm has spent its fury against them, but they have not been cast down.

The servants of Christ in that field—and we say it with devout gratitude to God their preserver—notwithstanding their severe bereavements in the removal of their fellow-laborers, notwithstanding the hesitation and indecision of Christians in this country, hold on the even tenor of their way in the confident assurance that ere long they or their successors will reap an abundant harvest from the seed now sown in tears.

But more may be claimed for these missions than this. They have not only been preserved, but thus far they have been attended with unusual success, and may compare with most other temporary efforts. This statement will hold, it is believed, whether the comparison be regarded with reference to the number of churches that have been organized, or the converts gathered into those churches; to the schools that have been established, or the youths who have been taught to read the Word of God in those schools; or to the number of dialects that have been reduced to writing; or the amount of Scripture and other religious truths that have been translated into those languages. We must be careful about laying down the principle that God countenances and approves an undertaking merely because it is successful. The same course of reasoning would lead us to infer that his face was against every cause that is temporarily involved in discouragement. But he does not ordinarily leave himself without a witness; and we do not see how we can recognize his hand, or infer his favor in relation to any event, if we can not in the history and present condition of missions to Africa. Is it nothing that twenty dialects have been reduced to writing by the different missions in Western Africa, and made the vehicles of conveying the Gospel to thousands of benighted men? Is it nothing that fifteen thousand children have been gathered into schools and instructed in the Word of God? Is it no mark of the divine favor that twelve thousand souls have been hopefully converted and gathered into

the fold of Christ? Can it be believed that Christians have been acting out of the sphere of duty, or in opposition to the will of God, when they have been permitted to bring the everlasting Gospel into contact with the minds of thousands and hundreds of thousands of their fellow-men, who otherwise would have gone down to their graves and into the eternal world without it?

But we draw an argument from another source. It is from the example of men of the world.

Our Saviour has said that "the children of this world, in their generation, are wiser than the children of light." We need no other justification for appealing to the example of worldly men for patterns of encouragement and perseverance.

It is undeniably true that men of the world have shown far more courage and energy in every enterprise connected with Africa, not to say of every enterprise in the world, where risk and danger are involved, than the friends of Christ have. No country in the world has drawn more largely upon the resources of worldly enterprise than Western Africa. When we remember the zeal and enterprise which enabled the Portuguese, three centuries ago, and that without any of the improvements of modern science, to construct large and durable fortifications along the coast of Africa, rear beautiful churches and magnificent castles, and subject extensive regions of country to their power; when we remember the indomitable enterprise which has enabled the civilized world to carry on an extensive and lucrative trade with the inhabitants of Africa for three centuries; when we recount the incredible amount of life and money that has been expended in solving a geographical problem relating to one of the rivers of Africa, which nobody regrets, now that the discovery has been made; when we remember that a single merchant, now living, in the course of three or four years has spent more than one hundred thousand dollars in explor-

ing the creeks and rivers of Western Africa, merely to ascertain the extent of her commercial resources; and when we contrast with all this the puny, and I may say the niggardly efforts of the churches in Christendom to disseminate the Gospel among the same people—I, for one, feel almost overwhelmed with shame and confusion of face.

But it has been affirmed and re-affirmed, that white men can not live in that country. And who are they that maintain this opinion so confidently? Men of the world? No! *They* live there, and labor there, and make money there, notwithstanding all this outcry about the unhealthiness of the country.

Without pretending to give precise statistics, we presume that we are strictly in the bounds of truth, when we say that the number of whites residing on that coast, and on islands adjacent to that coast, can not be less than three thousand. If we add to this the floating population, engaged in commerce and in the suppression of the slave-trade, the whole population can not be less than six or eight thousand.

In spite of the reputed unhealthiness of the country, European governments can find officers to govern their civil establishments, and soldiers to garrison their fortifications. Merchants in Europe and in America can find men, not only to sail their vessels in those seas, but they have their agents on shore—ay! and as many of them as they wish—to gather around them the rich products of the country. Science, too, finds no difficulty in getting agents to carry on her researches in those regions. And we may add to all this, that there is a considerable number of individuals of affluence, who reside in that country as a matter of preference.

But what is the missionary corps among all these? They do not form the one-hundredth part of the whole. And what is the inference? What is the verdict that posterity will pronounce upon this strange fact? It can be nothing

else than that motives of gain and worldly ambition are a hundred fold more powerful, in the present age, than all the zeal and love of the Christian churches of the same period.

Let us pursue this humiliating comparison a step farther.

The number of Protestant missionaries residing on the coast of Africa has never, at any period, been half as great as that of those who have resided there for the purpose of carrying on the slave-trade. Here, then, is a class of men, who, in opposition to every dictate of conscience and humanity; in defiance of all the great powers of the earth; in the midst of cares, perplexities, and disappointments that seldom fall to the lot of any other set of men, find it practicable to live in that country, and not only so, but at the most insalubrious points, and among the most savage tribes on the coast. And can any inference be drawn from this fact that shall not fasten reproach upon the followers of the Saviour? Are we willing that history shall record the fact that ungodly men live in Africa to degrade and ruin her sons and daughters, but that we can not live there to rescue them from everlasting destruction?

We have little or no hesitation in saying, that if the church of Christ had, during the two last centuries, made one half the effort to Christianize Africa that men of the world have to degrade and ruin her, long ere this that entire continent, instead of being proverbial, as it now is, for ignorance and idolatry, would have been filled with the light and the blessings of the Gospel. And we have as little hesitation in predicting that, if the churches will henceforth make efforts somewhat commensurate with those that are likely to be made by the world to draw out her commercial resources, the present century shall not pass away before Africa, yes, miserable, degraded Africa, shall be brought under the power and the dominion of the Gospel. Faith and courage and patient perseverance, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost,

will assuredly triumph over every difficulty, be it imaginary, or be it real.

It is a well-authenticated fact, I believe, that naval officers, both in England and France, seek appointments in the African service, because they are promised speedier promotions in consequence of being on this station. They cheerfully encounter all the perils and hardships of this service for the sake of worldly honor. They brave all the terrors of an African climate, that their names may be placed a little higher on the naval register. But has our Great Captain no promotions for those who peril their lives in his service? Has he not recorded a promise of reward for all those who will lose their lives for his and the Gospel's sake? What European potentate can furnish his servants with such guarantees of security and safety as ours? Who but ours can say to those he sends forth into the midst of dangers, "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil;" "the sun shall not smite by day, nor the moon by night."

I offer but a single motive, in conclusion, why we should engage more heartily in this work.

I pass by, with little more than the mere mention of it, the solemn obligations which we as a nation are under to send the Gospel to the benighted inhabitants of that country. It is an undeniable fact, that much of the misery and wretchedness of that people has been inflicted upon them by ourselves, or by our forefathers. Not to enlarge upon the calamities of the slave-trade, in which our fathers were deeply implicated, there is a process of demoralization by intemperance going on in that country, at the present moment, that threatens to be equally ruinous. And who furnishes the means of intemperance to that unfortunate people? Our own country, almost exclusively. And shall we do nothing to repair these breaches that are made by our own countrymen?

I pass by, likewise, the consequences that are likely to result to the churches of this country, if they withdraw from an enterprise by means of which Providence evidently intends to stir up their sympathies and invigorate their faith. What spiritual power can those churches expect to have, which shrink from a contest designed by Providence to draw out their noblest energies ?

The thought to which I wish to give prominence is this, that if the tribes of Africa are not reclaimed from their ignorance and idolatry by the preaching of the Gospel—by such a system of missions as I have been advocating—then, so far as can be known from all the light we have on the subject at present, I solemnly believe that they will be left to all the misery of perpetual heathenism. I am not aware that I have a deeper conviction on any other subject. Nor is it more my own than that of almost every other missionary who has been a considerable time in that field. We have watched, with the intensest interest, all the varied schemes that have been put forth to reclaim this people, and we do not see that any of them, except that of the preaching of the Gospel, is likely to carry salvation to their doors; and this, for the present at least, must be done mainly by white men. And the auxiliary agency upon which we chiefly rely, is that of the natives trained on the ground.

Missionaries toil in that field under many disadvantages. They pursue their labors, in many cases, in the midst of sickness and bodily exhaustion. They do it in the face of all the despondency felt in this country on the subject. They do it, because they do not see that any other agency is likely to save this people from the fearful consequences of idolatry.

Let me not be misunderstood. We would not underrate, nor object to any other scheme of benevolence to improve the condition of the people. The efforts of the English government, for many years past, and more recently of our own,

to suppress the slave-trade, is worthy of all praise. Had it not been for these, and especially those of England, Africa as yet had scarcely been accessible to missionary labor; and it is devoutly to be hoped, that these noble and disinterested measures may not be relaxed until this foul demon is chased away from the earth. But let it not be forgotten, that the suppression of the slave-trade is not the moral or social renovation of Africa. The disorder lies too deep to be removed by any merely external appliances.

Nor would I speak lightly of the aid of modern commerce. Without her aid, we never should have reached the shores of Africa; nor could we maintain ourselves there without her occasional visits. And yet commerce, indispensable as it is, if unattended by Christianity, will be more likely to injure than to benefit the people.

Nor can any very important results be expected from the introduction of mechanic or agricultural arts, or from the establishment of schools, except so far as they are brought forward as the handmaids of a preached Gospel. Of themselves, and among a people who have in no measure been brought under the influence of Christianity, they can not effect any important changes, even in their outward condition; and much more impotent must they be to effect any spiritual good. The experiment to civilize heathen tribes without the aid of the Gospel has been often tried, and it has always failed. The reason is obvious. Heathen nations of the present day have none of the elasticity and energy of character that distinguished the great civilized heathen nations of antiquity. They have no recuperative energy, by which they can rise to importance in the world. They have sunk too low in sin to be reached by any arm shorter or less powerful than that of the Gospel. Upon this alone can we rely, for this only can effect their salvation; and this ought to be the great object of our aims. And if we go forth with singleness of purpose, in reliance upon the promises of

Him who hath commanded us to go, we need have no anxieties for the final result. We may meet with reverses and losses; clouds and darkness may now and then rest upon our paths; but of the ultimate attainment of our great object—the conversion and salvation of Africa—there can be no doubt, so long as Jehovah is enthroned in power.

Nor was there ever a more favorable time for the introduction of the Gospel into that country than the present. Providence has laid open that land for the reception of the Gospel in a most wonderful manner. Missionaries have secured a firm footing at many of the most eligible points. Commerce furnishes facilities of access to all important places along the sea-coast. The natives every where are not only ready but anxious to receive missionaries. Hundreds of native youths have received a Christian education, and may now be employed to an almost unlimited extent. Indeed, nothing seems to be wanting, but to lay aside our cowardice, and advance, in reliance upon our Great Captain, to secure a certain and glorious victory.

THE END.