



Representation of the Court of Select audience-Costume, and the ceremony of swearing fidelity to the British Government.

JOURNAL

OF A

RESIDENCE IN ASHANTEE.

BY

JOSEPH DUPUIS, ESQ.

LATE

HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S ENVOY AND CONSUL FOR THAT KINGDOM.

COMPRISING

NOTES AND RESEARCHES RELATIVE TO THE GOLD COAST,

AND THE

INTERIOR OF WESTERN AFRICA;

CHIEFLY COLLECTED FROM ARABIC MSS.

AND INFORMATION COMMUNICATED BY THE MOSLEMS OF GUINEA:

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

ORIGIN AND CAUSES OF THE PRESENT WAR.

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DEDICATION.

TO

THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

GEORGE THE FOURTH,

&c. &c. &c.

SIRE,

IN conformity with the permission which I have received, I now place under the patronage of your Majesty's august name, a volume exhibiting the intimate and political feelings of the Sovereign of Ashantee, demonstrative of a friendly regard, as well towards your Royal person as to the commercial prosperity of the British Colonies on the Gold Coast : the contents of which I stood pledged to make known to your Majesty.

With sentiments of the purest attachment to your Majesty's service, and to the honour and interest of the crown,

I remain,

With the profoundest veneration,

SIRE,

Your Majesty's most faithful Subject,
and dutiful Servant,

JOSEPH DUPUIS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE British trade with the Gold Coast of Africa was placed by charter, in the reign of Charles II. under the controul of the Royal African Company, whose governor-general (the Governor of Cape Coast Castle) and council (consisting principally of the commandants of the subordinate forts) had the direction of matters on the African shore, acting, of late years, under instructions sent from England by a body of men chosen for that employ, called the African Committee. This committee was latterly allowed by parliament £30,000 per annum, for the maintenance of their forts in Africa, the protection of the trade, &c. The system was highly injurious to the public, for the trade was only nominally free—in fact it was monopolized by the governor and council themselves, and so much of the public grant as was actually laid out in the maintenance of the forts and establishments, served only to keep the public out of the African market; the application of the remainder it is not difficult to conjecture.

The forts were held at certain rents secured to the native chiefs by notes, which will be more particularly mentioned in the following pages. On the conquest of Fantee by the King of Ashantee, the notes came into his possession, and the rent was paid to him for a

time. He several times ravaged the Fantee and other maritime countries, and the English having interfered to protect the natives, he blockaded Cape Coast itself in 1816, but was induced by presents to withdraw his forces.

In 1817, Mr. John Hope Smith being Governor of Cape Coast Castle, and president, and the council consisting of the Governors of Accra, Tantom, Annamaboe, and Dixcove, the African committee on the suggestion of the council, sent instructions to forward what they termed both an *embassy* and an *exploratory mission* to Coomassy the capital of Ashantee. Mr. Smith furnished a sketch of a treaty to be concluded between the governor and council, and the King of Ashantee. Mr. James was appointed to head the mission, from his rank as senior member of council, and governor of Accra fort, and Messrs. Bowdich, Hutchison, and Tedlie were selected as his associates; the two former gentlemen writers, the last named an assistant-surgeon in the company's employ. At Coomassy Mr. Bowdich, of his own authority, assumed the chief command, superseded his superior officer Mr. James, and concluded with the king the convention which will be found in the appendix, No. 2, where it is inserted from the original in my possession, which differs materially from that published by Mr. Bowdich as the treaty in question.

Such was the state of our relations with Ashantee, when, by the advice of a friend, I forwarded a memorial to the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, tendering my services as resident consul in that country.

In due time I received letters * from the Treasury and Downing-

Downing-street, 3d January, 1818.

* I have laid before Lord Bathurst your letter of the 26th ult. with its enclosure from Mr. Joseph Dupuis, tendering his services as resident at Coomassy in Africa; and I am directed to acquaint you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, that Lord Bathurst entirely concurs in their recommendation of appointing a consul at Ashantee, and will have much pleasure in submitting to the Prince Regent the name of Mr. Dupuis, as qualified to fill the appointment.

Signed HENRY GOULBURN.

To G. Harrison, Esq.

street, intimating that my offer had been accepted, and ordering me to make the necessary preparations for proceeding to my destination.

It was explained to me, in England, that my appointment originated in an earnest desire on the part of His Majesty's government, to cultivate the existing harmony with the king of Ashantee, and, upon the basis of a mutual confidence, to nurture the seeds of an accidental friendship as an essential preliminary step to the advancement of certain hopeful expectations connected with the manufacturing and commercial interests of Great Britain; whereby government, it would seem, had built upon the probability, through the auspices of the king, not only of enticing all, or the greater part of Ashantee commerce, to the several British settlements on the Gold Coast; but also of inducing that monarch to suffer the traders from the more inland districts to visit the British markets in common with the Ashantees themselves. In elucidation of these sentiments, I beg to refer the reader to the following extracts taken from my instructions.

“ It must be almost superfluous to point out to you, that the *most* important object to attain, is, to establish mutual confidence; since upon this basis alone can mutual interest be raised. And with this view, it may be good policy to defer the prosecution of any plans for *immediate* profit that may have a tendency to excite the suspicion or jealousy of the natives. For though the promotion of our commercial

The other letter addressed to me was as follows:—

The Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, having been pleased to communicate to Earl Bathurst your letter of the 26th ult. offering your services as resident at Ashantee, I have it in command from their lordships, to transmit for your information a copy of his lordship's answer thereto, in order that you may make the necessary preparations for proceeding to your destination.

Signed GEO. HARRISON.

Treasury Chambers, 14th January, 1818.

See also Commission, Appendix No. I.

relations with the interior is, undoubtedly, a consideration of the *first* importance, yet in a country with which we have had so little intercourse, *that* should be but a secondary object. Your particular care should be to satisfy the minds of the king and his ministers, that our professions of *friendship* and *good-will* are *sincere*, before you allow it to be understood that the intention is to pursue our enquiries, and to extend the trade beyond the boundaries of his dominions.

“ The duties of a British consul at Coomassy must necessarily be of a peculiar nature: He must therefore, for a *time*, be *almost wholly* guided by *circumstances* as they *arise*, bearing however always in mind as the general rule of his conduct, his duty and allegiance to his sovereign and country, the *promotion* of the Christian religion, and the interest of British commerce.

“ Your acquaintance with the characters of the Moors or Arabs (obtained during your long residence in Barbary,) renders any suggestions for your government, with respect to them, wholly unnecessary; further than it will be deserving of much consideration, how far it may be politic to place confidence in any of those who are resident at Coomassy, by making use of them as interpreters or otherwise, as they *must*, both from their religious principles and self-interest, be rather disposed to *prejudice*, than to promote our interests. You may, however, find them to be less bigoted than self-interested, and by prudent measures may be able to turn their influence with the government very much to the advantage of this country.

“ One object most desirable to obtain, as it would essentially assist in the realization of the views of government, might *perhaps* be a grant from the king of Ashantee, of a district, about *twenty-five miles from the coast*, subject to a perpetual annual rent, with full liberty to clear and cultivate the same, and to erect houses, &c. Such a spot, if judiciously chosen, might open an extensive field for the employment of the youth educated at the Company's schools, and be the beginning of a system

which might eventually extend to the cultivation and civilization of the whole coast. You will, therefore, keep this object constantly in view, and seize every favourable opportunity of impressing upon the mind of the king, the signal advantages that would result to the Ashantees as a people, and the immense accession of riches and strength which would be acquired by the sovereign, from the country being brought into such an improved state. It hardly need be observed to you, that this is a matter which will require to be treated with the greatest delicacy, and that no opinion upon it should ever be hazarded by any other person attached to the mission.

“The enclosed are copies of the treaties entered into with the kings of Ashantee and *Dwabin*: upon reference to which, you will see that *they* pledge themselves to continue on terms of friendship with the British. To permit a British officer constantly to reside at Coomassy; to encourage trade with Cape Coast Castle, and its dependencies, and to commit *their* children to the care of the governor in chief (of the Company’s establishments) for education at Cape Coast Castle, &c. &c.

“You will be sensible how necessary it is to get geographical information, and therefore you will carefully treasure up every thing you can learn, without showing that you attach any importance to the obtaining of it.” &c.

I was detained in England about nine months, reckoning from the date of my appointment; for I did not sail for the coast of Africa until the month of November following. The voyage itself was as favourable as could have been desired: we left the Downs with the wind at north-east, which increasing to a gale, conveyed us to Madeira in six days. After a detention at Funchal short of a week, we finally weighed anchor for Cape Coast Castle. More than this outline, it is presumed, would not afford the reader any real interest.

From January, the month I landed on the Gold Coast, to the following June, my health was unimpaired by the effect of climate, while many sunk under the mortal influence of tropical diseases; yet I courted

rather than shunned exposure to the air by night as well as day.* It was the opinion of my friends that the seven or eight years of "seasoning" I had undergone in Mauritania rendered me less susceptible of danger; but in this sentiment I never could agree with them; and I was the more prejudiced in favour of my own way of reasoning when the periodical rains set in, for I was instantly assailed by a fever, which for severity and duration, was of the most dangerous character. When from this attack I emerged to a state of convalescence, which I did only under symptoms of extreme debility after the lapse of nearly two months, I retired from the castle to a little cottage in the "bush," where for six ensuing weeks I gradually improved in health. But the season of fogs, mists, and exhalations succeeding the first fall, as it does upon this parallel of latitude, I again relapsed under the malignant influence of the period. The fever at this time attached itself locally† to the liver, spleen, &c., and although the danger was more remote than heretofore, yet as I laboured long under it, and grew gradually worse, I had no hopes of gaining strength sufficient for my contemplated journey to the interior, unless by a change of air. Thus prepossessed, during the height of the ulterior rains which usually set in in the month of September, I embarked on a cruise in his Majesty's ship Pheasant, commanded by Captain Kelly, an officer every way conspicuous for his gentleman-like conduct.

The rains chased us from the coast to the bight of Benin, whither we were bound, and for five ensuing weeks the strides of death among the crew were considerable. My health continued to be seriously bad, and the cruise becoming irksome, I availed myself of an

* I am satisfied, from the result of my own experience in Africa, that many fall victims to the climate from the adoption of a course of training improperly termed prudential; viz. a sudden change of diet, from *ship's fare* to a scanty sustenance of vegetable matter, (rejecting even a moderate proportion of wine) and seclusion in their apartments from the sun and atmosphere. Habits of this kind have, at least, a natural tendency to stagnate the flow of healthy juices, and render the body unfit for exertion. Many there are, however, who fall victims to intemperate habits.

† This is a very common symptom of the progress of disease upon the constitution of Europeans between the tropics.

opportunity that offered to transship myself to the Snapper gun-brig, (commanded by a late lamented friend) then on her passage back to Cape Coast. A tornado which we experienced, and the set of the current together, carried us to our destination in two or three days, and when I set foot again on shore at the close of November, I was little improved in health. The rains, however, had ceased, and in less than a week my disorder wholly subsided. I recovered, seemingly, to the most perfect state of health, and my anxiety to take upon myself the duties for which I was sent out to Africa, was proportionate to the now alarming state of public affairs in relation to our connexions with Ashantee; for this was the period when the king, exasperated to the highest pitch of indignation against the servants of the Company as well as the native population of Cape Coast, demanded satisfaction of both in sums of money equivalent to £12,800., the half of which was, as he termed it, the assessed penalty for a violation of the treaty made by Mr. Bowdich.

During my absence on the cruise, a Mr. Wm. Hutton, a writer in the service of the company, landed at Cape Coast. I had once before accidentally seen him at Gravesend, when, it seems, he contemplated returning to Africa, this I knew at the time I sailed myself, and this was the limit of my knowledge of this gentleman. When I returned from the cruize, he shewed me the respect of a common place visit of congratulation or condolence, (for I had unhappily lost an infant member of my family during my absence) and this was succeeded by a letter, which I received the next day, from my friend Mr. Joseph Dawson, (ex-governor of Cape Coast) a merchant in town of the first class of respectability, both in property and character. It ran as follows:—

“The gentleman I sent to the Castle is Mr. Hutton, whose name you have frequently heard me mention. I now introduce him to you as a particular friend whom I wish well to. He accompanied the expedition of Major Peddy, and is well-seasoned to the climate. I think he would be useful to you, if you go to Aquamassy, (Coomassy), in case

of sickness, for he knows the nature of business here, and can act under your direction. He has begged of me to see you and offer his services voluntarily to go up with you ; so I may recommend him to you as a young man who has talent, and for his integrity I will answer," &c.

Pleased with a voluntary tender of service for such duty, as it was a solitary instance of the kind, and gratified with the idea of obliging a friend, I accepted of the offer, although I was already provided with a vice-consul,* a youth inexperienced indeed, but whose qualifications of the heart were of the first distinction.

Mr. Hutton being more competent to take an active part, I employed him on many occasions, and indeed I may not omit my public acknowledgments of his industry and zeal on many early occasions, and which I stamped with my approbation in a memorial submitted to me to obtain my sanction ere I forwarded it to the lords commissioners of the treasury, the result of which procured both him and Mr. Collins the rewards they petitioned for.

During my third illness, a few days antecedent to the journey to Coomassy, I gave Mr. Hutton a temporary power to act for me, mainly because I was apprehensive that measures would be taken to supersede me in my command upon the score of ill health—a step which might be imputed to motives of *humanity*. I therefore authorised Mr. Hutton to proceed to Doonqua, with the presents under his charge. Finding subsequently, however, that the influence of the governor and council still endangered my possession of the charge, and as my indisposition for several days continued obstinate, rather than allow any authority in that country to interfere with the powers which had been granted to me, I increased that which I had granted to Mr. Hutton, authorising him now to jog forward at a gentle pace, if my illness should still increase in severity, to relieve me from the uneasy thoughts arising from the daily and hourly interference of the castle with duties which belonged to me alone.

* Mr. Collins, son of the reverend gentleman of that name, who was sent out by the late Bishop of Chichester.

My recovery, two or three days afterwards, rendered this precaution unnecessary, and I had the satisfaction to assume the command at Doonqua.

Looking back to the period of my arrival in Africa—the month of January, 1819,—I found Mr. Hutchison, who had been left at Coomassy by his coadjutors, Messrs. Bowdich and Tedlie, in quality of resident, upon the coast, having been recalled by Mr. Smith, the governor of Cape Coast Castle, to fill the office of salesman in his warehouse, at that interesting period when the king of Ashantee was occupied with his military preparations for the approaching war with Dinkera, king of Gaman.

During Mr. Hutchison's stay at the court, the king, on various occasions, acknowledged the satisfaction he enjoyed from his connexions with the whites, and particularly the British. The fervor of the king's attachment indeed, had developed itself in many little conciliatory acts, and in tokens genuine or politic of his personal esteem for Messrs. Mollan, Smith, and Hutchison*; nor was the primary consideration forgotten, for that monarch employed every means in his power to promote trade with the British, which for a time flourished, although chiefly, it must be admitted, in the governor's warehouses; for when the tributary sovereigns and caboceers assembled their retainers, preparatory to the meditated invasion of Gaman, they were all directed to procure supplies from Cape Coast, so that, according to the most authentic accounts, Mr. Smith's stock of rum, powder, and cloth, was metamorphosed into gold dust in the lapse of a few days only.

These were benefits conferred by the court alone. In regard to the inferior classes of traders, they, not being bound by the royal restrictions, speculated freely and sought their own markets, either with the officers of the castle, or among the free mer-

* These gentlemen were presented by the king with slaves and gold. Mr. Mollan was governor of Annamaboe, and Vice President of the Council.

chants in town. Thus all participated, more or less, in the temporary influx of commerce; although it was stated by some to have been of no solid advantage, except in bulk, as the business was chiefly transacted by Mr. Smith, and a favoured few. This correspondence is supposed to have received a slight check, from an omission, on the part of Mr. Smith, to acknowledge the king's benefits according to negro courtesy, by reciprocal donations, courtly messages, &c. This neglect, however, made no impression on the political attachment of the king, whose conception of the treaty of 1817 favoured an implicit confidence in the good faith of those who had courted the union; and this belief was encouraged by a persuasion that the smiles of the British government, or rather the British sovereign, irradiated his throne with a refulgence that dazzled the multitude, excited the envy of cotemporary powers, and rendered his political existence more secure from foreign enemies, or the ambitious schemes of the tributaries and nobles of his empire.

Mr. Hutchison's occupation, as warehouseman, was found profitable to his employer, as it attracted a private connexion from Coomassy, who chose that gentleman for their broker in preference to one they did not know. This preference excited much dissatisfaction among the merchants and inferior traders. Without the castle walls the treaty itself was bewailed in serious lamentations, reproachful to its authors, although, in truth, a few of the complainants had no cause to be dissatisfied, unless by comparison with the channel that absorbed so much gold in mass. Be this as it may, the evil, real or imaginary, vibrated in my hearing, shortly after I landed on the coast, and the treaty was unreservedly condemned as the cause of the public grievance. The mission which gave existence to that treaty was represented to have been conceived in mercantile enterprize and intrigue; the expence of which was cast upon the government, while the profit was almost exclusively pocketed by the few leading servants of the African Committee. It was boldly affirmed that the document dignified with



INTRODUCTION.

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the name of treaty, was in reality a shadow, although not an innoxious one; and although it could deceive no one versed in the tortuous politics of the country, yet it was reasonably calculated to stand the test of criticism in the meridian of London; where the organs of its supporters (who were liable to the same imposition) afforded the only channel from which information could be elicited: that to effect the sinister purposes of a plot deeply laid, a meritorious officer, such as the late Sir James Yeo described Mr. James to be, was recalled with censure, at the instance of his young aspiring associates, the companions of his dangers and fatigues.

The king was at the head of his army on the Gaman frontier at the time I landed, and a battle was shortly expected to take place between the "rival powers," as they were improperly called by the governor. The natives of the town of Cape Coast, elated by reports which some affirmed came from the windward towns, whilst others maintained that they were fabricated in the castle, entertained hopes that the Ashantee monarchy might be annihilated in the approaching conflict. These wishes they were imprudent enough to promulgate, thereby affording the king's friends and his captain resident, who lived in the town, an opportunity to represent the disaffection that prevailed. In due time the court noticed it, and politically restricted the intercourse between the inland and maritime traders, until the termination of the campaign. This restriction, however, is to be understood in a limited sense, for still the sovereign's confidential servants and traders visited the castle, and purchased, as usual, what was wanted for the court or camp.

The Ashantee captain resident had been stationed by the king at Cape Coast, and was considered there as the organ of his government. While the king remained in his capital, the maritime states were cautious of giving offence; but when the southern provinces were no longer overawed by the presence of the monarch on his throne, the natives of Cape Coast, encouraged, it must be admitted, by the

gossips of the castle, thought proper to take a sudden umbrage at the resident, whom they looked upon as a spy or inspector over their actions. Reports were circulated from some unknown source, that the king's army had suffered a defeat of magnitude, and that Dinkera was pushing over the Tando river with intent to repay the hostile visit of the king. The resident protested against the falsity of the account, as did the chiefs of Elmina town, but the interest they took in the business was supposed to proceed from other motives than those sincerity might inspire.

Traders now but rarely visited the settlements ; and when they did come, it was found impracticable to elicit from them what alone would have passed current for authentic information, namely, an admission that the king had been defeated !

At this crisis two royal messengers came to Cape Coast to vent a complaint against the conduct of the people of Commenda, whither they had been sent by their sovereign to convey a *jaw-bone* or two, as trophies of the success of the Ashantee arms. They claimed the protection of the British, by virtue of the treaty. It was confirmed beyond disputation that these messengers had been used with some violence, and turned out of the town in contemptuous defiance and ridicule. At Cape Coast they were secure from molestation, but could get no redress ; for Mr. Smith, without the aid of the council, and without regard to my particular interest and responsibility in the concerns of Ashantee, refused to administer justice between the parties until, after the lapse of many months, the threat of hostility became so alarming to the interests of the settlements, that the council assumed the power of acting independently of the views entertained by its president, and determined to forward the mission.

As far as policy may be allowed to palliate those errors of administration, which are connected with a violation of public and private faith, so far only it was justifiable to abjure this treaty of Mr. Bowdich. Let it be assumed that the early reports of the king's defeat were

actually credited in the castle to the extent that the military power of Ashantee had been vitally shaken in the conflict with its western enemies, still it was the honour of England, and, as it was imagined by the king, the faith of her monarch, which had been pledged to him in the treaty of 1817, upon what authority I leave to the judgment of the reader.

I believe, upon no slight grounds, that my consular appointment to the court mainly contributed to inspire Mr. Bowdich's uncle with the temerity to induce a rupture with the king; for in opposition to my solicitations that my arrival in the country should be communicated at the capital by a public messenger, it was explained to me that the time was not suitable, and I must wait until after the rains, as it would be dangerous to travel before I was seasoned to the climate. Many whisperings were circulated in augmentation of the difficulties, and my hopes, although buoyed up in favourable expectancy, did not wholly subdue my fears of disappointment; for the impracticability of visiting the metropolis became a common topic of conversation, and every discouraging prognostication was echoed about without reserve, but certainly not without a motive. The sentiments of the parties in town united in a rooted belief that every measure short of *actual hostility* would be resorted to, to prevent the execution of those plans which were contemplated in my appointment; and that Mr. Smith was, moreover, personally interested in suppressing my visit to court, from the feelings he had for his nephew, whose exaggerated representations of the opulence and grandeur of the Ashantee monarchy, he was no stranger to. Doubtful as the sequel might prove, my hopes and fears alternately fluctuated as I anxiously looked forward for the king's return to his capital, upon which I was now inclined to concentrate all my expectations.

The Captain resident, who was a young athletic man, was taken suddenly ill in the month of March, while this misunderstanding existed, and his death speedily ensued, not without a strong suspicion

of poison, which, it was whispered, had been administered by a slave of the caboceer Aggry, a man who received pay from the company, and who was upheld as a superior chief, and dignified with the title of King of the town. Whether this was true or not I cannot affirm, but no successor was ever appointed to the vacant situation, and yet it was more than ever incumbent on the government to watch the idle rumours that gave so much uneasiness to the king.

In the same month a silly tale was circulated at Cape Coast that a most decisive battle had been fought between the belligerents; that the king of Ashantee had fallen in the conflict, that his army was scattered over the face of the country, and that his enemies, headed by the victorious Dinkera, were within a few days' march of Coomassy, where the advanced guard had already arrived. Yet no clue could be discovered for tracing this rumour to a source that might imprint upon it a semblance of authenticity: notwithstanding which it was seemingly credited implicitly by Mr. Smith, who assured me *he had no doubt of its truth*: hence the same opinion predominated throughout the town, as well as in the castle. I know no reason why it should have taken so deep a root, except that it was what chimed with the anxious wishes of the natives, and, as it would seem, co-operated with the views of some of the superior authorities in the castle.

As my hopes and fears now centred in the truth or falsehood of the statement, I hired a canoe and went to El Mina with a letter of introduction to His Excellency the late Governor Oldenburgh, by whom I was assured that there was not a word in the report deserving of credit, although he doubted not there had been a general engagement. The Ashantee traders who were in the town, amounting to near one hundred, including their slaves, laughed outright at the tale, which they treated as a malicious libel that would be attended with evil consequences in the sequel. It was added, moreover, that these artful reports were coined at Cape Coast exclusively, for every other town knew them to be false; and even the people of Commenda were then

sensible that they had been betrayed into their late excesses by the influence of Cape Coast.

Towards the end of March, a messenger, bearing the gold-hilted sword, came to the castle from the camp, stating that he had been deputed by his sovereign to acquaint the governor that an outrage had been committed at Commenda upon two men of office, who had represented to him their inability to procure redress; but that the king expected, upon the faith of the treaty, and the friendship that existed between them, that justice would be done. However, if the governor declined taking that trouble, he should send some troops for that purpose.

The king, it was added, had also heard with anger and regret, that the natives of Cape Coast were not disposed to be friends; that they talked foolish things, as if they wanted him to come down again to the water side; but he trusted the governor would look to it for him, because he was then engaged in war.

This was substantially the message which was laid hold of as a palliative argument for having bidden defiance to the king in language which that monarch deemed insulting, and a farewell adieu to the treaty of Mr. Bowdich: for Mr. Smith, without listening to the main argument, or attending to the justice of the king's complaint, interrupted the man, by desiring him to return to his master and acquaint him that he might come down "in forty days, or in twenty, or as soon as he thought proper."

This messenger, whose name was Accra Dehe, lingered about the town for some time, and vainly intimated that he durst not carry such a message back: that it would be an insult to the king, and perhaps cost him his head. But at length he was compelled to depart.

In order to elucidate these rash councils, so abruptly resorted to, without the concurrence of any other individual associated in the commission for the administration of public affairs; it is requisite to say something of a finesse that was employed to give sanction to

hostility at such a crisis, when so many interests and expectations were thrown away. Will it be credited that the message itself was perverted, through the medium of the interpreter, who was instructed so to do, that a plausible opportunity might be afforded for breaking off the friendly connexion that existed with Ashantee? This was roundly asserted by many who were not known as friends to the king, and who freely declared that De Graaf, the castle linguist, interpreted the king's message to the governor with exaggerations, and even falsehood, in the course of which he said (or as it was suspected was urged to say), "The king would certainly come down to Cape Coast in forty days and *punish those who had abused him.*" In order to obtain, as it were, a tacit sanction, Mr. Smith invited me to meet the messenger in the hall, in company with captain Kelly of H. M. S. Pheasant. We caught the words as they fell from the lips of De Graaf, and I confess, for my own part, the colouring was so artfully contrived, that I saw no other alternative than waiting patiently where I was. Indeed, for some time after, I was a dupe to the prejudice that the king actually designed war; notwithstanding that Accra Dehe, before he quitted the Cape, declared that De Graaf had perverted the king's message.*

The elders and chiefs of the town were then privately instructed to arm their people, and defend themselves in case of necessity. A wall of circumvallation, extending across the hills, and entrenching the town and castle, was hastily erected with mud and swish, loop-holed for defensive warfare, as if it were actually believed that the Ashantees would come down; and if so, that the people would find security behind these frail bulwarks, against an enemy so terrible to their remembrances.

Accra Dehe returned to the camp, and, as I learned at Coomassy,

* The king denied the message to me, in terms the most positive and convincing, and alleged that he had punished Accra Dehe in the first of his anger, wrongfully; for De Graaf was the man who, he believed, had perverted his words. Mr. Smith, however, understood the native language!!!

truly reported what had occurred, together with his own suspicions regarding the imposition. The king, however, was enraged to a great degree of anger against his officer, whom he accused of falsehood, put him to the torture of the bastonade to extort confession, and finally threw him into prison with the intention of putting him to a cruel death, in case he discovered equivocation or deceit.

In the meantime the farce was conducted at Cape Coast, with every ostensible show of promptitude, although in reality it all ended in the erection of the wall; for Aggry, who had boasted of his ability to procure five thousand auxiliaries from the bush (country), found it impossible to obtain a single man: every town and every village, being either overawed by a dread of the vengeance of Ashantee, or in strict alliance with that powerful nation.

These reports, reaching the capital, annihilated what little remained of the trade, at a single blow; the traders either not caring to trust themselves and their property at Cape Coast, or being laid under prohibitions, which restricted the intercourse to El Mina, and the windward settlements, where, for twelve months after, they deposited their gold and merchandize. The Dutch, consequently, enjoyed all those benefits which the treaty was supposed to have conferred upon the British, who in truth were indebted to the agency of their European brethren in the few commercial transactions they had with the Ashantees; and these contracts were sometimes attended with loss upon the property, varying from twenty to thirty per cent. (without including interest of money and risk of payment) which fell to the share of the Dutch as the intermediate parties.

The prospect of surmounting those obstacles which impeded my visit to the court, was now but a faint one at best, and only to be discerned through a cloud of trouble and vexation. By this time I was sufficiently initiated in the sinister mysteries of African politics to know that, although I might ultimately succeed in my endeavours to reach the metropolis, yet it would not be until every hostile feeling

had been roused into action, thereby to give full employment to my time, and excite general distrust and suspicion. These sentiments imperceptibly stole in upon my secret thoughts, harassing my mind with tantalizing reflections; nor were any of my friends able to console me at this time with a solitary hope of what I so ardently desired. But one opinion existed, and anxious as the majority were for my success, they did not hesitate to suggest to me the propriety of returning to England, there to submit a just statement of the obstacles I had to encounter.

This advice, it is almost needless to say, did not accord with my own sentiments. Limited as my hopes were, I still enjoyed the mental satisfaction of knowing that things were at least in a train to be brought to issue, however unfavourable that issue might prove; and I had previously resolved to abide the test, before I sought new instructions or resigned my commission.

The rains set in with more than usual violence before the close of April, and although I had hitherto enjoyed as good health as in England or Barbary, I was early attacked with fever, which for six weeks held me in suspense between life and death, nor did I recover without symptoms of extreme debility, increased by the nature of the climate and the anxiety which preyed continually upon my mind.

Another messenger came down in June, desiring, in the name of the king, simply to know whether Accra Dehe had deceived him, or whether Mr. Smith had actually sent him up a defiance.

I was too ill at this period to attend the hall, but I learned afterwards that the reply retorted the charge of defiance upon the king or his messenger, for having first used the language of threat.

Whilst all this was transacting, news reached the Ashantee army that Cape Coast had been entrenched with a wall, and that the town's-people were in arms against the king's authority (for this, indeed, was a truth too palpable for concealment). When it was reported to the king, at Houraboh in Gaman, as that monarch told me himself, his

captains simultaneously unsheathed their sabres and solicited him to allow a detachment of troops to march down to the coast. "We will kill them," said the captains, "or bring them before you, for this insult is insufferable." However, enraged as the king was, he suppressed his feelings, telling his captains that he held a "book" with the white men, and could not acquiesce in the general wish, but that he would nevertheless swear to seek satisfaction, for he believed the governor was imposed upon.

Notwithstanding the royal messengers continued coming to and fro, between the camp and the castle, the report of the king's death did lose ground. In the castle the most favourable supposition supported an opinion that the Ashantees had sustained a defeat of such magnitude as to have produced the election of another king, who, from state policy, negotiated in the name of his predecessor. Some were bold enough to affirm that Ashantee no longer existed, but as a department of the Gaman empire, and was then governed by a son of Dinkera.

In conformity with the king's promise to his army, another messenger, of high rank, and with a large retinue, made his entry in September. I was at this time sufficiently recovered from a second attack of illness to attend the interview. The man, in an able speech, recapitulated all those grievances of which his master complained, beginning at the Commenda "palaver," and ending with the fortification or line of defence. The mutinous conduct of the people was touched upon with *delicacy*, yet the odium was cast upon Mr. Smith, who was indirectly accused of having *invited* them to *insubordination*, on a belief that the king had been defeated by his enemies. In conclusion, the messenger declared, in the name of his master, that the treaty was of no use if *insincerity* was attached to British councils;—that the king looked upon that treaty as "Fetische," (sacred) and therefore had sent it down to the castle, in order that Mr. Smith should read its *contents*, and determine whether or no he was bound to give satisfaction for the injuries that had been done: and moreover, if it should be

answered negatively, that gentleman was desired to retain possession of the treaty, in order that the king might apply to his own resources without scruple, as it was contrary to his principles, or his notions of honour and good faith, to keep that deed in his hands and make war; or, as it was more figuratively described to me at Coomassy by Apoko, to march against the town with the musquet in hand and the "book" in the box.

As this was uttered, the messenger drew from under his garment a little morocco trunk, out of which he took the treaty, and presented it to Mr. Smith, who evinced something like perturbation or confusion, as he declared "he had nothing to do with it." The linguist, De Graaf, interposed a whisper, and it was then read over as far as the fourth article,* when the messenger again rose and demanded satisfaction in the name of his sovereign, upon the faith of that article, which, if not complied with, he affirmed, would call down the vengeance of Ashantee upon the natives of the town. In respect to the Castle, he added, the king did not wish for war with white men, but his own people must be obedient; he would not, however, hold the book or treaty if he made war.

The hall now resounded with vociferous arguments from the partisans of Ashantee and others connected with the messenger's suite. Some of the town chiefs, awakened at last from the stupefaction of idle dreams, joined earnestly in the debate, hoping, as it appeared, to mitigate the wrath of the monarch, or exonerate themselves from censure, by declaring that as they were under the government of the whites, they could not help what had been done. In fact the audience for a time resembled the upper gallery of a playhouse between the acts, so general was the confusion; when order was restored, the messenger

* The fourth article was as follows:—"In order to avert the horrors of war, it is agreed, that in any case of aggression on the part of the natives under British protection, the king shall complain thereof to the Governor-in-chief, to obtain redress, and that he will in no case resort to hostility, without endeavouring as much as possible to effect an amicable arrangement."

desired he might hear more of the treaty, which Mr. Smith read, as far as the seventh article, where he was interrupted, a second time, by a demand of satisfaction upon the faith of it.* Nor would he listen to the palliative arguments which were obtruded by Aggry and a chief of the name of Binie. He declared that his orders were peremptory and his duty imperative; and, therefore, he should leave the treaty in the castle, unless Mr. Smith would promise to do the king justice.

At this juncture I requested the governor would make known to the messenger the object of my mission, and the desire I had to see the king; for, incredible as it may appear, that monarch was in total ignorance of any thing concerning me, unless from report. My request was complied with. The messenger again rose, bowed to me, and took me by the hand in token of respect and good will. This circumstance appeared to stagger the resolution he had formed; and he was, for some time pensive and doubtful, as if he knew not what course to pursue; his inflexibility, however, was overcome, as he testified by enquiring whether he was to leave the treaty, or whether I would talk the palaver with the king. The reply was, that he must be guided by his own discretion, and accordingly he retired with the treaty to his quarters in town.

The town chiefs and their retainers were now, for the first time, warned of the danger they had incurred in giving an unbridled licence to their tongues.† Indeed the advice was scarcely needful at

* This article was worded as follows:—"The governors of the respective forts shall at all times afford every protection in their power to the persons and property of the people of Ashantee, who may resort to the water-side."

† Yes, it is a notorious fact, that the people were first encouraged to resort to arms, then censured for having done so. My confidence, during the erection of the wall of circumvallation, was rooted implicitly in the honor and integrity of Mr. Smith; and so I described my sentiments in my public letters to England. So much did I deludedly conceive myself a partisan in the policy he had adopted, that I daily visited the progressive advancement of the works of defence, and often in his society, although I knew, at the same time, they were calculated to ruin my best hopes. But these, while I felt their force, I set in no sort of competition with what I imagined to be a national cause,—the insult offered to the flag of my sovereign, and the indignity offered to a man whom I looked upon as a friend.

this time, for their minds were riveted upon the impending peril ; and the scenes of former years were revived in imagination, as they contemplated the daring spirit of their enemies, and the power of the king. In the town, tranquillity predominated for a time, among all orders of men ; not a whisper, or the rumour of one, was to be heard prejudicial to the character or interests of the offended monarch, and the reports of a Gaman invasion were now woefully discredited or silenced. Yet, in the castle, the same idle speculations were indulged in, but whether their propagators actually believed in such trash, although they affirmed it, is very doubtful.

Mr. Smith was, it seems, still of opinion that the Ashantees had been totally defeated, and accounts were again written to England to this effect, but in order somewhat to qualify the tone of his former sentiments, he affected to imagine that the government had recovered the blow, still however doubting that the same monarch ruled the empire.

Trade was entirely at a stand, for the Ashantees had long since deserted the Cape. The Dutch settlements, particularly El Mina town and castle, were stored with the inland merchants ; and British commodities gained vent through that channel alone, whilst the Dutch, as heretofore, continued to reap all the advantage.

The messenger, whose hesitation proceeded from doubts connected with the importance of my mission, and my rank as coming from England direct to the king, came to the resolution of remaining on the spot until he should be furnished with other instructions from the king.

During the suspense, I was again so severely attacked with fever, that by the advice of my medical attendant I was prevailed upon to take a cruize in the Gulf, and accordingly I embarked on board His Majesty's ship Pheasant. The rains were still excessive, sickness tracked our flight, and mortality made some havock among the officers and crew. At the expiration of five weeks (it being then

November) my health having improved, I returned to the coast in the Snapper gun-brig. For some time after I enjoyed indifferent good health, under a tardy convalescence.

The season of health and re-animation was, however, now in rapid advance, and I believe the revived prospect of visiting the capital contributed more than any thing else to my recovery.

Public affairs were precisely on the same footing as when I left the Cape. The same messenger was still in town, but it was reported that a man of high rank was coming down to the coast in quality of ambassador; with a train of armed followers.

The town's-people were more than ever sensible of their folly, and a few vented their murmurs against the whites, under the impression that they had encouraged them to resist a power which they could not unitedly contend against. The wall of defence was, therefore, suffered to moulder away in neglect, notwithstanding Mr. Smith continued still to give it as a sort of private opinion, that both policy and necessity required our entering upon defensive warfare at least, and offensive as regarded the protection of the town, if needful, from the ravages threatened by the Ashantees. The impossibility of affording thereby, protection to the lives and property of the people, formed no part of the argument.

Many were the anxious hopes and fears in circulation, and no one could form even a conjecture as regarded the future. On the one hand it was feared that the accumulated provocations would weigh heavily in the scale of Ashantee politics, and perhaps influence the king to carry fire and sword through the town; for it was no secret that an enemy so powerful as the sovereign of Ashantee might perform this with comparative ease, and without incurring any particular hazard even from the fire of the castle guns, should that course of proceeding be resorted to. On the other hand it was admitted, that although the king was exceedingly exasperated, yet he would be influenced to listen to any reasonable terms, provided they were associated with the

Long agitated mission. In one point of view there was an unity of sentiment outside of the castle, namely, that any attempt at negotiation short of my visit to court, would be fruitless.

This was the time when advices were expected from the committee, and many sanguine hopes of relief were centred in that quarter. But when the dispatches arrived, they were found to contain nothing important as regarded the political aspect of affairs in Africa. The information, in substance, was a reiteration of former strictures upon the conduct of Messrs. Mollan, Smith, and Adamson *, on the score of exorbitant charges in their accounts; but more particularly as they concerned the pecuniary affairs of the two former gentlemen; and the threat of recall or dismissal was again fulminated at them with revived censure, in consequence of their having defended their accounts with scornful acrimony. Under these circumstances I was confirmed in the opinion that the committee themselves had been misled by the interested reports of their servants in regard to the affairs of Ashantee.

Mr. Smith now unequivocally gave it as his opinion, without however specifying reasons, that to forward the mission would be the "height of imprudence and madness." †

Again, therefore, my hopes were blighted, and no other consolation presented itself than the anticipation of the interview with the ambassador, whose arrival was looked for within the month, and to whom report gave the credit of extensive, if not ample powers. Indeed it was affirmed that this great captain had been dignified by

* Mr. Adamson was governor of Tantum.

† These are his own words, extracted from letters which he wrote to me on the subject, and which I have still in my possession. It was clear to me, that either pride, and the anxiety of preserving a reputation for consistency, predominated over every other feeling, whether as regarded his own interests or those of the public; or that he was inflexibly bent upon the original maxim of risking every thing rather than promote a mission whose tendency he seemed to think inimical to his own and his nephew's interests and reputations.

his sovereign, with a commission that qualified him to decide for peace or war upon the spot, and to act accordingly.

From this period, then, I no longer looked upon the councils of the Cape (that term will imply the individual acts of Mr. Smith) but as a barrier, or a chain of mountains on the march: and I availed myself of an opportunity that offered, to make known to Lord Bathurst, in the fullest extent, my situation and the predicament in which I was so accidentally placed.

Another month elapsed, and still every measure of policy was contemplated in secret hostility, whilst a semblance of inflexibility, devoid however of the dignity of resolution, or the generosity of fellowship and good faith in politics, tended to support the natives in a belief that their "palaver" with the king was of consideration sufficient to warrant unqualified hostility on the part of the castle. Certainly the town had been made the dupe of this conceit at an earlier stage of the quarrel, and doubtless it inspired them with that symptom of courage, or folly, from whence emanated many offences which, unhappily for themselves, called down upon their heads the vengeance of the sovereign, and that not a slight one; for already I was sufficiently informed to know that the united power of the British and *all* Fantee besides in the field, was inadequate to contend against that of the king, who, if he chose it, might destroy the town of Cape Coast without risking the loss of a man from our fire; and if he knew how to attack the castle itself, it was not defensible. But the original infatuation was nearly at an end, and perhaps had wholly subsided; for the people, as if sensible ~~last~~ that they had overstepped the boundary of prudence, were armed with caution: they were now seriously alarmed, and their efforts of courage were paralyzed in embryo; they therefore endeavoured to screen themselves under a semblance of neutrality, as if they were either unconcerned in the differences now existing between the king and Mr. Smith, or as if the British government would rescue them from

their perils by negotiation or force of arms: and that too without employing any efforts on their own parts. Indeed they had buoyed themselves up with the hopes of a *white* army coming to their relief.

The year was fast approaching to a close: I had already been held in this state of anxiety and suspense upwards of eleven months, and for ten of those weary months, or thereabouts, I had supported my lot with as much fortitude and resolution as I could.

The messenger, whose approach had been so long the theme of conversation, was now announced to be on his journey to the Coast, and at no great distance. Various reports gained credit, also, that a large body of troops would be quartered upon the town, until the negotiation should determine between peace or war.

In this interval of suspense, Mr. Swanzy arrived upon the coast, bringing under his charge despatches from the Committee, which warranted his hopes of assuming to himself the direction of public affairs in place of Mr. Smith, upon whom, together with his coadjutors, Mollan and Adamson, a final act of censure was registered, on the score of unjustifiable charges in the public accounts, and insolence in their vindication.

Mr. Swanzy had the candour to admit that obstinacy and private resentment alone had reduced the settlements to a situation so truly alarming.

Hitherto, novel as it may seem in the system of government, no council had ever been assembled for taking the sense of that body upon the subject of Ashantee, as it has already been related. But now Mr. Swanzy, in virtue of his own powers, took an active part in public, compelling Messrs. Smith and Mollan to curtail their charges by a reduction of some hundreds of pounds, and to recant certain injurious expressions which they had applied to the committee.

Mr. Smith still adhered to his sentiments of defying the power of the king; Mr. Mollan, with that obmutescence for which he is remarkable, gave no opinion at all, and Mr. Swanzy, who it will be remem-

bered, had a political game to play more intimately associated with his private interests, avoided saying more at this time than what might be qualified affirmatively or negatively.

This semblance of re-animation, however, once more removed the cloud of despondency that covered the minds of many of the chiefs in town, and it was now imagined that Mr. Swanzy had ability and inclination sufficient to avert the threatened calamities. That his inclinations would suggest pacific measures, no one could reasonably doubt, as his mercantile hopes naturally beat in unison with the feelings of those who had been such long sufferers.

Again at the close of the month of December, I paid another visit to his excellency governor Oldenburg. Trade was still brisk at El Mina, and the Dutch were still profiting by our own evil policy. The Ashantees, I had the mortification to learn, spoke in very loose terms of British faith, nor did they seem to think that we were overburthened with common sense. The information I derived from the governor gave me to understand, most unequivocally, that, instead of having suffered reverses, the king had been completely successful in the Gaman campaign, and that there no longer existed a doubt of the death of Dinkera, and the final submission of his subjects to the conqueror's yoke.

During my stay under the hospitable roof of this worthy governor, I received information from Cape Coast that the long looked-for ambassador had arrived at Doonqua, and would shortly reach the place of his destination. Thus informed, I returned to the Cape without loss of time, where I found the popular rumours to be again very unfavourable. The anxiety of all classes was extreme, from a presentiment of hostility; for the ambassador's train, according to report, was *an army*, and his demands upon the castle and the town were stated to be exorbitant.

From this period it was a sort of breathless suspense for a day or two, until the advanced guard, as it was termed, was seen traversing the beach.

The ambassador entered the place with a degree of military splendour unknown there since the conquest of Fantee by the king, and according to prevailing courtesy, the town chiefs, headed by Aggry, were drawn up to receive their unwelcome visitors.

Let the imagination trace the routine of etiquette, and let it be believed, as there is no doubt of the fact, that the number of people in the ambassador's train, at the lowest estimate, was about twelve hundred, of whom about half were either Ashantees or Assins (some of them women and boys) and the remaining half Fantees of Doonqua and Mouree, joined by some El Mina people, who all professed allegiance in common to the king.

The ambassador, who was a man apparently between the ages of thirty and thirty-five, stood in the relationship of nephew to the king: it will be unnecessary, therefore, to say more of his rank and influence at court.

On the day of audience, he delivered a speech in the Hall, which De Graaf interpreted briefly as follows:—

“ The king says, you (the governor) sent white men to Coomassy, and they told him it was because the whites wished for peace and a good trade; on hearing which he rejoiced to think that he should gratify the great king and his captains. These white men saw the king's face, and they knew he was a good king and wished well to the governor and white men who lived in the country; therefore they made a treaty of strict friendship. Then the king sent down all the trade to the governor, thinking he loved him as a true friend.

“ The king was afterwards obliged to make war against Dinkera, who had defied him, and refused to pay him gold as before. He ordered his captains to bring all the people together, and clean the

guns. And when the white man,* who lived with him heard that, he said, now I must go back to the water side; and the king, considering that to be right, let him go.

“ The trade went down as before, and the king was happy, because he thought, as the white men were friends, they would not allow Fantees to do foolish things and shame him before his captains.

“ When the messengers went to Commenda, it was because he loved the people; he, therefore, sent a jaw-bone† of Dinkera's captain, that they might know the king's enemies were dead, and rejoice at it. Now the governor knows that these messengers were robbed and beaten, and the people laughed at the king; therefore, the messengers went to complain to the governor of Cape Coast, but he would not hear them.

“ When the king heard that he was much grieved, and he sent Accra Dehe to make his compliments and tell the governor to examine that affair, and do what was right. When Accra Dehe returned to the camp, and told the king that the governor did not care for him, and said that he might come down in twenty days, it broke his heart, because it shamed him before his captains, and all the kings and great caboceers who fought for him. He could not think the governor would use him in that manner, because he never sent an offensive

* Mr. Hutchison.

† I think I have observed, elsewhere, that this description of present is deemed courteous and highly complimentary by the negroes, particularly when conferred by a chief or crowned head. This character, however, was attempted to be disputed when the palaver had gained its greatest ascendancy, and not before, for no other reason that I know of than that government and the committee would readily credit the belief that it might be interpreted into threatened hostility and insult. Let us put the question fairly to the issue, by referring to what Bosman relates of the war between “ the Commanians ” (Commenda itself) and the natives of Saboe, Acany, and Cabes Terra, page 33:—

“ Notwithstanding we (the garrison of Elmina castle) had been hitherto perfectly neuter, the negro-general sent a civil message to our governor, with several skulls of his vanquished enemies, in token that he had resolved to live and die in the service of the Hollanders; his message was civilly received, and after thanks and presents to the general, dismissed.”

message to the castle. The king then punished the messenger, but the captains said it was wrong, and that the people of Cape Coast were insolent; and they took their swords to march against the Fantees. But the king forbade them, saying he must do what was right according to the book, and he should have satisfaction. Then the king sent more messengers to the governor; but they tell him the governor will not give satisfaction according to the book, and the captains believe that it was true he sent a defiance, saying if the king chose to come and fight he was ready. Then the king called all the chiefs and the old men together, and told them the truth; and they said, 'This dishonours you, king; we cannot hear this and sit upon our stools, for the people will laugh at you and us; it is a very bad thing: you must have satisfaction.' Then the king sent down another messenger and gave him the book, that the governor might see what was true with his own eyes; and say whether he wanted peace or war. But still the governor refuses satisfaction; and yet he says the book is right.

“The king is sorry for the sake of the old men, and women, and children, but then he cannot help it, if the governor will have war; the king has nothing to do with white men; but if they choose to make palavers with him, it is not his fault. He knows that they come to trade in his country, and they have a great king of their own in the land of the white men. This is all true; but then the king (of Ashantee) is a great king too, for all the black countries, and the people must serve him; and if they will not serve him, but are foolish, and do evil, they must die. Now the governor knows that Cape Coast is very insolent, and when the king complained to the castle, the people were told to build a wall and fight him. Is that like good friends, as the book says? The other towns of Fantee do what is right, and the king has no palaver with them, and he is unwilling to make war for one town only. And now he sends to the governor to ask, if he will settle that palaver or not? because, otherwise, the army will certainly go down and destroy the place; for it is a great palaver, and

the king and all his captains are very angry, because they believe that Aggry and De Graaf cheat them, and tell the governor lies; therefore, the king says they had better look to it, and take care what they do, for he is not a king to play the fool with."

Here the ambassador paused, or was interrupted by Aggry, De Graaf, and others, who felt interested in the censure. Some confusion ensued, and when order was again restored, the linguist declared that there was something more important "*in the budget.*" This was signified to the ambassador, and he proceeded to say, that in consequence of the provocation that had been given to the king by the town of Cape Coast, he, as ambassador, was authorized to demand from the inhabitants a fine of * 1600 ounces of gold. And as regarded the conduct of the governor, he was desired to make the same demand of 1600 ounces from him—making collectively 3200 ounces, and unless these payments were complied with, he was instructed to say the king would grant no peace; nor would he desist until he had taken ample satisfaction.

Confusion and discord again predominated, every tongue was put in motion, coupled with such gesticulation and contortion of the muscles as a subject of that interest may be supposed to have created. The anxiety of the town chiefs was extreme in proportion to their fears.

It was some time before the tumult subsided, and in the interval Mr. Smith collected the sentiments of Mr. Swanzy and myself.† It is perhaps needless to say they were in unison upon the item relating to the king's demand made upon a British castle or a British governor, and it was resolved unanimously to reject the terms with indignation, unless that clause was rescinded which concerned the governor publicly, for in no other character could I know him in a transaction which involved

* Equivalent to £6,400 currency, the two demands making £12,800 together.

† This was the only compliment of the kind that gentleman ever voluntarily offered to my political opinion, my rank, or interests, in the affairs of Ashantee.

the national dignity. This resolution being announced to the ambassador, it was then somewhat qualified by an offer to negotiate, upon terms of equity, the *differences that existed between the king and the natives of the town*. To this amendment Mr. Smith did not object at the time; but subsequently he endeavoured still to give the colouring of consistency to what he termed his former policy, by declaring his conviction that no good could be done by temporizing measures, even at so critical a juncture.

Here then I will say, (and in truth it deserves recording as a solitary instance of the kind) the councils of the Cape exhibited a moderate share of dignity and temper, however late and unseasonable. Had this moderation been adopted earlier, all differences would have been adjusted many months sooner: in fact, they never would have had existence to any serious extent.

The ambassador, in reply to our proposition that he should renounce the demand made upon the governor, declared it was impossible for him to abrogate what the king had decreed; upon which Mr. Smith retired from a debate which was at first partially, and then exclusively engrossed by the town chiefs. These men admitted, in a qualified sense, that they were bound to the sovereign of Ashantee in bonds of *fealty* and *allegiance*; and when taxed by the ambassador with insubordination and insolence, in having built up the wall, &c., they claimed certain privileges from local situation within the precinct of a British fort, which they affirmed had been stipulated for by the treaty of Mr. Bowdich. Some exonerated themselves at the expence of their protectors, by attributing every thing that had been done to the orders of the governor, whose authority, they said, they were bound to respect.

In conclusion, it was stated they could not attempt to negotiate even on their own accounts, while the king demanded money of the castle, but if that edict were repealed they would pay what they were able. Here the audience broke up in dissatisfaction. This was the 7th of January.

Having on a former occasion had reason to doubt the veracity* of the linguist's interpretation, I took the precaution, this time, to station a linguist of my own choosing in the hall, and this man assured me that the king's speech did not exactly tally with what he had just heard from the lips of the public interpreter, who had omitted certain complimentary parts, and in particular one which regarded me, personally or publicly. Upon making further enquiry I was fully satisfied of the truth. My indignation may be imagined; I instantly resolved either to proceed to Coomassy at all hazards, or to quit the coast and lay my complaints before government. My letter to the Governor and Council of the 8th of January, of which the following is an extract, will bear testimony to what I affirm.

“ Having learned, after leaving the hall yesterday, that the linguist had not made a just interpretation of the message sent down by the King of Ashantee, particularly as regarded that part of the message wherein he sends ‘ his best compliments to me,’ I was induced this morning to send the messenger a present, coupled with a request that he would pay me a visit, &c. What he declared was as follows:— The king desired his best compliments, and would be very glad to see me in the capital, and accordingly a person appointed by the king accompanied him for the purpose of conducting me to court immediately, and without regard to existing disputes, which he, on the part of the king, would remain here to settle. The king says, moreover, he is very much hurt to hear I have been so long detained at Cape Coast.

“ From the impression made upon my mind by this conversation as now stated to you, and particularly as my belief is that the demand on the Fort will be abandoned, it is my earnest desire to lose no further

* Whether the linguist on this occasion was instructed to deceive me, whether he acted from design or inadvertency, I cannot say;—but I may say, I *believe* his intention was to support Mr. Smith in his endeavours to oppose the mission.

time in proceeding to the discharge of my duties at Coomassy, and as the king's messenger with his retinue are to remain here, you can, if you think proper, (although it is by no means my wish) detain them as hostages," &c.

"Under all circumstances, and as I am firmly persuaded the king has no hostile intention, &c. I must entreat you, in the name of his majesty, to fix upon an early day for my departure to the Ashantee capital, being determined to proceed thither alone, if the other gentlemen are not disposed to accompany me."

My letters to the Colonial Office set forth the obstacles I had so long contended against, and the ultimate resolution I had taken, conformably to what I have stated. In council I protested, that unless the presents designed for the king were restored to my charge, and due preparations made for the mission, I would leave the coast by the first opportunity,* and should hold them responsible for what consequences might ensue in the sequel. No direct reply was given. Mr. Smith and Mr. Mollan still pertinaciously adhered to their former resolutions, and Mr. Swanzy neither countenanced nor opposed them, for he was at this time interested in affairs of pecuniary moment, in which the council were called upon to enforce the resolutions of the committee against the governor and vice-president.

Some private discussions took place the following morning in town, upon a question between Akassy, a caboceer of Assin belonging to the ambassador's suite, and some of the town chiefs, who were accused of being accessaries to the robbery of certain Assin traders and others, who had ventured to the coast upon the faith of the treaty.

The ambassador again demanded an audience in the Hall, in the course of which he reiterated the demand he was authorized to make

* I have been thus explicit only from the circumstance that the governing faction, in lack of a more equitable charge against me, had the effrontery to write in a clandestine manner to the committee of African merchants, setting forth a disinclination or a dread on my part to perform the duties for which I was sent out.

upon the castle and the town, adding it was the king's fixed determination not to allow the aggression of the natives to pass unpunished, and unless the most ample satisfaction were made, nothing less than war was to be expected, although the king wished to live in friendship with the whites.

At a meeting of the council, it was at last resolved to adopt conciliatory measures, and accordingly this resolution was notified to me by way of reply to my letter of the eighth, as before quoted. As a peace offering, I presume, on the part of Mr. Smith, it was notified also to me, that the governor and council, in consideration of the critical situation of public affairs, had deemed it essential to increase the present originally designed for the king, by the addition of *one hundred kegs of gunpowder, one hundred musquets, and one hundred ankers of rum*, over and above what I brought out from England, and that these articles were to be selected from the best in quality. Some cloths were moreover appropriated for distributing among the ministers and courtiers.

Here then, after seven or eight months loss of time in England, and upwards of a year's forcible detention at Cape Coast Castle, the prospect of reaching my journey's end dawned on the horizon. Yet there existed many preliminary points to adjust: the presents to pack; relays of hammock men to procure; meetings of council upon the affairs of Messrs. Smith and Mollan, upon private affairs, &c. All these matters required time, it must be admitted, but they needed not to have taken up so much as three weeks, viz. from the 11th or 12th of January, to the 2d of February. But it is well known that many hopeful *humane* expectations were raised upon driving the mission into the depth of the rains; the policy adopted was evident, but disappointment crowned the sequel, as every man lived to return, although death made some havoc in after days.

The comparatively few days remaining on my hands were devoted to the society of friends, who, as usual, on such occasions

consult nothing but hospitality and good fellowship. The convivial character of our tropical colonies is proverbially known; I need only observe that Cape Coast does not lag in the rear. Good cheer greeted me in various quarters, and a parting glass at the social board never could do harm in the salubrious climate of the Gold Coast; so, unfortunately my friends thought, in defiance of my own philosophy.

On the 26th of January, as I was coming from a friend's house at a late hour in the evening, a sudden paroxysm of fever arrested me; and for several subsequent days it raged with violence, and as it is frequently the case in this zone, attached itself to the liver. The best medical advice tendered by Mr. Banks, formerly a surgeon in the service, and then a trader in town, availed but little, although the fever occasionally remitted. February set in, and convalescence was yet remote.

The presents were ready at the beginning of the month, and soon after I received documents of possession; but how shall I describe my astonishment, when I found that these simple projectors had intruded upon me a volume of instructions, which they chose to consider proper for my government; adding, at the same time, by message, that unless I would accept of the same upon the prescribed terms, they would take upon themselves to withhold the presents, and appoint one of their own body to attend the court. Thus decorously were my actual instructions authorised by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury treated, and thus respectfully was it presumed to treat a commission bearing the signatures of His Majesty and the Colonial Minister.

My feelings may be well conceived. As the insincerity of my opponents* became more evident, and as sad experience had taught me that if I should now resign myself to their controul, they would not hesitate attempting to pursue measures to an extreme which might

* Mr. Swanzy had publicly declared, both in council and out, that the Board had no power to assume dictation to me, or to interfere in the remotest degree, with those functions which His Majesty's Government had confided to me.

arm them with the power of effecting my political ruin, I was resolved to anticipate the project without even consulting the honourable grounds of resistance my commission afforded. I chose, therefore, to enter the lists armed with precautionary language. I protested against the right claimed by the company's servants to intrude instructions on me. I delivered them over to the possession of a friend, authorizing him to send them to the castle after my departure, and I gave my reasons for so doing in letters from which I shall select the following extracts, the former of which I wrote instantly upon receipt of the instructions.

Cape Coast Castle, 2d February, 1820.

“As regards your instructions to me, it was my intention at first to return them to you without a comment, conceiving, as I do, that I am not bound in any shape to receive instructions from you. But when I reflect, that by taking this step it might lead to an open rupture between us, and prevent those objects for the public good proceeding in a fair train, &c. I sacrifice my own feelings to the service in which I am engaged, and shall only, *for the present*, enter my protest against such instructions *for reasons which will appear in due time.*”

Doonqua, 11th February, 1820.

“For reasons which will recur to you, and which appear more fully in my protest, I have thought proper to return you those instructions which you took upon yourselves to frame for my government, not conceiving myself justified as a government officer in recognizing any instructions from you as the servants of a mercantile board. At the same time, and as I before stated, I shall not object to receive any suggestions from you, &c.”

To the Governor and Council.

But resuming the clue of the narrative, my distemper, which changed to a fever of the intermittent order, continued obstinate, and

the state of my feelings by no means contributed to assist nature. In short, I was unable to rise effectually from my couch for a week after the presents had been consigned to my charge, namely, from the 1st to the 7th of February, and even then I could but stagger.

During this suspense it was consulted in private how it would be feasible to supersede me in my command, on the score of ill health. This scheme I counteracted by ordering the party to hold themselves in readiness for the march at the instant, and authorizing Mr. Hutton and Mr. Collins to proceed as far as the village of Doonqua, there to attend my coming, should my recovery speedily ensue. The presents, securely packed, and covered with skins to preserve them from the wet, were thus conveyed to the village before-named.

As I did not quit my apartment on the following morning, my opponents sought another mode of annoyance; but now it degenerated to what was really contemptible, for reports were circulated that my illness was feigned. My physician, who was in some shape in the interest of the company, had honour enough, however, to refute the calumny by letter.

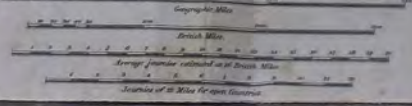
On the seventh, I made an attempt to follow my charge, but failed under it; for I could not walk ten paces without support. That night, however, I gained repose; on the eighth, I was better, and on the ninth I left the Cape.

JOURNEY TO COOMASSY.



A MAP OF WANGARA

In political Sections, Shant & Modern the courses of its Rivers, & the Routes from Abante to the Joliba, Gambia, and Senegal Rivers compiled from Manucripts and other information collected at Gambia, during a Mission to that Kingdom, by J. Dupuis Consul.

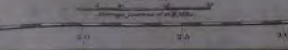


Water passages with the stream are indicated on a hand scale of 100 French Miles. The small circles connected to these lines represent the principal towns or stations where the Kingdoms have been mentioned in the following and detailed.



A MAP OF SUDAN

Continuation of the courses of the Rivers, and of the principal Regions of Africa, their bearings from Abante and the same according to the reported Journals of Diego Barboza by J. Dupuis Consul.



Water passages with the stream are indicated on a hand scale of 100 French Miles. The small circles connected to these lines represent the principal towns or stations where the Kingdoms have been mentioned in the following and detailed.

JOURNAL

OF A

RESIDENCE IN ASHANTEE,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

JOURNEY TO COOMASSY.

DEPARTURE FROM CAPE COAST CASTLE—MOUREE—DUTCH CASTLE OF NASSAU—BEETLES—ASHANTEE TRAVELLERS—RUINS OF FANTEE CROOMS—EMPEROU—DEFEAT OF THE FANTEES AT THAT PLACE—FORMIDABLE SERPENT—SECOND PARTY OF ASHANTEE TRADERS; TERROR OF THE FEMALES—MOSLEM FROM COOMASSY—RED AND BLACK ANTS—DESCRIPTION OF DOONQUA—THE FORESTS—REMAINS OF MANSUE—PROVISIONS PLUNDERED BY THE FANTEES—COURSES OF RIVERS—ABANDOU—CROOMS OR TOWNS OF FOOSO, YANCOMADY, AND AKOMFODY—ANNOYANCE FROM RATS—THE YOUNE, A KIND OF SLOTH—DANSANSOO—MEKAREN—PASSAGE OF THE PRAA—PRASSO—KIKIWHARY—ENMITY OF THE INHABITANTS TOWARDS THE FANTEES; SEDUCTIVE ARTS OF THE FEMALES—SITE OF MIASSA—DEFEAT OF THE ASSINS UNDER CHEBOO—REMAINS OF SAPORGAH, TIBIASSAH, BEQUAMA, AND ENSAMAH—ARRIVAL AT ANSAH.

On the 9th of February, at an early hour in the morning, I mounted my palanquin and bade adieu to the castle. As the customary salute was fired, a party of the town's-people assembled, and tracked my steps along the eastern beach as far as the outskirting houses. Here the crowd of spectators was augmented by another group of men, women, and children, who flocked from the different avenues. The spectacle was indeed calculated to impose an idea of splendour upon the imagination of a negro; and the novelty of a palanquin with four bearers was a refinement in the *luxury* of African travelling, that excited additional

attraction. The women, in particular, who surrounded me, and for a time impeded my progress, were profuse in courtesy.

At the distance of a short quarter of a mile, my friendly retinue bade a final farewell, and returned to their homes. About this time I was compelled to alight, on approaching some rugged cliffs which intersect the beach, jutting out into the sea. The crags which here and there overhung the water, under the semblance of little capes, formed of shelving pointed rock, created serious impediments.

The surface was now totally changed from a bed of sand to one of granite rock, which at intervals stood erect in small spiral points, as if chiseled by the hand of art into the fanciful forms it exhibited. The jutting cliffs appeared to increase in number as we advanced; their acclivities were also of some elevation, and sloped off in angles. In some instances the surface exhibited solid ramparts of stone shooting upwards into ridges little short of perpendicular elevation, and these barriers it became necessary to scale by the combined assistance of hands and feet.

The sun had by this time attained an elevation that rendered the effect of his beams oppressive; the absence of the sea breeze, which seldom sets in before ten o'clock, contributed to increase the languor I felt. The exhaustion occasioned by premature exertion wanted but little of producing a fit of fainting; and at last it totally prevented my descending from the vehicle, notwithstanding the embarrassment and detention it occasioned. In this helpless state, my attendants were compelled to lift me over the obstructions as they occurred. At last we emerged from our difficulties, and as we quitted the sea coast, in approaching the Dutch fort of Mouree, the path presented a fine surface of sand skirted by a few stunted bushes.

The road between Cape Coast Castle and Mouree, and from Mouree to Annamaboe, is at all times disagreeable, and perhaps the most precipitous on the line of coast, but the state of the tide during this journey rendered it particularly so.

On entering the town the Dutch colours were hoisted in compliment to my arrival, by the corporal who had charge of the fort; for it is at present ungarrisoned, although not considered as abandoned by his Majesty of the Netherlands.

When I alighted, I felt a degree of exhaustion and indisposition, occasioned by a slight attack of fever, that rendered it extremely dubious if I could proceed further that day. The crowd which had assembled obstructed the current of air, small as it was, and increased the languid symptoms until, for a few seconds, the heat was insupportable; but a draught of the cold infusion of bark, added to the refreshing application of vinegar, quickly restored me. The Caboceer of the town and the Dutch corporal shortly after waited upon me to exchange compliments.

Some trivial disputes ensued among the Fantees on the distribution of equal loads, and before the misunderstanding could be enquired into, it appeared that the good sense of those, to whom the least cumbersome and weighty burthens were assigned, had suggested the propriety of decamping during the confusion. To appease these discontents it was requisite to supply the deficiency, by taking on a few more carriers; and as nothing more remained to do, but prosecute the journey, I embraced this opportunity to disencumber myself from the burthen of military accoutrements. The travelling dress which I now substituted for my former apparel, consisted of a jacket and trousers of linen; it was commodious and light, and contributed, in no small degree, to alleviate the oppression from intense heat. The hour of ten flattered us with expectation of a sea-breeze, and a zephyr, announcing its approach, soon afterwards agitated the torpid atmosphere.

The Dutch castle at Mouree is called Nassau; and, when the slave trade was in its vigour, was deemed a station of great importance. The edifice, although small, is compact, and regularly flanked with bastions at each angle; this, added to its elevated situation, would entitle the place to some respect as a fortification, provided it still maintained a gar-

ri-son. The landing-place is tolerably commodious for canoes, and differs little from that of Cape Coast. The town of Mouree, like all the towns in the vicinity of European forts, is built immediately under the walls, and is a compact mass of stone and clay-constructed houses, without any other order than a division of the whole into irregular openings or avenues, forming narrow lanes, of intricate, and in some places, from the obstructions of dirt and rubbish, of difficult access. The whole population is supposed not to exceed eight thousand souls. Its distance from Cape Coast is nearly four miles.

Our route from Mouree was rather to the eastward of north. The path in the vicinity of the town was open for the distance of more than half a mile, except at intervals, where a few projecting boughs of the loftier kinds of shrubs intersected each other; but as we proceeded the road gradually contracted, and the bushes which were stunted before, now exhibited a more mature and luxurious growth; added to which, a number of lofty trees grew spontaneously over the surface of the country.

The soil on the line of march was a reddish clay, covered with a scanty surface of white sand, interspersed with broken pieces of quartz: the sand, however, appeared attached exclusively to the path, and was probably the effect of constant friction upon the quartz pebble, which, from its brittle quality, pulverized to a glittering dust.

The discordant voices of the larger species of birds now vibrated through the woods; but the luxuriance of the foliage obstructed the view. The notes of parrots, crown birds, and toucans, were, however, easily recognized amidst a vociferous medley of warblers, who, as we advanced, retreated, sportively singing and hopping from spray to spray.

Various large beetles, but more particularly one of the cricket kind, swelled out a lengthened note of an indescribable sound, exceedingly shrill and inharmonious. These little inhabitants of the forest climb the loftiest boughs, where they sustain life by perforating the bark, and

sucking out the glutinous sap of the ganian and other mucilaginous trees; they are extremely numerous, and as their notes commence with the rising sun, and last throughout the day, they keep up an uninterrupted uniform dizzy chirping.

At three miles and a half from Mouree, we passed the site where a small Fantee croom was said to have existed, but of which not a vestige remained. The plantations of cassada, banana, guava, &c. nevertheless still flourished in unnurtured growth, blended with the wild productions of the forest. The path suddenly contracted as we ascended an acclivity, and the foot-way, which appeared to have been formed by the passage of a current of water, was scarcely wider than the breadth of a foot. The impediment occasioned by this gully was increased by the fall of several large trees, which intersected the path at right angles, forming, as it were, a breast work which it was necessary to scale or to scramble under.

The distant tinkling of an iron castanet now attracted our notice, as it announced the approach of strangers; another instant presented to our view a party of five Ashantees, who informed us that they were journeying to Elmina for gunpowder. They had left Coomassy, they said, twenty-one days before. One of these travellers was decorated with a very large necklace of human teeth, interwoven with charms. The teeth had the appearance of recent extraction, an opinion that was afterwards strengthened by the sight of a little ivory blowing horn, to which he was then in the operation of fastening a human jawbone. To my inquiries how he became possessed of these trophies I could not obtain a satisfactory answer; a smile of brutal insensibility, however, convinced me the question was of a gratifying nature, inasmuch as it was interpreted into a compliment to his military prowess. This feeling was displayed by various contortions of mockery and exultation, as he directed a sort of conversation to the relic, in a chaunting tone.

A little beyond this, we entered another plantation in a kind of valley, containing the site where also a Fantee croom had stood in

former times. We passed two other spots of this description, before we entered an opening covered with palms, plantains, and papas. Here I sought the shelter of a tree, under which I alighted to obtain a little rest, and allow my attendants leisure for refreshment. On descending from my hammock (for the palanquin I had already been compelled to lay aside) the sensation of languor was so oppressive, that I could not preserve my footing without grasping the boughs for support.

The surface beyond this was every where covered with the same dwarf shrubs and forest trees, blended together. The stems of some were concealed by a species of parasitical plants, covering in some places the loftiest boughs. This produced a lively and novel contrast to the barren stems of others by which they were surrounded. Detached patches of bamboo and dwarf palm became also more frequent, and added to the variety of the landscape.

The next opening exhibited some relics that denoted a field of battle; it is now remarkable for a few straggling hovels built among the ruins of an extensive village, and inhabited by a remnant of Fantees, who had the good fortune to escape during the invasion of their country by the Ashantees.

This croom is called Yanbrassa: the number of its inhabitants did not appear to exceed two hundred; notwithstanding the numerous plantations by which it was surrounded afforded invitation to settlers. No corn was seen, but yams, bananas, plantains and papas flourished without culture. At a little distance to the North and East, on the slope of a hill, stands another village, called by the natives Tom Coffee, after the name of a particular kind of cloth, of which the Fantees are very fond. Here also the plantations were in a state of high natural perfection.

At the distance of half a mile, we passed the ruins of a small croom, called Berim: another spot of desolation bore the name of Eydro. We then entered a plantation that covered a greater extent of ground than any we had before passed. The diameter of this space probably exceeded a furlong, and in the midst of a jungle stood a few hovels

squeezed within a mass of crumbling walls. The name of this croom was Emperou. Its inhabitants during the first invasion of Fantee by the King of Ashantee, had observed an unfortunate neutrality, until the great battle which preceded the destruction of Abrah, and the extermination of the Braffo chieftains. To this unhappy policy they had been inclined from jealousy of the Braffo influence. Convinced of their error when it was too late, and smarting under the recent blow their country had sustained by the loss of its capital, they rashly formed the resolution of defending themselves against a sovereign already flushed with conquest. A Caboceer named Quassy Beni, who had escaped from the general slaughter at Abrah, presented himself before Emperou with the shattered remnant of his division, and invited the inhabitants to form a junction with his forces for the defence of their town. The proposal was embraced by the Emperous who had already collected another body of auxiliaries. This little army was, besides, augmented by the junction of some stragglers who were necessarily falling back as the enemy advanced. The king, however, was acquainted with what was transacting; his object, after the destruction of the Fantee government, was, perhaps, confined to the temporary occupation of Fantee, and the imposition of contributions; but the obstinacy of the people, it is said, forced that monarch to secure his conquests by the exterminating use of fire and sword, until he drove his enemies into the sea. Be this as it may, it was admitted by Fantees as well as Ashantees, that before another blow was struck, after the affair at Abrah, the king sent messengers to several of the Fantee towns, calling the people to submission, upon the promise of protection in life and property: thus pacifically inclined, he sent two of his sword-bearers to Emperou, to proclaim his sentiments to the chiefs; but, whether from distrust, or a too implicit reliance upon their own strength, these proposals were not only treated with contempt, but the royal messengers were used with indignity, and then put to death. When this impolitic step became known to the king, it naturally rekindled his wrath, and he then vowed the overthrow of Cheboo's government.

The order was now given to exterminate the population of every town, and raze the houses to their foundations; and in conformity with this resolution a body of troops was detached against Emperou, with orders not to spare an inhabitant of either sex. In the meantime the Fantee troops, assisted by the inhabitants and their auxiliaries, assembled to the number of many thousands, and by vigilance succeeded in cutting off some reconnoitring parties of the enemy. Too much elated by this success, they at length determined upon the plan of endeavouring to intercept the communication between the detachment and the king's head quarters. They separated their men into two bodies, one of which being left to guard the town, the other made a circuitous march to the westward, and fell unexpectedly upon the flank and rear of their adversaries. No happy consequences attended the action; it would appear, from accounts of the survivors, that neither party was prepared for the rencontre. The Ashantees, however, lost no time in sounding the alarm, rallying their forces, and recalling the advanced guard to their assistance, while the Fantees, even before the onset, were appalled. In this state of eventful inactivity, it is said, the main body of the Fantees remained passive spectators during a distant skirmish between their own vanguard and a detachment of the enemy. At last the Ashantees advanced with a shout, which struck a decided panic in their favour; the Fantees soon fled outright, and, with some loss, rejoined their comrades at Emperou. Notwithstanding this check, the inhabitants, as the Ashantees approached, suffered themselves to be led out to battle. The united force of the Fantees is stated to have greatly outnumbered their enemies, and a battle of the most sanguinary complexion ensued, at the distance of a mile from the town. The first charge of the Ashantees was severely checked, and they were driven back upon the main body with slaughter. The enemy, however, was too well disciplined to allow the Fantees to improve upon their advantage, and a murderous firing succeeded the onset, in which the Ashantees, from superior celerity, had the advantage. Still, however, the Fantees

maintained their ground, with a degree of intrepidity not undeserving of record, as it is perhaps a solitary instance during this war of their valour and resolution. On a sudden, volleys of musquetry announced an attack on their flank and rear, supported by the king in person. This unexpected charge decided the fortune of the day, for the Fantees now retreated with precipitation, while their enemies rushed on, and strewed the forest with indiscriminate carnage. Before the retreating army could regain the town, it was doomed to cut a passage through an opposing body of the enemy, who were at that critical period in possession of many of the houses; despair assisted their efforts, and their enemies were either cut to pieces or trampled under foot. The town itself, which was already in flames, afforded no protection against the murderous assaults of their pursuers. In this hopeless state, several of the Caboceers, after destroying their property, their wives, and children, put an end to their own existence; whilst the people, endeavouring to fly from the scene of carnage, were intercepted and butchered, or cast headlong amidst the burning houses. To sum up the horrors of this barbarous scene, every house was entered with fire and sword, and the inhabitants of both sexes destroyed. It is said that, with the exception only of about one hundred people, who fled before the town was assaulted, not a soul escaped from the calamity. These particulars were narrated by my two guides who were in that conflict.

The walls stood in many places erect, exhibiting the action of fire which, by vitrifying the clayey composition, had preserved the ruins from dissolution. The surface of the earth was whitened, in particular spots, with ashes, and bleached human bones and skulls, forming a distressing portrait of African warfare. In crossing the opening, some of the Fantees, by way of diversion, pointed to the relics, saying jocosely, they were Ashantee trophies: the Ashantees retorted the jest upon their fellow travellers with equal good-humour, and all parties were indifferent at a retrospection so paralyzing to humanity,

A small brook crossed the path at a little distance from Emperou,

tracking a course south-east to the Amissa River, which flows into the sea at the back of Tantum. During the operation of filling some water bottles, a discovery was accidentally made of a large snake coiled upon a pile of stones. The reptile appeared to be in a state of torpor, or sleep; and judging from the mass of folds, could scarcely be less than fourteen feet in length, by nine inches diameter, in the thickest part of the body. The scales on its back were large, and beautifully variegated with red and bright yellow. I was anxious to obtain the skin, but it was not deemed prudent by my guides to make the attack, as they affirmed that its bite was mortally venomous. In this particular it may therefore be supposed to differ from the boa-constrictor.

We met, shortly afterwards, with a large party of Assins and Ashantees, who stationed themselves on each side of the road, and saluted me with many courteous bows. They were armed in the fashion of their country with musquets and knives, and were conveying some bulky loads of ivory, and a valuable kind of grease used by the natives for anointing their bodies. A number of women and girls, whose employment consisted in attending upon their husbands, or masters, closed the order of the march, which from the nature of the path was necessarily in Indian file. The elderly females were under some consternation as I approached, yet they were not behind the men in good manners; but the young women, who perhaps had never seen a white man before, were wholly unable to controul their fears. The panic was excited by a very interesting girl who, at first sight, plunged screaming amidst the bushes, after resigning her hold of a bundle which she was carrying on her head. This movement was instantaneously adopted by the rest of her companions, to the great diversion of the men, who added to the general amusement by raising a shout, which increased the apprehensions of the *fair* fugitives.

We had not proceeded twenty paces from the spot, before we again fell in company with a party consisting of three men, two of whom were slaves, carrying a few elephant's teeth to the coast. The dress of the

proprietor, which consisted of a long shirt, a pair of ragged trousers, and a loose cap resembling a turban, convinced me that he was a Moslem. He saluted me with the customary inclination of the body, which I acknowledged with the Salam. For some moments he appeared in doubt, but recovering from his surprise he pursued my steps, and taking me by the hand, repeated with great emphasis, "Alikà Salam yà khài," "Peace be upon you brother." I endeavoured to converse with the man; but we were wholly unintelligible to each other, except in the few scripture phrases which comprised his stock of Arabic knowledge. By means of an interpreter, I found he was from Coomassy, where he had left the King in anxious expectation of my arrival. He had just quitted Doonqua, he said, where all the white men were well.

Pursuing the journey, we came to an opening where a few huts stood detached from the ruins of another large croom, whose fragments were half concealed in high Guinea grass, and jungle, interspersed with plantain, guava and papa trees. I was by this time so extremely exhausted with fatigue and indisposition, that it was doubtful if I could even reach my destination that night. Somewhat refreshed, however, by a short repose I indulged in at this place, and by another application to my restorative draught, I again resumed the march, and before four o'clock was gratified with the prospect of Doonqua. The day had been excessively warm, and the thermometer in town stood at 90 degrees in the shade.

The horizontal distance from Mouree to Doonqua, I estimate at fourteen miles and a half, although from the sinuosities of the path there can be no doubt that the whole journey exceeds twenty. The average course from Cape Coast is N. NE. The surface of this space is covered with a mixture of tall tress, stunted shrubs and bushes. The species which I recognised, amidst a vast amphitheatre of unknown productions, were bombax or silk cotton, tamarind, low palm, ganyan, wild orange, wild cedar, monkey apple, doom trees, a sort of wild fig, erasma, mahogany, and a lofty tree that yielded a light apple like the

coloquintida. Among the dwarf trees were several kinds of dying woods, of which I saw samples varying in tint from a deep to a bright yellow and orange, and others of a crimson red. Besides these, were numerous trees of lignum vitæ, iron wood, guava bush and laurel. I discovered also, several species of fine cane, of which the rattan and small Bamboo were the most conspicuous, growing in clumps or patches. The anana, or pine apple plant, flourished along the sides of the path, and even under the more sheltered parts of the forest, exhibiting, equal luxuriance in spots where it was not possible for the rays of the sun to penetrate. Several sorts of aloes were seen embedded with creeping shrubs: that called *aloe succotrina* was distinguished by its thorny leaves and spiral growth; but others of this class towered into trees of a beautiful appearance, the *aloe arborescens Africana*. Chains of fibrous stems shooting forward in longitudinal projections, completed the wild beauties of the surrounding scenery. Many of the fibrous species varied in dimensions, from the size of ordinary packthread, to the thickness of a large cable rope, which in some instances they represented by a natural twist. These vegetable chains, wholly destitute of leaves, appeared to bind the entire forest in solid concatenation. In some spots they rose to an elevation of fifty feet perpendicular height, sustaining their weight by an endless variety of folds and embraces, amidst the thickest boughs, and descending again in an opposite direction only to seek another commodious supporter.

The soil between Mouree and Doonqua, is a rich brown mould, occasionally encrusted by white sand and quartz pebble. The mould, however, did not appear to be of sufficient depth to afford much nourishment to the larger growth of the vegetable kingdom. On examining several fallen trees, I particularly noticed that the roots grew almost exclusively in horizontal shoots. This may be attributed as much to the sterility of the strata below the mould, as to nature itself, because this remarkable character was not confined to a particular class of vegetation. In the ravines and gullies were large pieces of quartz scattered over deep

sandy beds. One remarkable patch of solid granite rose in pyramidal masses to the altitude of twenty or more feet; these blocks of stone were at a short distance from the ruins of Emperou. No smooth pebbles were seen.

The habitations of the red ants form a striking feature, as they convey the idea of little towns established in the wilderness by another order of the creation. These erections are spiral, and of the elevation of ten or more feet. Another class of these insects, the small black ant, build nests on the boughs of trees, which in appearance resemble a globular or cylindrical mass of black clay, unlike that of the red ant, which is of a gravelly yellow tint. The weight of these masses of earth, and the glutinous matter which cements the parts, causes the boughs to droop and bend, in some cases, till they sweep the ground; and in others these nests are cemented to the ramifications of several trees, which encrust the whole in a solid mass of dripping mucilaginous matter. The most voracious and formidable insect of this genus is the large black ant, which burrows under the roots of trees, and erects a sort of nest upon the surface, resembling in form the mushroom.

The village of Doonqua is indebted for the importance it now enjoys, to the invasion of Fantee, and the desolation of its towns and cities, particularly that of Abrah. Formerly the spot on which it stands exhibited only a few humble sheds, the residence of foresters, and people whose occupations, as wood-cutters, and canoe builders, induced them to settle there. The ground on which it stands has been evidently gained from the forest. The inhabitants are said to exceed two thousand, and out of that number, in cases of emergency, they can equip 300 men for war.

The plantations that surround the croom are extensive, and yield more than sufficient for internal consumption. The houses of the inhabitants are built in the style of those of the Ashantees. A piece of ground is first cleared, and a frame-work, according to the plan and dimensions

of the intended edifice, is erected, with some regard to regularity. This frame consists of long poles, sunk below the surface at each angle. To these poles they attach hurdles by means of a strong lashing of fibrous twigs collected from the forest, the interstices being afterwards closely filled up with clay, which is smoothed over with rubbing stones; this gives it solidity and uniformity. Bamboo and palm boughs are employed for the thatch, which from its regular structure has a much more pleasing effect than the rude boughs and grass used by the natives on the coast.

The house of the Caboecer consisted of an assemblage of apartments quadrangularly enclosed in the form of three squares; linked together by avenues, barely sufficient in width to admit free ingress. Upon enquiring the reason of this singular style I was satisfied with the reply, that it was advantageous for defence or escape, in case of an attack. I could not avoid remarking that the plan upon which the more wealthy part of the community built their houses, resembled, although rudely, that of the Moors of Barbary; the only striking difference was between the thatched roofs of the former, and the terraced covering of the latter.

A small stream of running water, in the vicinity of the croom, supplies the inhabitants with that element in a state of purity, and thereby exempts them from that excruciating malady the Guinea-worm, a disorder with which the natives of the sea coast, who use the stagnant water of pools, are cruelly afflicted.

The Caboecer who governs Doonqua under the king is called Paintry, and the village is also known as Paintry's croom. The course of policy pursued by this chieftain during the invasion, entitled him to the clemency of the conquerors. After the destruction of the Fantee armies, he was permitted to retire from Abrah with all his property, and this was the spot he selected for his residence, to which he invited other settlers to establish themselves under his protection. The king afterwards conferred upon him the dignity of Caboecer; although the only

benefit he reaps from that title is an honourable seclusion from the court, whose policy interdicts all confidence in the Fantees.

Towards the close of the day, the Ashantees, headed by their two captains, Ado and Quako, assembled to wish me joy on my arrival, and to learn my intentions regarding the morrow. As the fatigue I had undergone suggested the propriety of rest, I retired at an early hour, but passed a sleepless night, for I was attacked with a smart paroxysm of fever, attended with acute pains in the side.

The tenth of February was spent in quarters. Mr. Collins, during the day, had an attack of ague, and was confined to his bed; the other officers, however, enjoyed good health. The thermometer at twelve o'clock stood again at ninety degrees in my apartment; but as the evening approached it fell, and during a tornado, which ushered in a heavy fall of rain, the quicksilver was for a few seconds considerably agitated: it afterwards sunk gradually during the storm to eighty-one degrees. Towards evening it fell as low as seventy-six degrees, and the transition from heat to cold was acutely felt. My health still continued below mediocrity until the evening of this day, when I was overpowered for the first time with a soothing sleep; from this period my bodily ailments subsided with a rapidity that has ever since made the retrospection wonderful. At the dawn of day I arose much refreshed, and already I enjoyed the certain criterion of returning health, a wholesome craving for food. From this period, the eleventh day of the month, symptoms of convalescence advanced rapidly. Mr. Collins was also improving; and as circumstances were thus propitious, I gave orders for the march on the following day. Unfortunately at this crisis the chief linguist was severely afflicted with Guinea-worms; and without giving notice of his intention, he returned to the Cape.

At eight o'clock in the morning of the 12th, we left Doonqua. After penetrating through a thicket of five or six hundred paces, we suddenly found ourselves in a forest as magnificent as it was dense and

intricate. Numerous plants and creepers of all dimensions chained tree to tree, and branch to branch, clustering the whole in entanglement, so that it sometimes became necessary to cut an opening as we proceeded. In this operation we were considerably retarded, and our clothing suffered much from the rude assaults we sustained from the trunks of trees, and impending boughs. Nor was this the only inconvenience; for notwithstanding we were continually on the alert in watching these formidable obstructions, we could not avoid receiving some slight contusions, and scratches. The opacity of this forest communicated to the atmosphere and the surrounding scenery a semblance of twilight; no ray of sunshine penetrated the cheerless gloom, and we were in idea entombed in foliage of a character novel and fanciful. The death-like stillness that prevailed was soon interrupted by the occasional shouting of the negroes, to put to flight, as they termed it, the evil spirits of the forest. Now and then a flight of parrots and other gregarious birds interrupted the intervals of silence; but the richness of this vegetable canopy prevented the possibility of gaining even the most imperfect view of these feathered screechers, or indeed of anything but those objects by which we were immediately surrounded. Even on the line of path, so frequent were the turnings, and so greatly did the angles incline to the eastward and westward of north, that I have no hesitation in affirming that the precision with which Mr. Bowdich has described his route by compass, from what he has termed a calculation of its numerous angles, is, at best, but a conjectural estimate.

In some spots the land was elevated in slopes and ridges, yet it was not upon the whole deserving the name of hilly. On descending one of these slopes, a partial opening in the forest afforded a limited prospect, and the blaze of light that burst through this gap animated the scene with some tints of lively green. Clumps of plantain trees were seen sprouting out of a rich bed of grass and cane, and the whole plat was studded with low palm and patches of jungle. We were now in the enjoyment of what was comparatively a distant prospect; it was the summit of a little hill,

at a short musket-shot distance from the path, covered with vegetation. A few wretched hovels stood in the midst of silence and desolation. In former days, however, this gap contained a very populous town.

Again we plunged into the recesses of a forest whose obstructions were as formidable as the preceding, and we shortly after came to a piece of swampy land, on the margin of which we alighted for refreshment. Having expeditiously satisfied the cravings of hunger, we resumed the journey over two small water courses flowing to the south-east, but they were nameless. After crossing another little stream, we were consoled with intelligence that our resting-place for the night was close at hand. An opening that admitted the fading rays of daylight, now presented a capacious surface, fledged with exuberant patches of grass and jungle, in the midst of which stood some tattered sheds. This was Mansue, where formerly stood a large opulent town called by the same name, and considered the frontier of the kingdom of Fantee. Mansue originally owed all its importance to the traffic in slaves. When Fantee and Assin were two distinct sovereignties, it was customary to permit the latter to bring slaves and merchandize to this mart, where they were regularly met by the Coast traders. In those days I was assured the whole space was occasionally surcharged by assembled crowds, whose interests were connected with the traffic in slaves.

The Ashantees had arrived before us, and already were their fires blazing in all directions; it therefore became necessary to use precautions against any accident that might endanger a communication with the gunpowder, which the careless insensibility of these people would have consigned to one of the sheds. A small chasm resembling a cave, which stood at the distance of about a hundred paces to the westward, was pointed out as a secure receptacle, and thither it was conveyed.

The path over which we this day travelled differed materially from the preceding journey. The forest between Doonqua and Mouree, however imposing, is not to be classed with the one that now falls under description; for, indeed, every advancing pace seems to confirm

the knowledge that the traveller is no longer on the confines, but in the heart of a great continental wilderness, where nature governs on a scale of proportionate magnitude. The bamboo and dwarf palm occupied intervals where they covered the space of many acres, presenting thorny impenetrable barriers; and where they bordered the path were amongst our most formidable enemies. A tree of the mimosa species also, of large dimensions, was occasionally discovered by an aromatic fragrance emitted from its pods. These pods, which exhibited a firm woody texture, were eagerly sought after by the Fantees, for the purpose of extracting their odour. The Ashantees named the tree cotamma. Wild fig trees were numerous, and the fruit lay thickly spread upon the ground. The leaf of this tree bore, however, no resemblance to the true fig leaf; but rather resembled the maple, in its formation and glossy surface. The fruit itself, notwithstanding it could not visibly be distinguished from the fig, resembled it neither in smell nor taste, for it was exceedingly offensive, whilst its external construction promised all the delicacy of that luscious fruit in a state of culture. The *Mimosa Scandriensis*, or Patagonian tamarind, every where abounded. This is a majestic tree, yet it by no means deserves to be ranked with the first class of African growth. The pod, as its name indicates, is a tamarind externally and internally, but its dimensions are from one to two feet in length, and in breadth about four inches, yielding a number of stones proportionate to the size of the outer rind.* Besides these, the forest was strewed with several kinds of fruit resembling the pomegranate, and a very large growth of guava; but the odour they diffused was most repugnant to the smell, notwithstanding their inviting looks. Bombax and wild tamarind were the most conspicuous objects, as well from numbers, as their remarkable forms and bulk. In certain spots some monstrous trees had fallen to the earth from decay, exhibiting in that

* Some of the seed I brought to England and consigned to Mr. Lee, of Kensington, in whose Nursery it was sown.

state, every stage between maturity and decomposition. Here and there were scattered solid mahogany logs, as if torn from their roots by tempests. Others under rapid stages of decay, showed a gangrenous disease at the root. Many also, which had the semblance of having fallen long since, yielded to external pressure, and occasionally the foot would sink through moistened dust to the depth of several inches. A few were cankered through the centre, leaving an open passage between the separated stem over huge heaps of rotten wood-dust. Some of the fibrous kinds were covered with knots and sharp-pointed thorns of a fearful growth, the punctures of which were considered by the Ashantees as painful and poisonous; they were on this account avoided with caution.

Some hollows and slopes, where the rain had collected, exhibited sheets of clay-coloured water through which we waded at uncertain depths; but generally between the knee and ankle. The sides and bottoms of these cavities were of a spongy slime, which absorbed the feet with the slightest pressure, and rendered the passage exceedingly laborious.

We were seldom disturbed by the howling or appearance of wild beasts, yet the spots which were supposed to have been visited by hyenas, were, on approaching them, easily recognised by the emission of a fetid effluvia which, it would seem, the earth had imbibed from the exhalations of the hide of that animal. Indeed these rancid smells were frequent on the route, although we never could discover their authors.

As the night closed in, we endeavoured, by means of the luggage, to form a fence round our tattered habitation; and having erected a sort of breast work, we retired to rest as composedly as our limited comforts would permit: for at Mansue we could procure nothing, save two or three unripe plantains. These privations had been anticipated at Doonqua by a stock of provision, more than reasonably enough to last two or three days; but our good friends the Fantees, imagining they could carry the burthen in a more commodious manner than on their heads, had thought it advisable to distribute the weight internally. Besides

committing so great a depredation on our suppers, they had made a serious attack upon the rum kegs and wine bottles. The excessive fatigue of the march, had indeed overpowered the acute sensation of hunger; but I awoke at an early hour in the morning, indifferently refreshed, and exceedingly stiff from the bruises and excoriations of the preceding day. The route to Mansue is about N. half E. distance seventeen miles horizontal, twenty-two by the path, which is one of the most tortuous on the journey.

At seven o'clock in the morning of the thirteenth we left Mansue, and with it the prospect of the heavens, as we entered a forest exactly similar to the former. The limits of the foot-way could scarcely be said to exceed the width of twelve inches, over which the shrubbery projected on all sides. Another fall of rain during the night, had soddened the earth, and all the vegetable world was dripping with a moisture which showered upon our bodies in plentiful discharges, while the foliage nearer to the surface, with equal liberality, shed its moisture on our clothes, to a degree that very speedily drenched us through to the skin. The etiquette of Africa, which imposed on me the head of the file, was little to be envied in this place, as it naturally exposed me to more than a single share of soaking.

A little running stream, such as might be termed a brook, flowed with a sluggish motion rather to the eastward of south. The Ashantees called it Sanary. The gap it occasioned was equal to twelve or fourteen feet, yet the junction of the boughs above the stream, entirely excluded the sun's rays. The water was limpid, although sensibly impregnated with decomposed vegetable matter, and when disturbed by pressure, the soil raised a turbid cloud from its bed, like the grounds of coffee

About eleven A. M. we arrived at the Okee; a little river that holds its course here to the S. SE. over a bed of granite rock and white sand, with a gentle rippling current. This stream was the most important of any we had yet seen, although its surface at the ford did not

exceed four fathoms. The depth was indeed too inconsiderable to deserve notice, except in certain spots, where the water had collected in pools, formed by the embankment and some stony obstructions. Here alone, the sun had a partial action upon the shrubbery. The Okee empties itself into the sea near Tantum, and is there known as the Amissa river. On leaving its embankments, we again left behind us the cheerful light of day.

A party of Ashantees who were journeying south, suddenly approached, and saluted by a respectful inclination of the body. They were from Coomassy, they said, and had been deputed by Agampong to sell their loads of ivory at El Mina, whither they were going. The information obtained from these people corroborated former accounts of the anxiety of the king to see me in his capital.

We arrived next at an extensive cluster of ground palms, where a little stream called Ibani flowed to the west of south, and was said to unite with a larger branch, in its track to the Okee. The river named Agoya or Gaya, next arrested the attention, its course was south. The width of this stream in the broadest part might have equalled eighteen feet, its bed, however, was compact, and the embankment steep; but at the ford the water scarcely covered the angle. This is a stream tributary to the Okee. About half a mile beyond the Agoya we fell in with a small clear watercourse that terminated in an extensive swamp, spreading around as far as our limited prospect afforded observation; in the midst stood many of the largest forest trees.

On leaving the swamp, we caught the distant tinkling of the castanet, and at the turning of an angle fell in with six Ashantees who had left Abandou, as they asserted, within the compass of an easy run. We had not long separated from these people, before we met two others in company with many women and slaves, among whom was a girl about fourteen years old, of the most jetty blackness, and in features more than ordinarily interesting. Whether these travellers belonged to

the preceding party or not I had no opportunity of inquiring, for they fled abruptly into the recesses of the forest.

Exactly at night-fall a little opening which discovered a mass of jungle and cane, denoted our arrival at Abandou; the croom at which it was proposed to rest that night. A few bamboo huts thatched with palm, and lined with cane matting, marked the spot where formerly a more extensive town existed. In the vicinity of the houses was a small plantation which barely sufficed for the refreshment of travellers; for we were again constrained to resort to our fragments.

The occupiers of two or three of these huts, were by the orders of the Ashantees turned out of their habitations, for our accommodation; much against their will indeed, for the weather indicated rain. The fissures were therefore carefully closed, by which the apartments were rendered tolerably comfortable.

The horizontal distance from Mansue to this place is eighteen and a half miles, and by the path about twenty-three. The average of the courses gave N. half E.

During the reign of King Cheboo, who governed in Assin prior to the Ashantee invasion, Abandou was a populous village; but it now gives shelter to a few foresters only.

The features of the country between Mansue and Abandou are almost the same as on the preceding march. Many of the climbing plants, and some of a migratory character, were observed to strike across the rivulets, from bank to bank, by twisting their stems for support amidst the lower limbs of lofty trees, and adhering in their progress to whatever object stood in the way, until the opposite shore again afforded a permanent resting place. The large parasitical plants were more frequently seen as we advanced to the north. The mimosa classes were numerous, as also clusters of the ground palm, and wild aloe; ebony, various species of mahogany, iron-wood, wild tamarind, &c. were among the most conspicuous, and may be added to those already described as inhabitants of this forest.

The banks of several streams exhibited strata of red and dark grey coloured clays, surmounted with light and sandy mould. Decaying wood and vegetable matter presented solid masses of corruption in all its various stages. The thermometer in the woods at eight o'clock A. M. stood at eighty degrees, and at noon at eighty-two.

Notwithstanding the combination of evils such as have been described, and which are unavoidable in travelling through the forests of this kingdom, the fatigue they occasion is perhaps more than counter-balanced by the friendly shade they afford the European traveller. The contrast in temperature, when we emerged to one of those insulated spots where the sun has a partial action, was equal to an increase of eight or nine degrees on Fahrenheit's scale.

A light rustling breeze from the east, shortly after our arrival at Abandou, indicated an approaching tornado. The thunder was heard in the distance, but no rain fell near our quarters. As the heavens were now partially open to observation, we were for some time amused with the flight of parrots, crown birds, toucans, cranes, vultures, hawks, and a variety of smaller birds, retreating before the expected blast, and seeking security from the torrents of rain which accompany this species of storm. Some of the latter were clothed in plumage beyond conception beautiful; about the same time, a troop of monkeys of the marmozet and large black species, were sportingly skipping from tree to tree, with astonishing dexterity,

The fatigue we had endured, and the limited rest we enjoyed in our quarters at Mansue, induced an early retirement to repose. For my own part, I revelled until morning, in what then seemed to me the most luxurious repose I had ever enjoyed.

On the 14th, at eight o'clock in the morning, we left Abandou: the path for the first two miles was particularly intricate, and the ground more than usually covered by entangled thickets of bamboo, palm, briars, and other thorny ligaments.

At three miles distance from Abandou, we fell in with a pretty little

rivulet called Katoa, its course was to the south-east, over a bed of rock and sand. This also is tributary to the Amissa. At half a mile beyond this, we crossed another stream of less magnitude, running to the southward of west, into the Katoa: it was called by the Ashantees Abonou. In half an hour more, we fell in with the Okee, its computed distance from Abandou being short of five miles and a half. The course of the river this time, was westward, inclining a little to the south, which was the reverse of its course on the south side of Abandou. The ford at this place was intersected by a chain of rocks forming a sort of bridge. We shortly after crossed the Adanso running south-west into the Okee, at no great distance from the ford. Here we perceived a number of Assin women and children, who were washing in the stream.

Lions and panthers were said to be found here occasionally only, for they usually occupy the thickets in the vicinity of villages, where they enjoy more opportunities of satisfying the cravings of hunger on the cattle of the inhabitants than in the solitary regions of the wilderness: an observation which appeared to me of a reasonable texture, as it coincided with the opinion I had previously formed on the nature of those voracious quadrupeds. The lion, the tyger, the panther, the leopard, say the Ashantees as well as the Arabs, are delicate in the selection of their victims. They must destroy the carcase themselves, or they loathe the food; and the blood alone suffices their wants, unless indeed the rage of hunger be very great, in which case they will devour a small portion of the flesh, leaving the remains of their prey to the hyenas and other carnivorous animals. The reason they alledge why hyenas, jackalls, &c. make more extensive excursions, is that these animals will take up with any kind of food, whether in a state of putrefaction or not. The superior beasts of prey seldom remove to any great distance from the place which gave them birth, provided there be opportunities of sustaining life, even at any risk from the wiles of mankind. Throughout the whole extent of land from Doonqua to the

banks of the Praa river there are neither towns nor hamlets, consequently there is no cattle for the sustenance of these animals, except the chance range of a few deer.

We next arrived at a small stream that flowed to the southwest, but its insignificance was such that it had no name. A mile beyond this stream is the Atonsou, a little rivulet flowing S.S.W. into the Praa. Here an opening presented itself to our view, in which the scene was animated by the reflection of the sun upon a rich foliage that surrounded a sort of dam, where a body of water had stagnated. Having left the Atonsou a mile in the rear, we came to a few bamboo huts like those at Abandou. The area, which was free from forest trees, was about three hundred paces in diameter. The sugar-cane, and a few banana and plantain trees, grew hereabouts in luxuriant clusters, besides which there were both high and low palm, bamboo, cocoa trees, and erasma. The name of this place is Fooso. Prior to the invasion it was a town of some little consequence, chiefly from its central position: it was then well inhabited, whereas at present it exhibits no better aspect than Abandou, and neither place admits of more than a temporary sojournment. During the retreat of Cheebo, when he fell back upon Fantee, a skirmish took place between the Ashantees and Assins in the neighbourhood of these huts; the former gained the advantage, and the destruction of the town was the natural consequence of that action. The Ashantee army then pursued the fugitive monarch southward. The distance from Abandou to Fooso is eleven miles.

Our route still lay through forest, but to the north of Fooso the ground was clear of thicket, and the eye was permitted to wander amidst its recesses to the distance occasionally of forty or fifty yards. An horizontal glance exhibited pillars of wood of mighty dimensions, rivetted as it were to pedestals, such as Mr. Bowdich has not inappropriately termed flying buttresses; trees proportionately smaller filled up the interstices of this woody landscape. The prospect above dis-

played all the verdure cemented in a rich entangled web, impervious to a single ray of the noonday sun. This grand awning was still enwreathed in folds by various plants of a migratory kind, and particularly by that sort of fibrous stem which resembles cable ropes. Ground palm, bamboo, and rattan, were now become very common.

A morass intersected the path at no great distance from Fòoso, in which mud predominated more than water, and beyond this, at an hour's march, we crossed a little current of water flowing westward, and entered Yancomady. All that now remains of this village is a few Bamboo huts, the abodes of foresters; some palm and plantain trees choked up with the rank growth of cane and jungle were the only relics left of its plantations, or rather, in despite of the exterminating hand of war, they had again reared their heads above a surface of utter devastation. Some spots appeared in the neighbourhood where clusters of the largest trees had been subverted by the violence of tempests, thereby dragging in their descent a whole army of surrounding objects, or crushing into splinters those limbs which were incapable of sustaining the accumulated pressure until a sufficient bearing was gained on the barren wrecks of many trunks. Not unfrequently these threatening avalanches were suspended in various angular positions, supported only by numerous bands and links of forest cordage, entwined in friendly embraces amidst the branches, and round the trunks. The thermometer here stood at eighty-eight degrees in the shade.

Our path lay amidst clusters of ground palm, which grew on the brink of a romantic slope terminating on our right in a deep chasm. A few hundred paces from this we alighted at the Potessin, a rivulet whose current flowed to the W.NW. in a stream of ten or twelve feet broad, and united with the Soubin, tracking their course jointly to the Praa. In half an hour more we arrived on the margin of a little rivulet called Ambama, and from this stream we came to the Soubin, flowing to the northward of west. As the evening approached



we crossed a little brook called Aniya, and from thence travelled by an agreeable path to Akomfody, where I had resolved to pass the night.

This also was a long journey, for the march was of nine hours duration in the whole; and in the course of that time, we traversed twenty-three miles of ground, although the true distance is no more than seventeen. The average course about N. NE.

The surface between Abandou and Akomfody is level, with the exception of a few slopes, and the chasm between Yancomady and the Potessin. A rich black loam frequently bordered the streams, and was occasionally found in a few marshy spots. Sometimes a fat unctuous marl was met with in extensive sheets: sand however predominated; and in place of the quartz, which abounds so greatly in the southern districts, nothing in the shape of a stone was discovered except a few small angular pieces of mica and granite. Certain spots emitted a corrupt effluvia blended more or less with the odour of decomposed vegetation and aromatic shrubs.

The hillocks formed by red ants were now rarely discovered; but the black ants were numerous and troublesome, the bite they inflicted occasioned a sharp burning heat. Nor are they less dreaded in the cultivated parts and even in the towns. The voracity with which they surprise their prey and assail him at all vulnerable points exceeds that of locusts, when they alight in a field of corn; for when once the attack is commenced, no bodily effort of the victim will avail him. Flight is generally impotent, unless it should lead him to a pool, when a natural instinct occasioned by the burning pain, induces him to plunge into the water. This kind of ant, say the Ashantees, is not only the plague of all other animals, but also of every class of their own species, and of the red ant in particular. If I may be indulged in a whimsical comparison, I will suggest a resemblance between these diminutive freebooters and the Arabs, who alike migratory, rove over the surface of the country, and establish a temporary residence where

it meets their views, often to the terror and in defiance of neighbouring towns. Thus the black ants in myriads will trace a particular course, and pursue that track in exact and thick embodied file, over an extent, perhaps of miles, until they fix upon a spot to their liking, where they erect little conical habitations, which may be said figuratively to bear a similitude to the Arabian tent, both in colour and form. The red ants, on the contrary, raise solid mounds of clay, which are cemented with a mucilaginous substance that binds the parts together in an indissoluble encrustation, and bids defiance to any violence short of the pick axe. The intrusion of the black ants is thus effectually prevented; but whenever their entrenched prey venture abroad, or are observed in repairing and augmenting their habitations, which they frequently do, a chase ensues, and thousands become the victims of their opponents, who sometimes force an entrance even into the nest itself. I was present once when a hillock was perforated in order to obtain what is commonly termed the queen, or mother ant, which is an unwieldy insect, two inches in length and one in circumference, formed in head and shoulders like the common ant, with a white body like that of a maggot. This insect resides in a separate cell, at the very foundation of the hillock, and is said to be gifted with such inexhaustible fecundity as to bring forth its myriads in daily and unceasing repetition. The act of cutting through the surface was laborious; but that effected, the earth crumbled as it usually does. The cells resembled those of the hornet, and were generally in diagonal rows, but without order or regularity. The labour was ultimately attended with success, in the discovery of the "queen mother." During the process the red ants fled in all directions, and vainly endeavoured to recover their cells, while they were assaulted by a troop of black ants, who in despite of a vigorous resistance devoured their prey on the spot, or carried it off between their nippers. The black ant, it is said, will fearlessly attack any animal, not exempting mankind; but particularly infants, whom they frequently

destroy and devour. The panther is not too strong for them to cope with, the rat is not too subtle, nor is the squirrel too active; vigilance and force are equally unavailing. They will even, as the Ashantees report, seek the abodes of serpents, and entering their holes, allow the reptile no chance of escaping. The hanging nests of small black ants were also very numerous in the trees, where, it would appear, they choose their abode as a security against attacks of the universal enemy.

Acomfody, formerly a village of moderate dimensions, now lies desolate like the rest, and is only remarkable for the few huts it contains. Its plantations are equally insignificant, so that all the refreshments we were able to procure amounted to a few unripe plantains. The huts were already occupied by a party of travellers; but this, as usual, produced no inconvenience to us, for they were speedily dislodged.

The fatigue of these marches had jaded even the negroes, several of whom were lame; and notwithstanding the general anxiety to keep pace with the mission, there were fifteen absentees as late in the evening as ten o'clock. That we suffered in an equal proportion may safely be concluded. We therefore sought our apartments, anticipating the benefit of repose; but in vain; for after I had retired to rest, and had just fallen into a profound slumber, I was roused by a confused noise, and a sensation resembling that of the pressure of a man's hand upon my face, and on the bed-clothes, as though some persons were about to attack me in that defenceless posture. Thus prepossessed I started out of bed, and immediately recognised screechings resembling those of the rat. This indeed confused, but did not satisfy me, so strongly did I imagine that an intruder had gained access in the dark. By the aid of lights which my attendants procured, I searched, but to no purpose, and while I was prevailed upon to discredit the suspicion I had formed, I took the round of the quarters, where all was confusion and uproar, from the same cause. Mr. Collins was employed in defending

himself with a stick against these vermin ; and at Mr. Salmon's hut it was the same. Satisfied, now, of the reality of the nuisance, I again retired to seek repose, but in so doing was compelled to resort to the same weapon in defence of my person against hundreds of rats, who, if I attempted to lie down, ran indiscriminately over my face and body, in their nocturnal gambols. Thus finding it impossible to sleep, I at last relinquished the attempt. Even the Fantees were distressed in this *rat croom*.

Towards the dawn of morning I heard the cries of some wild animals, which the Ashantees described under the name of *youne*. They said it climbed the trees, and continued those cries throughout the night. From this description, I could not clearly discover to what genus it belonged ; but subsequently I was shewn one at Coomassy, which was of the sloth family.

We left Akomfody at the hour of nine, and at the distance of a short mile, crossed a little rivulet running west of the Praa, whose name was Shambany ; and, in two miles more, alighted near a little brook called Baraco, a branch, it is said, of the former. For three miles more, we travelled over an entangled thicket, that led to half-a-dozen deserted huts, surrounded by a moderate sized plantation : the name of this place is Dansansoo. Not a soul inhabited the spot, and except when occasionally tenanted by travellers and foresters, it is as desolate as the wilderness itself. The summits of some old vitrified walls were here and there perceptible, amidst a plat of withered jungle and cane. This village was also demolished by the Ashantees during the retreat of Cheebo and Apoutay.

From Dansansoo our route lay over the same mazy thicket. Many limbs and branches of trees lay scattered about, exhibiting another scene of recent violence, as if a current of wind had passed over this tract ; an opinion that was strengthened by the numerous little swamps, and the quantity of moisture hereabouts.

Short of one mile and a half from Dansansoo we arrived at Me-

karen. This, likewise, was a wretched spot, consisting only of two or three hovels, encompassed by a little plantation; yet this, too, had been a populous place. A little distance beyond this, was a ravine that had the appearance of a water course; but its sandy bed was now dry. The surface was swampy, and overgrown with ground-palm, thicket, and small trees.

We were now in the neighbourhood of the Praa river. Hereabouts we fell in with a party of traders, and one of the king's sword-bearers. The slaves, to the number of twelve or fourteen, were loaded with many valuable teeth of ivory, also for the Dutch market. After a march of two miles and a half more we gained a glimpse of the water between the trees. A serpentine path, formed by a chasm, where the ridge was about forty feet perpendicular height, led down to the margin of the river, and here, after our guides had tried the depth of the stream, we crossed in a slanting course, under the lee-side of a bed of shelving rock, which stood near the centre. The water, at the ford, came up as high as the arm-pits; and on gaining the opposite shore, we climbed up a steep embankment, retracing the steps we had deviated from our true course. A little fetische house, which overlooks the river, invited our steps to the grateful shade of a cachou tree. Indeed, it is usual for the northern travellers to visit this spot, and make oblations to the river God, to whom the house is consecrated, before they presume to plunge into his stream. The house was built with upright poles, and wattled hurdles, lashed with twigs, and cemented together with clay; the roof was of palm.

The prospect of the landscape from this commanding point was really magnificent, but it was nevertheless a wilderness, and the knowledge of this limited the pleasures of imagination, in despite of its superb scenery, the fecundity of nature, and the fair bosom of a sheet of water that gave animation to the prospect. The gloomy forest to which we had been so long confined, presented itself to our view in a section, on the side from whence we came, whose northern limits were

laved by this beautiful stream meandering in a serpentine course from NE. to SW., until both extremes were lost in forest. The margin of the water was overgrown with a line of rank grass and flags, while the slope of the embankment was thickly covered by shrubbery, such as ground-palm, bamboo, rattan, sugar, and ground-cane, various species of the dwarf mimosas, besides a variety of unknown plants. The rays of a sun, now in his zenith, acting upon this mass of verdure, produced an animated tint in the different shades of green upon every shrub, and almost upon every leaf. The forest itself, frowning in awful majesty to the very verge of the embankment, formed a romantic back-ground, while the surface beneath was buried in darkness. To enumerate half the different species of vegetation is not in my power, for the greater part by far were unknown to me. Those which I recognised of the larger growth, were such as have been already mentioned. Ganyan, however, was a very conspicuous object on the opposite embankment. It is characteristic for this tree to shoot out fibrous tendrils from its branches, and these are prolonged in the growth, until they strike into the earth in various postures, although generally perpendicular.

The smaller trees and shrubs, besides bamboo, rattan, and common cane, were Guava bush, in limited quantity, indigo, umbrella trees, dying woods, erasma, cocoa, male and female, migratory and stationary vines, wild fig, aloe, tamarind, &c.

The surface here was a rich clay, free from pebble, and covered in the line of the ford with a bed of light sand. This river enters the sea at Chamah. It was at this time about the breadth of the Thames at Richmond, and the current, which varies, on account of the freshes that occasionally augment the stream, ran about four knots. The annexed plate is engraved from a sketch I took on the spot. Mr. Bowdich, in acknowledging his failure in an attempt at copying the natural beauties of the scene, perhaps with reason declares, that it would baffle the skill of any artist to depict "the life of its beauty," except a Claude, or a Wilson. Without questioning the truth of this, I hope my presump-



A South prospect of the River - Pava and the Forest of Spain.

W. H. Sturt

tion may meet with indulgence, as I trust it will, when I declare that with a limited knowledge of the art, I attempted the sketch from private and not public motives. It may be considered, therefore, as the outlines of a landscape where the objects are represented as nature has stationed them, rather than as an attempt at portraying the *animation of vegetable life*.

Having indulged a sufficient time in the contemplation of these rural beauties, we resumed the journey over what now appeared to us a delightful path, and which, indeed, was open, and wide enough in some places to allow six or seven men to walk abreast. The barbarism of the southern forest appeared every where to be softened into features of a milder aspect, and it seemed as though our toils were comparatively at an end.

At a short half mile from the river, we entered the town of Prassoo through a clean broad avenue, which separated the houses into two nearly equal sections. Decency now required me to conceal my tattered apparel (for deplorably torn it was) from public gaze. I therefore wrapped myself in a cloak, and walked to the house of the Caboecer. This chief, a little emaciated old man, whose name was Awado, received me with much ceremony; but, as I then thought, little civility. In retiring I was, however, better satisfied with the good-natured countenances of a few scores of spectators, who were waiting to obtain a glimpse of white men.

From the Praa southward, the progress of the sword down to the very margin of the sea may be traced by mouldering ruins, desolated plantations, and osseous relics: such are the traits of negro ferocity. The inhabitants, whether Assins or Fantees, whose youth and beauty exempted them from slaughter on the spot, were only reserved to grace a triumph in the metropolis of their conquerors, where they were again subject to a scrutiny which finally awarded the destiny of sacrifice or bondage; few or none were left behind to mourn over their slaughtered friends, or the catastrophe of their unhappy country.

Prassoo, or Praa Assou, is a name derived from the proximity of this town to the river Praa. In magnitude it cannot be compared with the superior class of towns, yet it covers a great extent of ground; its main street being about two furlongs in length, broad, clean, and regularly formed. This street cuts through the village at right angles, and intersects a number of little lanes and passages formed by rows of houses, which are closely erected, although generally detached from each other by a space of several feet. Many of these vacancies were enclosed by hurdles and fences of bamboo, of an unsightly construction. The generality of houses were rather superior to those we had seen at Doonqua. The habitations of some were washed on the outsides with a bluish clay, which, from exposure to the sun and atmosphere, had faded to a dirty white, recalling by an effort of the imagination what had been reported by Mr. Bowdich, of Ashantee, "architecture." But the far greater proportion of the houses were formed simply with hurdles, plastered over with clay, the common soil of the country, and some of hurdles and thatch only.

The population of Prassoo is stated to be about nine thousand souls. The town does not lay claim to any very great antiquity, and may be said still to enjoy the infancy of its growth. It is surrounded by luxurious plantations of plantain trees, and some detached spots for the cultivation of maize.

Leaving Prassoo, we entered an open path which we pursued for another short half mile, and entered Kikiwhary long before the sun had run his course. Our reception by the spectators was courteous and gratifying, for every countenance testified joy. I dispatched a complimentary message to the *deputy* Caboecer, and, as it was my intention to pass the night in the town, I alighted under a spreading tree, while the captain of the escort selected appropriate quarters. After a short absence, he returned and conducted us to a neat little house, containing four apartments of convenient size. Our first calls, it may be well supposed, were for food, particularly flesh, which we

had been so long deprived of. In the interim, I received a very acceptable present of a sheep, some bread, and plantains, from the Caboceer of Prassoo. The deputy Caboceer and some of the town's-people waited upon me with congratulations.

In the cool of the evening I walked over the town, and was every where greeted with the most cordial and respectful welcome. A number of children of both sexes, and some adults followed me at a reserved distance, gratifying their curiosity without intrusion, and flying, as I approached, when occasion required to retrace my steps. To me the scene conveyed infinite pleasure from a retrospective contrast with the more northern regions of this vast continent, where I have travelled among strangers, from whom I have, on similar occasions, experienced insult and hostility. The natives, however, were observed to scowl at the Fantees, with a malignancy, which, at first, I could not satisfactorily account for.

The town of Kikiwhary is considerably larger than that of Prassoo, and its inhabitants proportionately numerous. The population of the place is said to exceed fourteen thousand. The etymology of the word Kikiwhary is, *take heart*, or resolution, a name which is not uncommon to other towns of the kingdom. It is said, that the present town stands on the scite of a very extensive city, which was destroyed some ages back by an irruption of the tribes of Dagomba. Like Prassoo, it is characterised by one main street, separating the houses into two sections, and intersecting at right angles a number of avenues. The houses, which resemble in construction those of Prassoo, consist of various classes, from the quadrangular building down to the common bamboo hut. The white clay washed walls generally distinguish the habitations of the wealthy; but they are not numerous. As the apartments are all either upon the ground floor, or elevated only two or three feet above the natural surface, the roofs are necessarily the most conspicuous features in the *coup d'œil* of an African town. The interior compartments of the best houses are furnished in a style corresponding with the simplicity of

African wants; two or three wooden stools, some earthen pots for culinary purposes, cane mats, a water jar, and a lamp, constructed of brass or clay, comprize all the utensils of the far greater portion of the inhabitants; while many of the houses of officers high in rank, are adorned with large wooden drums, and horns decorated with skulls and jaw bones.

The government of Kikiwhary, like that of other towns, is vested in a Caboceer and Council of Elders. This chief, whose name is Akassy, was at this time absent. He was formerly a captain of that part of Assin, governed by Amoo, and had, at the early part of the contest with Ashantee, espoused the politics of the king. Akassy was deputed to accompany the embassy to Cape Coast, as representative of Assin, to discuss individual claims and private losses.

The complaints of the inhabitants of this town were, indeed, serious; for it appeared that some of their people, to the number of about sixty, had been *panyard*; or, in other words, seized, together with their trading property, and sold by the Fantees at different stations on the coast to slaving ships, while the king was absent in Gaman. Report conveyed to me the murmurings of several families, who alleged their participation in the injury; and the execrations which were lavished upon the Fantees taught them, betimes, to limit their rambles.

This day's journey was nine miles and a half, horizontal distance, and the average of a long list of courses gave NW. and by N. On the banks of the Praa, the thermometer, at one o'clock, P. M. gave eighty-seven degrees in the shade, and again at three o'clock, it was as high as ninety degrees in my apartment, at Kikiwhary.

The quarters were continually surrounded by spectators, chiefly women and children, whose anxiety to gain a glimpse of our persons was occasionally checked by an impulse of terror when we approached them. The smiling countenances which graced these beauties, convinced me that their destiny was a happier one than the generality of their sex enjoy in Fantee. Their lascivious glances, accompanied by signs, which could not be misconstrued, convinced me also that these ladies, however superior

to the Fantees, participated with them in a certain failing. I was, besides, assured that many of the wives and daughters of men in power, were employed in the way of traffic, to practise the seductive charms of beauty, to inveigle the impassioned and unwary of the other sex, in order to create a palaver, which commonly terminated in fines or slavery. When the slave trade was legalized on the coast, it was a usual mode of entrapping youth, and those who were incapable of redeeming their persons from bondage, suffered the severity of this pernicious law, and were in most cases sold in the public markets for exportation to the West Indies.

About ten o'clock on the seventeenth, I bade farewell to Kikiwhary, pursuing a path, which for the first two or three miles, inclined very much to the westward of north; now and then it was rugged, and overgrown with briers and underwood. The Ading rivulet, an inconsiderable stream, whose current ran to the S. SE. at this distance, held on a course to the Praa, where it united near the ford. The water did not exceed a foot in depth, and twelve feet would have measured the breadth of the stream; yet during the rains its tributary waters were said to inundate large forest tracts hereabouts. Another stream called Ano, of less importance, flowed easterly, and is said to connect itself with the Ading, from which it is separated by a small tract only. Hereabouts is also a clear open space of several acres in extent, surrounded by jungle and plantain trees. The name of this spot is Miassa, (not Animiaso, as Mr. Bowdich has spelt it, and which is an amalgamation of both river and town) it was distinguished formerly for its great population, and when Assin was a tributary sovereignty it belonged to the first rank of towns. A few miserable inhabitants now occupy the land, where they have erected some habitations of bamboo and thatch. Their existence chiefly depends upon the traffic with Kikiwhary. Miassa was at one time deemed the capital city of Assin, but it owed its importance more to the seat of government, which was established here by Cheboo, than to any local

influence of its own. During the wars between Amoo and Cheboo, when the latter had suffered two defeats from his adversary ; a third sanguinary conflict took place near this spot, which terminated in favour of the latter, and the utter destruction of Amoo's army followed the action. Amoo, however, escaped, and again fled to Coomassy to lay his complaint before the sovereign king. That monarch had employed many months in a fruitless negotiation prior to the engagement, and having about this time received a cruel indignity in the person of an ambassador, he first formed the design of compelling the Assins to a state of unlimited submission.* Cheboo and Apoutay, however, assembled their forces in the vicinity of Miassa, with the resolution of giving battle to the Ashantees ; but some disaffection among the Assin chiefs dispirited the troops, and treachery was supposed to have stirred up a powerful interest in favour of the enemy. The crisis approached which admitted the choice of only two alternatives, either to risk a battle on the spot, or resign that extensive tract of country north of the Praa, and retire to the left bank of the river. In this dilemma Cheboo chose the former, but in the hour of trial his courage was not competent to the task of meeting an enemy so proverbially terrific as the king of Ashantee. A few shots were exchanged at the onset, while Cheboo and a party of followers fled to the river. This decisive panic in the chief is said to have been occasioned by the desertion of several Caboceers, on the field of battle. Be this as it may, it is admitted on all hands, that here the Assins fled before an army which numerically did not amount to half its own force ; although it was confessedly superior in organization, equipment, and resources. Slaughter followed in the rear, down to the margin of the river, where Cheboo and his friends learning the extent of their misfortunes, fled across the stream, and whither the Ashantees had no inclination to pursue them, at that time. Miassa was razed to the foundation,

* Vide also Meredith's History of the Gold Coast.

thousands were put to the sword, and thousands sent into slavery in the more northern provinces of the empire. This event is celebrated by the Ashantee bards in an appropriate song, wherein it is recorded that a river of *perjured blood flowed from Miassa to the Praa, and propitiated the wrath of the river god*. Thousands of human victims were afterwards sacrificed in daily and nightly troops, at the little fetische house where we alighted; and the carcasses were cast into the river, in order, as the Ashantees affirm, that the glory and military prowess of their sovereign might be known throughout the land, as the current swept the bodies to the sea. Akassy, the Caboceer who now governs Kikiwhary, and a man named Quamina Abindou, both incurred the stigma of treachery; the latter was subsequently put to death for some embezzlement of the spoil.

The forest beyond Miassa relapses into its usual solitude, exhibiting also most of those stern beauties which are characteristic of the land south of the Praa. At a little distance beyond Miassa to the eastward, are several ruined villages, in particular one named Soubel between the Ano and Ading; other desolate spots of the same kind are scattered over the surrounding country, between the points of north and east, of which Oncro, Intoba, and Injany are the principal.

The paths leading to the plantations were still open, and occasionally frequented. Two miles more brought us to another open space, the relic of a large Assin croom called Saporgah; which is little better than a heap of ruins. Some solitary sheds occupied by foresters and palm wine collectors were the only objects that could interest the eye. The path was exceedingly obstructed by thicket and decayed logs, from this place until we arrived at the ruins of Tibiassa, another habitation, as the Ashantees affirmed, of the spirits who roam at night. Nothing but a few straggling ruins, embedded in jungle, remained; yet it was said to have been a place of importance. The little stream called Prensa crossed the path, at a very inconsiderable distance from Tibiassa, as it traced an easterly course to the Ano. The next

opening at the distance of a mile and a half more, was a moderate sized space occupied by some detached ruins, the relics of a town called Bequama, and near this spot the little rivulet called Prapong (or arm of the Praa) about seven yards in width and two or three feet in depth, pursued its southerly course to the Praa. We shaped a course along the bed of this stream to the distance of a hundred yards or more, and then quitted it at an angle formed by its westerly inclination. The path as we advanced rather improved, although the natural obstructions were still so great as to create delay. Four miles beyond the Prapong are the ruins of a town called Eshamah. A little village of modern construction, bearing the same name, stands on a slope which commands the ruins. The inhabitants, probably about fifty in number, obtain a precarious subsistence from their labours in the forest. These poor people were at this time absent, at their respective occupations, in hewing timber, and tapping palm trees for wine, with which they trade to Ansa. A few traders from Ashantee were reposing under the shade of some trees, in what might be called the market place.

Eshamah formerly enjoyed a moderate rank in Assin, and its population is said to have rivalled in numbers the inhabitants of Prassoo. It is remarkable for a sanguinary battle fought in its vicinity between Cheebo and Amoo. Leaving the ruins of this place, we again penetrated the forest, and in the lapse of an hour entered Ansa about four P. M.



Drawn by J. D. Payne

A Woman & Youth of Banna. A. Marcus Slave.

CHAPTER II.

PUBLIC RECEPTION AT ANSAH—DESCRIPTION OF AN ASSIN HOUSE—EFFECTS OF NEGRO WARFARE—STATE OF HEALTH OF THE PARTY—AKROFROOM—SUPERSTITION OF THE INHABITANTS WITH REGARD TO WHITE TRAVELLERS—BEASTS OF PREY—ELEPHANTS—MOISY—FRONTIER OF ASHANTEE—THE RIVER BOHMEN—SABLE NAIADS—CHUSAH—FOMANAH—DOOMPASSY—OFFERING TO A HOUSEHOLD GOD—DATCHASOO—MESSAGE FROM THE KING OF ASHANTEE—ADADWASY—AMOAFU—VISITS FROM THE KING'S SON AND DAUGHTER—BEQUA—ASSIMINIA—BOPOSSO—AGEMUM—SARASOO—PROCESS OF CLEARING LAND FOR CULTIVATION IN FANTEE AND BARBARY—FIRST SIGHT OF COOMASSY—PUBLIC RECEPTION BY THE KING—SPEECH OF THE KING OF BANNA—CEREMONIES—OBSERVATIONS ON THE JOURNEY AND CLIMATE.

DESOLATE as the land is on both sides of the Praa, with the exception only of Prassoo, Kikiwhary, and Anseh, I had, nevertheless, deemed it expedient, in support of my public character, to announce the approach of the mission with all becoming solemnity. A description of the ceremonies practised at Anseh, as they bear a relation to the usages elsewhere observed, may not be displeasing to the reader. The road-flag with which I travelled through the woods, and which was simply a small union-jack, was, on our approach to the town, dismissed to the rear, its place being supplied by a more brilliant suit of colours. Such of the escort as were in attendance joined in embodied ranks equal to the limits of the path, while one of my soldiers who had practised the bugle, blew a blast or two on that instrument, which, coupled with the shouts and songs of my attendants, never failed to

collect from the houses a numerous concourse of spectators, who, it may be said, strove in emulation to pay that respect to the British flag, and to white men, and Englishmen, which it was my pride to witness. At Ansah, every countenance was stamped with those genuine feelings of respectful admiration which it was my object to excite. Crowds followed us to our quarters, bestowing occasionally some flattering commendations upon the objects that interested their attention.

As the day declined, drums were beat and horns sounded throughout the town, to give notice to the chief and elders to assemble with their retainers, in the market-place, to receive the public visit they anticipated. On our side, I gave instructions to the officers to equip themselves in uniform, and the people to dress in clean apparel, &c. Thus arrayed, we sallied forth, at a sort of funeral pace, preceded by the colours. On turning an angle leading to the market-place, we were suddenly saluted by the beating of drums, but after awhile the discord ceased. The Caboecer, whose name was Coinin Akim, (deputy Viceroy of Assin under Amon Koitea) was encompassed by all the principal male inhabitants of the town, headed by their respective chieftains. An avenue between this mass of human beings was left sufficiently wide to permit us to approach in the order of single file; and through this space I advanced, touching hands with the Caboecer and the other chiefs, while a number of boys waved short scimeters, chopping bills, and swords, over my head, as they yelled out the "*strong names*" of their patron, descriptive of his rank, heroic achievements, &c.

At the conclusion of this ceremony our party retired to the shade of a tree, where, when we had taken our seats, the Assin chief and his party advanced in turn, preceded by the band of performers, whose overture was of a character still more inharmonious. Indeed the flutes and some of the smaller horns only, when they could be distinguished in the medley of sounds, softened to a degree of tolerance the harsh barbaric clamour. One instrument, resembling the horn of an

enormous buffalo, which was decorated with a profusion of human jaw-bones, uttered abrupt and incessant blasts of the most dismal howling that can be imagined. Others of similar dimensions ornamented with the like brutal trophies, produced a lengthened distressing tone, something resembling the moderate cry of hyenas. Some small elephants' teeth, hollowed into form, were rather more melodious, excepting when they chimed with the concert. The large drums were carried on the heads of men, and beaten in that posture; but the small ones were slung as kettle drums. These added to calabashes and gourds filled with shot or small stones, concave bits of iron, and striking sticks, will give an idea of the national taste in harmonic matters. As the chieftain advanced to take my hand, a number of parasites rushed before him holding their noses, as the custom is, and recapitulating his "*strong names*," with vociferous, and, as it would appear to a stranger, offensive intrusion; for these flatterers, notwithstanding they were gently pushed aside, returned to the charge as boisterously as before. On a sudden he burst from the crowd, and as he took me by the hand, perfect order and silence ensued.

The Caboceer was followed successively by the captains, elders, and ordinary class of inhabitants; but the latter did not presume to offer their hands for acceptance, a compliment which was expected by the Caboceer and chief officers only; all others were happy in being permitted to pass in the pompous line, to wave their hands, and pay the compliment of a welcome.

I had scarcely returned to the quarters when a file of men entered profusely laden with provisions. The present consisted of a sheep, a goat, a quantity of yams, eggs, fowls, plantains, and palm wine, besides fire-wood, cankey bread, sugar cane, and some honey in the comb. Indeed I never before witnessed hospitality, even among Mussulmen, who are religiously scrupulous of that virtue, equal to this, which in fact was a private present. My acknowledgments were accompanied by a trifling return of rum, and a piece of British manufactured cotton.

The plantations of plantains, yams, and cassada, are very extensive in the vicinity of Ansah, and large tracts of land were then in a state of preparation for the reception of grain. This, which is now the metropolis of Assin, is a large compact town full of houses and hovels of all classes, from the quadrangular inclosure of four, six, or eight apartments, to the small bamboo hut. The quarters assigned for the reception of the Mission belonged to a wealthy inhabitant, who, to accommodate us, was unceremoniously compelled to turn out, with his wives and children. As the house I occupied at Ansah is at least equal to some of the best in Coomassy and elsewhere, I shall digress a little in particularizing its "architecture" and conveniences. It was a square enclosure with a recess behind, forming two apartments, besides the four contained in the quadrangle itself. Opposite the door was a narrow passage, leading to the retired part of the building, and which the natives appropriate to the use of the women and juvenile branches of the family. The rooms were elevated two or three feet from the ground, and the ascent was marked by two steps, which, as well as the lower walls, were simply plastered with red clay, rudely sculptured indeed, but still with some regard to order. Little buttresses here and there surmounted with ornamental carving in "*alto rilievo*" decorated the sides of the rooms, the dimensions of which were about nine feet by six or seven, and roofed with a sloping thatch of palm.

Ansah has also one broad street only, leading north and south through its centre. The avenues, or lanes, right and left, besides being of extreme narrow limits, exhibit a variety of unsightly obstructions. This place, having formerly been the seat of government of Amoo and the party attached to Ashantee interest, was respected during the war by the forces of the empire. Its population is estimated at twenty-four thousand souls.

Coinin Akim, it may be observed, besides his deputy viceroyalty of Assin, is also Caboceer over the desolate forests of Fantee; his jurisdiction extends from Moisy in the north, down to the sea-coast, and east-

ward from the province of Akim to the limits of Denkera. Akassy, the Caboceer of Kikiwhary, who supports a secondary dignity in Assin, governs all the adjacent towns and villages, as the representative of Coinin Akim, to whom he is immediately answerable.

It will not be deemed extraordinary, by those who are acquainted with African maxims and prejudices, that all Fantee, excepting the few towns on the coast, and the far greater portion of Assin should be found in the state I have described; the population extinct, the plantations more or less destroyed, and the forest relapsing to its original growth. In the wars of the negroes, a few of the subjugated are reserved to grace the victor's triumph; but slavery, or death, is most frequently their final doom. Little kingdoms have been thus annihilated, as in the case of Denkera, Akim, Warsaw, and many others, whose names have almost become obsolete. The importance of these dreary regions is, therefore, trifling, when compared with a surface of such extent; and particularly so, when it is considered that where a population amounting, it is supposed, to something between three and four millions occupied the districts of Fantee and Assin, the inhabitants now scarcely amount to as many hundred thousands, after the most liberal calculation, including even the Fantee towns on the sea side.

The march from Kikiwhary to Ansah was comparatively the most moderate and least fatiguing of any of our journeys. The Anana still flourished luxuriantly in the woods, and the bamboo and ground palm covered many acres, with a most impenetrable thicket. The high palm which towered here to an elevation rivalling the more gigantic productions of the earth, increased the wild beauty of the surrounding scenery, for this class had been rarely met with on the road.

The thermometer in the forest varied between the hours of ten and two, from eighty-one degrees to eighty-three. In our quarters at Ansah, at one o'clock, the quicksilver stood at eighty-seven, and two hours after sunset, sunk as low as seventy-seven.

From Kikiwhary to Ansah it is ten miles, horizontal distance, and the average of a long list of courses gave N. half W.

The health of the officers at this time was good, excepting that of Mr. Collins. In justice to the gentlemen who accompanied me, I ought to acknowledge the fortitude which marked their characters, and stifled every complaint, during a laborious course of service, and under circumstances not far removed from severe hardship.

The Ashantee guides or captains, belonging to my retinue, wished me to remain at Ansah, until the king should be apprised of my arrival; but, as I preferred a station nearer to the capital, I again issued orders to resume the journey in the morning.

Accordingly, on the 18th, I quitted this town, attended by a group of spectators, who, on the verge of the forest, exchanged a parting farewell, and returned to their homes. The umbrageous covering of the trees was again a grateful relief from the sensation of extreme heat. Within the compass of an hour's walk from Ansah, we crossed the bed of the Foum, a fine little rivulet running easterly, and uniting, it is said, with the Prapong and the Praa. The margin of this stream is profusely covered with a shrubbery of a beautiful character. The water, at this time, was knee deep, although the width of the channel could scarcely be more than three fathoms. At the distance of a mile and a quarter more, we came to the Parakom, another little rivulet, proportionate in dimensions to the Foum, of which it is a branch, and flowing at this part of its course in the same direction as the former. Another little stream intersected the path about half a mile beyond the Parakom, but was too unimportant to have a name.

The rustling of the branches above our heads, and a deeper gloom, combined with the distant sound of thunder, announced, about this time, an approaching tornado; but no rain fell. The thermometer sunk from eighty to seventy-six. At an early hour in the day, we arrived in the neighbourhood of Akrofrom, where a concourse of spectators had,

as usual, assembled, in the main avenue, to greet our entrance. At my request, the Caboceer, who had already set the gong-gongs at work, deferred the ceremonies of an interview, until the sun had sunk below the visible horizon (the tops of the adjacent trees.) The rights of hospitality were, in the meantime, lavished upon us with liberality, equal to what we had before experienced; and our quarters were stored with yams, cankey bread, cassada, eggs, oil, fuel, and a sheep. The distress I felt for the females, who resigned their apartments for our use, (some of whom had infants at their backs) was quickly removed by the cordial welcome that animated their looks. A superstitious belief was entertained by those to whom the lot of sheltering white men had fallen, that their lives in future would be prosperous. The house itself was passably well built in the form of one we occupied at Ansah, but superior in size and sculptural ornaments, both of red clay and grey.

The Caboceer, of this town, whose name was Tako Dooney, happened to be at Ansah, when we made a public entry there; after the ceremony there, he was dispatched, by Coinin Akim, to repeat the honours at his own government. As the sun declined, the jarring discord of drums, gong-gongs, &c. announced the assemblage in the market-place. It will be unnecessary, however, to relate a ceremony, which did not materially differ from what has been described at Ansah. The parasites of this chief, it may, however, be told, desisted sooner, and were not quite so outrageously indecorous as those of Coinin Akim.

My people now fared sumptuously, yet there were ten men on the sick list, besides as many more lame or bruised; several of whom were in a state requiring rest, as well as wholesome food; but as our journies henceforward were likely to be short ones, I did not think proper to detain the mission; although my own servants were both incapable of exertion, one from the Guinea worm and fever, and the other from severe lameness.

Akrofroom covers a large tract of land, and is built in a straggling manner. It is not so large as Ansah, and its population is numerically

inferior. The avenues intersecting the main street east and west, like all others of the class, are either exceedingly confined, or, where the space is more than sufficient to accommodate one or two passengers abreast, the waste ground is generally appropriated to the reception of offal, dirt, and rubbish; which, as in that part of the city of Morocco inhabited by the Israelites, accumulates from time to time into little mounds, or hillocks, sufficiently elevated to afford a prospect over the walls and even the roofs of low built houses. The main street, however, is exempt from these nuisances, and the market places, both here and elsewhere, are never polluted by dirt or litter of any description. The favourable impression of Ashantee cleanliness, was checked by the exposure of nuisances in bye streets, in the environs of the town, and the backs of the houses, where it became difficult to select a foot way free from excrement and filth. Yet decency in compliance with natural calls was not by any means unobserved by the inhabitants, who erect sylvan temples in retired spots, at the outer boundary of the plantations, by excavating the earth, and erecting a platform on the upper surface, or by placing a number of fallen trees in parallel positions.

The number of small ill-constructed hovels at Akrofrom probably exceeded the more commodious buildings as fifty to one; and the grey clay plaster, or wash, here, indicated no distinction between rich or poor, master or slave. The plantations, however, are extensive, and yield more than sufficient for the consumption of the inhabitants; yet those of corn are very limited even here, although the population is estimated at eighteen thousand souls.

At the distance of one day's journey and a half westward, are the ruins of a large town called Boyabo, formerly the seat of Apoutey's government. The average course from Ansah to Akrofrom was N. NW. the distance amounted to eight miles and a quarter, horizontally computed.

We quitted this place on the following day, the nineteenth. The

path in its vicinity is broad and open, but this is characteristic only of the first half furlong, beyond which the forest relapses to its usual form and aspect.

This tract is said to be occasionally infested by the superior beasts of prey, such as lions, panthers and leopards; but none of these animals met our sight, nor had we ever distinguished their cries, although we were frequently disturbed by the plaintive screechings of the sloth, and the howling of hyenas, jackalls, &c. Amidst the boughs of a kind of cedar, I noticed several grey squirrels, who regarded my approach with great indifference. Here also, some of the party picked up a good number of quills that seemed to have belonged to a porcupine of the largest size.

At no great distance from Akrofrom we again fell in with the Prakoom rivulet, as at this time it swept to the west of south. On the opposite bank the path was open, leading over a thick bed of loose sand that covered the surrounding surface. Many lofty trees, and some of the smaller sorts of shrubs, were sapless and barren, with naked limbs and blighted foliage.

In the midst of a thicket, at the distance of four miles from Anseh, an elephant's tooth of moderate size was discovered; but the enamel being cracked into gashes, it was deemed of little or no value. It is affirmed by the Ashantees that elephants never herd in these forests, although very frequently stragglers are shot on this parallel as also on the confines, two journies north of Coomassy. Yet these wanderers are young, and as my informer described it, "foolish." The old elephants herd in Banna, Coransah, and some in Bouromy; they are numerous only in Sarem.

We shortly arrived at a little stream shaping a course to the S.S.W.; another of the same size, and running in the same direction, intersected the path a quarter of a mile beyond this; but they were both unimportant and nameless. At the end of ten miles (by the path) we discovered a gap that admitted the cheerful light of day, the surface of

which was, as usual, covered with jungle and rank weeds. We were now in the vicinity of Moisy, a small croom on the frontier of Assin, and which we entered about noon, but made no stay there.

This village, like other places of greater importance, can claim but one avenue deserving the name of a street, although it has several leading to the huts in the back ground. It is inhabited principally by mechanics, as weavers, potters, smiths, &c. and may be called a place of wretchedness ; yet it is notorious for excellent palm wine, and a superior growth of cotton. The habitations, even in the main street, are mean, notwithstanding the grey clay wash and plaster are more commonly in use here than elsewhere. The main avenue terminated in a pretty shrubbery, whose limits stretched away to the neighbouring plantations. Through this we journied some hundred paces until the little rivulet Bohmen, which sparkled in the front, gave notice of our approach to the hilly barrier that separates Ashantee, properly so called, from the province of Assin. The stragglers being numerous at this time, I thought fit to alight on the margin of the stream. My guides, (the Ashantee captains Ado and Quako,) were the first who approached, and with anger in their countenances, reprobated the conduct of the Caboceer, at Moisy, in not having prepared the honours due to a public reception. "He will lose his head for this neglect," added they, uniting their voices, "for we must tell the king the truth." I vindicated the unfortunate chief, by alledging my disinclination to alight. It mattered not, was the reply, the Caboceer alone was to blame, because the most positive orders had been given by Coinin Akim, that he should assemble the townsmen to greet me in passing.

We stood in need of rest, and as the hills lay exactly on the opposite bank of the stream, I delayed prosecuting the journey to give time for the people to recruit their strength. Our weariness was, indeed, universal, and we reposed in sullen lassitude on the margin of the romantic Bohmen ; the river, according to Mr. Bowdich's informa-

tion, so gifted by Providence, as to deserve the name of the "*Water of Eloquence*." The fairy virtue of this stream recurring to my memory, I demanded a calabash of water. In short, its efficacy was put to the trial, by many who required to slake their thirst, and be it recorded, failed in working its usual miracle. These symptoms of lassitude and silence were, however, quickly interrupted, by the arrival of a large pot of palm wine, and a message of exculpation from the Caboceer, who extenuated his neglect by alledging that he had expected me to have slept in town, rather than crossed the mountains that afternoon. The wine was of a growth recommended by the Ashantees as particularly nourishing and grateful to the palate, and was, they said, the best in the kingdom. But it did not need many encomiums, so acceptable was this description of beverage. Indeed, the far-famed excellence of the "*Water of Eloquence*" itself, would bear no competition with the wine. Its invigorating powers won it the palm of supremacy, without a single dissenting voice, for the faculty of speech which before was chained up within us, resumed its function with an effort powerful enough to banish the memory of past fatigue.

Upon making enquiries of the Ashantees, respecting the alledged virtue of the water, I had some difficulty in persuading them that it was a serious question. When assured of that fact, they declared they knew the water to be sweet, and, perhaps, it was good for sick people; but they did not know that it was capable of prompting speech, nor did they ever hear that it was visited on that account by parties of their countrymen.

The Bohmen is a very inconsiderable upland stream, gliding in its descent, between the vallies of Moisy, and slanting in its course to the southward of west, until it connects its waters with those of the Prakoom. It is almost embowered in shrubbery, overtopped by high trees, whose branches locking together in each others embraces, give it, in imagination, the semblance of a fairy grot; for its bed is studded with brilliant little rocks, and shelving slabs of granite, iron stone, and mica, mixed

with clear white sand, and yellow gravel, glittering, as it may be said, poetically, with a golden refulgence, where the meridian sun-beam here and there penetrated the vegetable arch.

Romantic as this may be pronounced, it was something heightened in effect as we crossed the rivulet, by the appearance of a party of women and young girls, skipping over the rocks, and laving their limbs in the current ; but, for whose jetty complexions, the fancy might in reality have conceited them a group of Naiads. Nor were the nymphs of the African wilderness wanting to themselves in the decorum of the sex, for they modestly screened their persons amidst the foliage.

Immediately after this, we commenced ascending a lofty hill, at first by a gradual slope ; but on a sudden it became abrupt, rugged, and washed into gullies. Huge pieces of rock, in overhanging precipices, opposed our steps, and as we were early compelled to clamber with hands and feet, our progress was attended with difficulty, and great physical exertion. The path, near the summit of the hill, was bare of its leafy canopy, and here the rays of the sun darted fiercely down upon a surface already scorched beyond a moderate glowing heat. This, added to the increased action of the vital organs, rendered our distress complete, and it was with incredible difficulty we journeyed up the acclivity, nearly a mile to the summit.* A contracted gap, or aperture on the left hand, afforded an indistinct prospect to the westward, of the top of another hill connected with this chain. It was, in truth, the greatest scope our eyes had been permitted to range over throughout the whole journey ; and although the horizontal distance would barely have exceeded a mile and a half, its novelty was equally delightful and transitory.

Mr. Bowdich says, he observed several eminent points from this station, in the hope of being able to check his computed distance by paces. No such land marks were visible to me, or any eminence, ex-

* Our sufferings on this march were necessarily greater than what the former party endured, because we crossed this barrier at the time of the greatest daily heat, and after a moderate journey, whereas the others traversed it in the cool of the morning.

cepting the peak of the hill already described, the utility of which, for mathematical calculations, it was surely absurd to suggest; for the visionary glance was so imperfect, and the uniformity of its clothing so characteristic of the land throughout, that had it been perceptible a second time, (which it was not) I am convinced it would not have been recognized with any certainty.

For some hundreds of yards beyond the summit, it was a sort of table hill, gently incurvated with slopes and ridges. The sound of a waterfall on our left hand indicated, however, that the path lay over a precipitous ridge, terminating below in a deep valley. Yet the forest was so opaque, that nothing was visible (except the stems of trees) beyond the circumference of a few yards.

This chain of hills, according to native authority, commences on the north-west side of Bequa, from thence inclining easterly to Datiasso and Doompassy, where it forks off in two branches, the one leading NE. to the Echouy Lake, the other inclining south of east, through Assin and Akim, to Aquamboe, and the neighbourhood of Accra, where it unites to the chain that may be seen at the distance of twenty miles from the British fort at that place. The height of Moisy Hill may be about sixteen hundred feet perpendicular elevation. The north side of the hill is less steep and rugged, so that the descent is not attended with much inconvenience. A small ravine gave a passage to a little stream, flowing westerly with a rippling noise; but it was said to bear no name. The land beyond the hills is evidently much higher than that of Assin.

The sight of a patch of jungle indicated our approach to the first Ashantee village: this was a miserable place containing about thirty hovels, called Chusah, whose inhabitants lived by the trade in palm wine and nuts. The track over the hills is capricious, but the course, after having passed Chusah, inclines again north. We traversed the brink of a chasm or pit of great depth, said to have been excavated for gold; but latterly neglected, notwithstanding the mine was believed to be rich.

Three quarters of a mile beyond Chusah is Fomanah, another little village, containing about a hundred and fifty inhabitants. Mr. Bowdich's assertion, that Fomanah was once a very considerable town, is contradicted by the natives, who, while they admit that it was formerly more populous than at present, declare it always to have been a foresters' village, and a place of insignificance upon the frontiers. The Caboceer, who was seated in the main opening, very courteously tendered an offering of palm wine and eggs.

Beyond Fomanah for about half a mile, the path was good, exhibiting a clean swept surface, with burning stubble on each hand. Doompassy was now distant only an hour's march, and as we approached in sight of the town, the greetings of the spectators, who were numerous, indicated the utmost cordiality. The Caboceer, a middle aged man, named Soabin, received me very courteously in the market place, and in due formality conducted me to the house designed for my reception. It was a sort of double house, neatly constructed, and ornamented with the rude sculpture of the country. The family (one of the first rank in the place) were all employed in removing their utensils. The landlord politely told me it gave him pleasure to shelter white men, as it would bring upon him a blessing from the gods. The distance from Akofroom to Doompassy is eleven miles and a half horizontal distance; by the path it is nearly fifteen. The average course was north, inclining half a point to the west. Mr. Collins here suffered a relapse of fever.

Our journies, it may be seen, were comparatively rapid, and really so in such a country, for we generally travelled as long as the day-light lasted, excepting the two or three last stages. Our halt, however, at Doompassy was imperative, for many more were afflicted with lameness and inflammatory disorders, of which the Guinea-worm and boils were the most prevalent.

The tall and stunted palms form the most interesting, and the doom, mahogany, and silk cotton trees, the most majestic objects in the

neighbourhood of the plantations hereabouts. These, blended with fibrous and thorny plants capriciously threading the branches in festoons, or entwining in snaky wreaths round the trunks of trees, give that singularly wild aspect to vegetation in the torrid zone which, perhaps, is only to be witnessed within the limits of the first and second parallels of climate in continental Africa. The Anana still skirted the path, and a few cocoas both male and female, increased the variety. Among the plantations I discovered a grovelling sort of palmeta or small ground palm, called by the Arabs asha, whose fibres they interweave with goats' hair in the manufacture of their tents. Among the trees and shrubs of small growth were cotton in abundance, some indigo, coffee, arrow-root, and the gooro or war nut, a species of betel, which the natives masticate as they do in India.

Hyenas, civet cats, baboons, monkeys, porcupines, ant-eaters, wild hogs, sloths, and squirrels, are said to abound greatly, besides deer, in this part of the forest. An animal which, from description, answers to the cameleopard, it is affirmed, sometimes visits these regions, and there are many to be found both in Sarem and Ghunja; but they are sacred quadrupeds, and although they herd with the elephants, they are never destroyed by the hunters.

At this elevation from the sea coast, much is left behind of the gloom and solitude of one of the greatest wildernesses south of the Niger; but this impression originated perhaps in the knowledge, that although it was still a waste, it now contained the cheerful habitations of men.

A serpent, agreeing with the *constrictor* of the class I met with on the road to Doonqua, but larger, was said to be occasionally seen here; it was dreaded by the traveller more than either the lion or panther, and would attack men as well as the most powerful animals in the creation, the elephant only excepted.

Red ants were very rarely seen here or on the road; but others

were as numerous and troublesome as ever, a fact of which they gave us many painful proofs.

My guides suggested to me the propriety of halting a few days at these quarters, adding that they durst not approach nigher the capital, for fear of giving offence to the king, by permitting me to travel like a common messenger, and by approaching the court before the necessary arrangements were completed for my reception. I was prepared to stop a day, to allow time for the return of an express messenger I had sent to the king from Kikiwhary.

I was roused from sleep at a very early hour on the following morning, (the 20th,) by the entrance of a man, whom I discovered to be the proprietor of the house, with an offering for his tutelary god, and which he was about fixing to the sacred tree, at the door of my apartment. The tribute, which consisted of the legs and head of a white speckled fowl and a small calabash containing a little corn and plantain, steeped in a fluid looking like blood, was placed on the ground at the root of the tree; but afterward, the members were severed, and suspended by a piece of cotton-yarn upon one of the lower branches. Another calabash containing a blackish fluid, served to water the roots, by being poured upon the ground, as a libation, during the recital of certain mystical words in prayer. The ceremony concluded by washing the stem of the tree with a colouring, made from the white or grey clay. On the route, particularly in the vicinity of towns, these offerings were very common, and in some spots, on which superstition had stamped a particular veneration, a numerous collection of pots and pans, although commonly broken ones, were deposited with their tributes to the gods of the forests and highways. Like the Greeks and heathen tribes of Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, the Ashantees, (who may rival or even excel the ancients in the practice of their orgies and rituals) provide their *δειπνα*, or highway suppers. Among the tribes of negroes hereabouts, they are, however, family offerings, and not public or national.

Doompassy, it is said, contains a population of fifteen thousand inhabitants. It has but one avenue deserving the name of a street, for those which intersect it, right and left, are only a confused number of openings of width barely sufficient to allow free ingress. Near the market-place are many decent-looking houses, of which the Caboceer's is by far the best. The plantations, which are flourishing and extensive, it would seem, are adequate to the supply of a population infinitely greater. Several large corn plats were enclosed, with tolerable fences of bamboo, to preserve the grain from the incursions of wild animals, and of pigs, which are here permitted to rove at liberty about the suburbs.

In the forenoon, I sent out a hunter, who, in less than two hours, returned successful from the chase, bringing with him a deer, of the antelope kind, a civet cat, and several birds.

The detention at Doompassy was particularly salutary to Mr. Collins. Mr. Salmon complained of the return of former symptoms, augmented, perhaps, by the passage over the hills. For my own part, I rapidly gained strength every journey, so that even at Doompassy, after a night's repose, I found myself in a state of health equal, perhaps, to the best I ever enjoyed in tropical Africa.

As the expected messenger had not yet returned, I gave instructions to renew the march on the 21st, to the great disappointment of my escort; but, as I hoped to meet the messenger on the road, I deemed it advisable to halt at a station more convenient to the capital.

At Doompassy, the thermometer, at eight A. M. stood at 81, at twelve, 86, and at seven P. M. 82, in the shade. In the evening, distant peals of thunder and a rustling breeze from the east denoted a tornado at no great distance, but no rain fell in the town.

The sick and lame were now twenty-three in number, of whom five were cases of so much severity, that I left them in charge of the Caboceer, with a supply of gold for their support, or to defray the expences of their burial. Many others, indeed, required rest, but they

were obstinately bent on going forward, rather than remaining unprotected in what they might conceive an enemy's country.

The inhabitants, as the bugle gave notice of our departure (on the 21st) flocked together in crowds, and with good-natured smiles bestowed their parting farewell.

A mile and a half beyond the town is a little current of water called Bahrein, running west, and a quarter of a mile beyond it is Carbouso, a croom equal in wretchedness to whatever the imagination may conceive of it. This we passed through, and beyond it the path was tolerably inviting, leading on to the village of Sanquanta, another little dirty croom, inhabited by forty or fifty families, who depend for their support upon the range of the forest.

Adjoining to Sanquanta, is a little brook, whose course S.SW. unites it to other little streams, that meander in the vallies of the hilly barrier and fall into the Prakoom. The name of this stream is Injouma. At the distance of a furlong, east from Sanquanta, is a large populous croom called Meduma. The discharge of musquets was distinctly heard in that direction. A little cross path to the westward led to a small village called Baramken. At an early hour, we entered Datchasoo, a town of some little importance, and took up quarters for the night in one of the best houses the place contained. This was a small enclosure, with four thatched rooms in a dirty and ruinous condition; but after a diligent search, it appeared that this habitation was superior to any other in the town.

Just at this crisis, two royal messengers arrived from Court, bearing congratulations on the part of the king, and a present of two and a half ounces of gold dust, enveloped in silk, a fat sheep, and an enormous sow. My own messenger returned with the royal messengers, who thus explained themselves:—"Sai (the king) hears you are come to see him, and it gives him pleasure; he therefore sends his compliments to let you know he will see your face on Monday (28th February) for that is a good (auspicious) day."



One of these messengers was a reverend looking negro, and a man high in rank; the other was a sword bearer, also high in office, and a vassal of Prince Adoom (the ambassador on the coast.) Having dismissed these people with suitable presents, they returned to say, that the king had ordered them to bear me company, and see that due respect was every where paid to the white men.

The sow, which, as I before said, was of an enormous size, was lashed by the legs to a bamboo pole, and had been transported, with great labour, on the shoulders of men.

From Doompassy to Datchasoo, it is short of six miles horizontal distance, or eight by the path. The average course by compass was N. N.W. It is a straggling town containing about four or five hundred houses and hovels, most of which are in a very ruinous condition. The population is given at two thousand souls, who subsist by spinning, dying, and weaving of cotton, manufacturing pots, working in the forest, &c. The flourishing state of the plantations here, bespeaks a rank which must have belonged to former years. There were corn, yam, and cassada enclosures, some of them tolerably extensive; and, in short, the people did not appear to want the necessaries of life, although their domestic comforts seemed so very limited in other respects.

We had been visited during the night by troops of rats, whose gambols over the thatch threatened to renew the adventure at Akomfody.

On the 22d we left Datchasoo, launching into forest as before, but an order from Court having been issued to remove obstructions and sweep the paths, the inhabitants of Datchasoo were already occupied in that work, and a number of fires were kindled on the sides of the pathway. We travelled therefore at a brisk pace, occasionally passing over prostrate logs of the most gigantic classes of timber, where the fire had severed them into open breach, and others that were still in flames.

The slave population of each town and of both sexes, was employed in this work.

At half a mile distance from Datchasoo is a little croom called Ankoasy, containing about seventy hovels, a mile beyond which we entered a better looking place called Adadwasy. At half a furlong distance to the east is a town of considerable magnitude called Madjoury, whose population is rated at ten thousand.

The population of Adadwasy is said to exceed three thousand. The town is constructed with tolerable regularity, and a growth of very fine trees, of the class mimosa, flourished in the market place, affording an agreeable shade for refreshment. The plantations were extensive and in the highest perfection. Having passed a leisure hour on the spot, we renewed the march, followed by a body of spectators to the opposite confines of the forest. The land in the neighbourhood is rather more hilly, but the risings are in long slopes easy of ascent. Aquamasy was the next croom we entered, distant from Adadwasy about three quarters of a mile. This is likewise a decent village of foresters, potters, and weavers. Its plantation is not inferior to that at Adadwasy, although the population is scarcely half as numerous.

Passing a ravine, at the bottom of which flowed a little rivulet to the S.SW. of very inconsiderable dimensions, called Jonkaran, we came to a place where a few wretched habitations were buried in a mass of jungle. This village, if it may be dignified by that name, was called Safoo, and a little beyond it was another brook called Yanasee, running NW. At a mile and a half from this is a small croom named Coraman, here also is a larger rivulet called Dansaboo, with steep banks on both sides terminating in abrupt ridges. The water flowed in a gentle current to the west. In three quarters of an hour more we entered Amoaf0, where I resolved to pass the night, and as it had been announced to me as a place of importance, I thought fit to renew the ceremonies usual on such occasions. We accordingly passed down the

main opening, and were conducted, after some formalities, to a very tolerable house, which had been evacuated for our accommodation by the family of a captain named Agado.

This journey was eight miles horizontal distance, the course N.

The curvature, or diagonal inclination of the path, if the reports of the Fantees may be credited, does not arise from natural causes, but is a political *ruse* of the sovereign to bewilder the faculties of the stranger, and create an exaggerated belief of the extent of the Ashantee dominions. This opinion is, however, ridiculed by the Ashantees, and I apprehend with justice, for the same rule could not possibly apply to the forests of Assin and Fantee, particularly in that dreary track between Mansue and the Praa; where the path, such as it is, appears to have been entirely neglected since the subjugation of the southern tribes.

Amofo is a croom of the first class: it is a sort of military depôt, and has a governor of rank. Some of the houses are tolerably well constructed; but still the clay and bamboo hovels predominate, perhaps, here, in the proportion of twelve to one, in the leading street. The population is said to be upwards of seven thousand, many, however, were Gaman prisoners of war, the property of officers and soldiers in the army.

On the twenty-third, my second messenger returned from the capital, for ceremonious courtesy being the *sine qua non* of African diplomacy, I endeavoured to neglect none of those outward forms which are so well understood in private life. I was assured by the Caboecer that the streets in Coomassy were by a royal edict ordered to be cleansed in anticipation of my approach.

While the presents were housing, I received a visit from the king's son, a child about six years of age, who was brought to me by his nurse, and several guardians, besides a courtly little troop of slaves and playmates. The custom of Africa was not omitted even on this occasion, for the visit was attended with a present of fowls, vegetables

and wine. A suitable return in sugar highly gratified the infant prince, who, however, generously distributed a portion of the sweets among his juvenile companions. I was next honoured with a visit by a female member of the royal family, a daughter of the king, whose age was probably about ten years. The retinue of this young lady was as numerous as the former. A sugar offering to the princess, with the addition of a little rum to the attendants, introduced us to a familiar acquaintance at sight. The matrons endeavoured to win my notice to their ward, by intimating that she was very fond of white men's caresses; but her timidity gave a flat contradiction to the assertion. I endeavoured to soothe therefore, in language somewhat adapted to a female ear, but the compliments I paid were unaccountably appropriated by my auditresses to their own youth and beauty, or to other inclinations; for they assured me by way of reply, that although the princess was young, yet in a very few moons she would be ready to take to wife; and if I admired her, they had no doubt the king would give her to me. At the same time the old women, taking several of their youthful companions by the shoulders, introduced them in a circle, desiring me to select a favorite without scruple, and keep her as long as I thought fit.

On the 26th, I again resumed the journey, and at the distance of half a mile, crossed the Bequa path. This is a very large town about three miles westward of the spot. The first little croom on the northern track is Gabin, adjoining to which is a small stream running west, to the Souberry. The land hereabouts was swampy, and covered with thicket and jungle. Beyond the swamps, is another superior little croom, named Benichas, which has a population of eight or nine hundred inhabitants. The village led on to the Souberry, a rivulet superior to the generality of little currents. Its course is to the southward of west, in a channel of the dimensions of twenty or thirty feet, and it is said to unite with the Foom.

Assiminia was now distant about a mile only, and this being a

town of some distinction, the usual formalities occurred in the market-place. The houses here, particularly those in the main avenue, are built with regularity, and may possibly rival the best in Kikiwhary, Ansah, or Doompassy. This appearance of comfort was also heightened by a number of beautiful trees in the market-place.

Assiminia is stated to contain from seven to eight thousand inhabitants. Its plantations encroach very extensively on the forest, and several large fields were, at this time, well fenced round in a state fit for the reception of corn and yams.

I delayed the march only to exchange compliments with the Caboceer, and supply our party with wine. The next croom we came to was Boposso, a mean dirty little place, seated on the top of a rising ground. The population could scarcely exceed a thousand souls, if so many.

A small stream intersected the path near Boposso, tracking a course westward, and a little beyond it we entered Agemum, a village of little more importance than the former. Yoko is the name of a third croom of this class, within the space of four miles; and short of a mile beyond Yoko, is a pretty considerable croom, named Abointem, containing it is said, three thousand inhabitants. Still, however, its construction was mean, nor did any of the houses here bespeak a rank superior to the ordinary class of crooms. A few hundred paces north of Abointem, a little rivulet called Bequa, which gives its name to the large town before-mentioned, flows to the S.S.W. and falls into the Souberry. Two miles beyond the Bequa is Potaiga, a croom rather superior in construction to the others, and containing twelve hundred people. A mile and a half beyond this is Fuiasso, a croom rather smaller than Potaiga. Sarasoo was now distant but an easy walk, and we accordingly entered that village at an early hour. The horizontal distance from Amofo to Sarasoo, is ten miles and a half, and the average course north half east.

The surface is of indurated high coloured clay, with now and then a scattering of iron ore, and white sand. In the vicinity of Yoko, were several very massive blocks of red and white granite. The high palm became more conspicuous as we approached the metropolis, and where a village, or open space, admitted a prospect of its upper limbs, added that beauty to the landscape which gives so much grandeur to the scenery of tropical Africa. The wild fig trees were still numerous, and some cassia, entwined with various aromatic shrubs, and the trees producing the kind of pepper called mallaguetta, or grains of paradise, were occasionally seen in the openings.

On the margin of the Souberin, and also near Potaiga, I noticed some large trees that yielded abundance of resinous gum in excretions of several pounds weight. In quality it was inflammable, like camphor, extremely light in weight, brittle, and emitting a strong odoriferous scent, not very unlike gum benjamin. I recognized also, that particular species of juniper, which produces the sandarach gum, and abundance of fine white soluble gum upon a kind of shrub, very nearly similar to the gum arabic tree. The genuine trees of these several classes named grassa, and tolh, by the Arabs, the former, a particular juniper, and the latter, what we term the gum arabic tree, were well known to me during frequent excursive tours in those districts of northern Africa, where they are indigenous. The soluble gum, which, for the sake of distinction, I shall term Arabic, is of the finest quality I ever saw, and is produced in crystalline globules, from the size of a pea to that of a small walnut.

This part of the forest abounds greatly in civet or musk cats, besides antelopes, ant-eaters, porcupines, wild hogs, sloths, squirrels, apes and monkeys. Some of the latter are exceedingly diminutive, and beautifully variegated with black and white stripes. Of the ape genus, the natives describe a species which inhabits the more eastern district, and walks erect, in which posture it will even attack armed

men. It is said also to ensnare women and young girls, whom it carries off to its recesses, and is so nimble as to render abortive every attempt at pursuit.

Sarasoo is a large compact village with one main opening, N. and S. dividing the houses into two masses. The plantations are extensive, and in an adjoining space were some small corn, yam, and cassada fields.

The difficulty of clearing spots, for the reception of grain, may well be imagined, where vegetation, both above and below the surface, is knit in such indissoluble bonds. In the Fantee country, where the produce of the earth is naturally dwarfish, and, generally speaking, does not exceed the elevation of common thickets, the process of clearing land is infinitely more arduous than in the northern parts of the Ashantee empire. The method which I have frequently seen employed in Fantee is as follows:—When a suitable spot has been selected, the slaves are directed to cut down the thicket, which is effected with the assistance of a small bill-hook, and without any immoderate labour. In the course of the operation, the few trees of a large growth are suffered to stand, after the amputation of their upper limbs. Besides those which are from necessity exempted, are also others which are suffered to remain from a religious veneration, and these are of various classes. The loppings of the boughs and thicket are then scattered over the surface in the most exposed situations, in order to dry up their sap and moisture. The reflected heat generally accomplishes this in two or three days, and the dried bush is then piled up in heaps, at regular distances, where it is fired and soon reduced to a burning pile, the ashes from which are scattered over the field as manure. At this stage of the process the preparatory labour is completed, for the plough is wholly unknown, nor would it be of any avail in such a matted soil. The spot thus prepared for the reception of grain, after the fall of the first rains, is planted with the assistance only of a small hoe, at orderly distances; but the land is never turned over, nor indeed do the natives

give themselves the trouble to grub up any of the roots, or the tendrils branching from them, or even to lop away the woody stubble that may obtrude above the surface.

In the more central parts of the kingdom, the features of the land render the process of clearing it infinitely more complicated and laborious, notwithstanding the method resorted to is the same. Here trees of more than ordinary dimensions must necessarily be rooted out, or felled with the thicket. The exempted trees are those which possess useful qualifications, such as the high and low palm, bamboo, tamarind, papa, cocoa, and some other kinds that yield valuable nuts. The sacred kinds of vegetation of every growth, are religiously respected, and suffered to exist; nor are they even mutilated like the trunks of those giant-like classes whose tops soar to the elevation of one hundred and thirty, and more feet, and whose ramifications are necessarily subjected to the operation, in order to admit a free circulation of air. The cumbersome growth of fibrous stems and vines, mixed with other plants of a watery nature, requires much labour in hacking to pieces and in removing. The time they take in drying augments the expence of the operation; but this accomplished, the process is simply as in Fantee.

In Mauritania and other parts of Barbary, as well in the Berreber lands as in those of the Arabs, I have seen tracts of many miles extent cleared externally from a covering of thicket in the course of a single day, simply by firing a quantity of stubble to windward in the dry season, when there is sufficient air to give action to the fire. The rapidity with which the crackling flames spread, is sometimes, although rarely, disastrous to those who may have wandered too far in attempting to cross to leeward of the body of fire. The thickets in these countries, however, abound in vegetation of an inflammable character, being chiefly composed of resinous trees, and dry combustible wood, whose kindling properties are increased by six or seven months' parching drought during the absence even of a single shower.

So far nature contributes to the labour of the Arab, and aids in the

transformation of a wilderness into a fair open field, or space richly manured with the still ignited embers. But what remains to be done before the ground is capable of cultivation must yet depend upon extreme bodily exertion. "The sweat of his brow," as it is sacredly written, must flow copiously ere that land can be rendered arable and fit for tillage. His labour indeed only commences at the stage where the toil of the negro has ceased, for every root and fibre must necessarily be dug from the bowels of the earth, before the plough can be made use of. Thus it would seem that Providence has duly portioned out the labours of the field; and the distribution of toil, whether it be caused by obstruction or sterility, will probably be found equal in all countries where waste land may be taken into cultivation.

Ceremonies were not wholly neglected during my stay at Sarasoo, but the nigher I approached to the metropolis the more deserted were the crooms by their Caboceers and the agents of government, who, by a mandate of the Sovereign, had been called in within the circumference of twenty or thirty miles, to add splendour to the Court, on the day appointed for my public entry. The deputies who governed in the absence of these chiefs being men of inferior rank, it was only necessary to exchange compliments with them by proxy, except when they met me in the market-place, or visited me in my quarters, which was usually the case.

The 27th was spent in tedious preparations, and in visiting the neighbourhood of the place. One of these excursions I directed to the Dah, a river that runs W. SW. at two or three hundred paces north of the town, from whence it tracks a course to the Souberin, with which it unites, and not with the Foom as Mr. Bowdich was informed. The width of the river was about fourteen yards, and the depth two or three feet at the crossing place. The Dah rises in Akeyah.

Sarasoo is said to contain eight thousand inhabitants, who for the most part are soldiers, slaves, and vassals, to Amon Koitea. Artificers,

however, are very numerous here, and the manufactures of cotton-cloths are of the superior order.

Our detention at Sarasoo afforded leisure to the invalids to rejoin the mission by slow stages; but, notwithstanding the general anxiety to do so, twelve were still absent, when the muster was made on the night of the 27th.

Early on the 28th, we crossed the Dah to a fine open path, that inclined over a bed of coarse and very white sand, extending from the river many hundred paces, and penetrating the forest as far as the eye could compass, right and left. Parties of travellers were no longer a novelty; we met many in the course of this morning journeying to and fro between the capital and the maritime towns, Cape Coast excepted. We passed a small croom two miles beyond the Dah, named Ayokoh, inhabited only by foresters. Numerous parties of natives, women, as well as men and boys, were briskly engaged, near the path, in lopping the boughs and enclosing some large tracks for the reception of maize and yams. Agogo is another croom of this class, and at a very inconsiderable distance from Ayokoh.

We were now, it may be said, in the immediate neighbourhood of Coomassy. A Court messenger met me on this path, with a complimentary enquiry after my health; and this man, being furnished with instructions from the king, conducted me to a little village, about a mile and a quarter SE. of the capital; the name of it was Ciry, a paltry little place, containing about seventy inhabitants; here the party alighted, and having exchanged road dresses for others suitable to the occasion, we prepared to move forward; but my palanquin, for which I once more exchanged the hammock, was so thoroughly dislocated, that it became necessary to secure the parts with lashings extracted from the forest: this accomplished, and the canopy being decorated with some gaudy yellow and red silk, produced a courtly African effect. Indeed, every man habited himself in his holiday apparel, and thus equipped, the

march was renewed in as close order as the path would admit of, serenaded by a vociferous chorus of the Fantees. Upon turning an angle, whereby two paths were connected, I was not a little surprised at coming directly in contact with a party of soldiers habited and armed in British costume, and headed by a white African (or, as it may be better understood, a white negro) dressed *en bourgeois*, with the exception only of a ponderous hat *en militaire*. These apish warriors, who formed a part of the king's body guard, fell into open ranks, and made some awkward movements with their musquets, accompanying each caricature evolution with a low submissive obeisance. They told me, that Sai had conferred the honour of sending their troop to escort me to his presence; a compliment which, perhaps, could not have been selected more judiciously. My own soldiers, however, were jealously inclined to preserve their station about my person; but this I opposed, from political courtesy, and therefore placed myself under the protection of the king's guard, stationing the Fantees in the van as an equivalent. In a quarter of an hour, we approached the swamp that environs the city on the south and east sides. Even here, under the very walls of the metropolis, the forest retained much of its characteristic gloom, and, excepting on the line of path, its thickets and entanglements; no change indicated an approach to a neighbourhood so highly populous as the metropolis of Ashantee. The swamp itself would have passed for any other of the same class in the wilderness. On the opposite margin of the water, a good number of the town's-people were stationed, waving to us, and inclining their bodies in salutation as they perceived they were observed. Several boys, who were here introduced to me by the Ashantees, as sons of their monarch, pushed in amidst the guard, and kept pace by the side of the palanquin.

A prospect of the capital (if such it may be called) at last opened in front of us; it was a partial glimpse, at the distance of twenty or thirty paces, of a few mud built hovels, surrounded in part by plantations, and some straggling walls of the same material, covering a contracted space gained from the adjacent waste. As soon as we arrived

at the outskirting houses, a portion of the city became visible; but its external aspect by no means promised any thing superior to the towns of Assin in general; and was, it must be told, foreign to those highly coloured plates and the description given to the world in Mr. Bowdich's work.

The street we entered was a broad convenient space enough, leading nearly in a direct line, north, to the Palace-gate; up this avenue we advanced through a crowd of spectators, of all ages and classes, and of both sexes. The clamorous songs of my people, as the procession moved on, joined to the novel sound of the bugle, appeared to animate every countenance with tumultuous joy, which was momentarily subdued only as a royal *blunderbuss salutation* burst full, as it may be expressed, in my face. The assemblage was too great to maintain an orderly deportment, and the soldiers were compelled to exert their authority to keep the people back. This, notwithstanding the commotion, was effected without difficulty, by flapping upon the ground small twigs of Bamboo, and sometimes striking the people lightly upon the legs.

My palanquin was on a sudden arrested in the main avenue by a deputation of Caboceers, who paid a formal congratulation on behalf of the king. It was Sai's desire, they added, that I should repair to the market place until the court assembled. Here, therefore, I alighted under the shade of some high trees, reposing for awhile from the scorching blaze of the sun, now about commencing his descent from the meridian. The atmosphere too, was in a manner stifled by the pressure of the multitude. A pause of twenty minutes sufficed for the approaching ceremony, and we again bent forward in orderly ranks to an angle that opened into the place of audience, from whence another salute was fired. A silence, however, like that of the forest, succeeded as the echoes died away; and as the smoke dispersed, the view was suddenly animated by assembled thousands in full costume, seated upon the ground in the form of an extensive semicircle, where the chiefs were distinguished from the commonalty by large floating

umbrellas or canopies, fabricated from cloth of various hues. These officers, only, were seated upon stools that elevated their heads just above those of their attendants. An avenue not wider than the footway in the forest, was the space allotted for walking in the line of chiefs, leading to the station where the king was seated. The etiquette was of a character corresponding with other ceremonies.

All the ostentatious trophies of negro splendour were emblazoned to view. Drums of every size, from five or six inches in length to the dimensions of as many feet, occasionally decorated with human relics, abounded in all directions; and in some (although few instances) the skulls of vanquished foemen, and strings of human teeth were glaringly exposed on the persons of the youthful captains. Ivory horns similarly ornamented, reed flutes, calabash rattles, and clanking bits of flat iron, composed the various bands in front of the Caboceers. The salutation, as heretofore, was accompanied by an impulsive grasp of the hand with each Caboceer of rank, and a waving motion afterwards in compliment to his friends, retainers, and slaves. In the act of approaching these peers of the Ashantee realm, the solemn stillness was invaded at intervals by the full chorus of each band, beating in rotation the peculiar adopted air, whereby each noble is known from his compeer. A number of select young slaves, boys of fifteen or sixteen years old, stood before the war captains, and other chief officers, in the aspect of a guard of honour, waving short scimiters and knives, which they flourished in a threatening attitude. The deportment of the Caboceers was marked with gravity; not a smile nor a courtly glance illumined the asperity of their features, and the salutations were uttered in a low affected tone of voice. The crowd, however, did not consider themselves bound to imitate the dignified deportment of their lords: they breathed a welcome in the silent language of the features.

In turn the quarters of the Moslems opened to view, where about

three hundred people of that faith (including slaves) were seated round their Bashaw. No drums or warlike instruments of any kind were in the retinue of this chieftain, nor was the avenue leading to his person guarded by steel. A dignity and decorum of the soberest cast distinguished the followers of the prophet from the tumultuous din of Ashantee custom. Policy at this time forbade my giving the salutation in a language known to them; still the reception I met with was courteous but dignified.

The dress of these people corresponded better with the costume of Egypt or Tripoli, than it did with that of western Barbary; yet it was a medley of several nations; but the privileged classes were handsomely habited in robes of Turkish or Indian cut silk, called *cofatten*, trousers of native cotton, with turbans of the same, and a small body vest richly braided with silk twist. This was perhaps the prevailing mode of dress, but other fashions, not less graceful, denoted the foreign traders; and in some instances, it was a mixture of Indian and Turkish habits, in which the loose flowing shirts with long and broad sleeves, formed the whole attire. I recognized also the common dress of the Arabs and mountaineers of Atlas: this was simply a sort of tunic without sleeves, falling down to the knee, and called in Arabic *kussabi*. The chief, however, was a solitary instance of deviation from every national mode. This man, who was far advanced in years, was decorated in yellow damask robes, something of a theatrical cut, although rich in faded embroidery and braiding. A muslin turban, preposterously studded with pieces of looking glass, charms, bits of unwrought coral, and glass beads, enveloped his head, which was covered, besides, with a damask scarf that fell over his shoulders in many ample folds, and united with a cumbrous load of apparel of various colours.

A full share of reserve, not untinged with fanaticism, appeared at first sight to distinguish the conduct of this follower of Mohammed's law. When I approached to receive his hand he hesitated, and in a



C. Williams, Sc.

Drawn by J. D. P. ...

Masters of Dagombah and Salagha in the Costumes of their Countries

tone of low rapid utterance, recited those beautiful lines of the Koran, called al Fathiat.* The ceremony was novel, and courtly in the extreme; for in Morocco and other Mohammedan states, this form of introduction is only adopted on particular occasions, where the parties are both brethren of the same faith.

From the Mohammedan quarters I advanced towards those of the ministers, linguists, and other confidential officers in whom the king reposes trust. Their superior rank was conspicuous in the number of their attendants, in the superior construction of the enormous floating canopy, in the reiterated discordance of the bands of musical performers, and in personal decorations, consisting in general of a profusion of gold ornaments suspended from the wrist and ancle, to distinguish the favourites of Royalty.

At last I approached the avenue where the king was seated. The martial instruments surrounding the throne suddenly burst upon the hearing in heavy peals, and the household slaves advanced, flourishing their scimiters over my head with menacing violence. This threatening ceremony was directed with renovated vigour as I advanced to take the king's hand, but having as it were won the contested honour in the late struggle, my opponents quietly suffered me to enjoy the prize, for the *music* ceased, the guards retired from the presence, and I was quietly permitted to pay my respects. The king extended his hand with great

* بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الحمد لله رب العلمين الرحمن الرحيم ملك يوم الدين اياك
نعبد واياك نستعين &c.

“In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate. Glory be to God the Lord of the creation and the universe—the most merciful King of the day of Judgment. Thee do we worship and Thee do we supplicate. Direct us in the right way; in the way of those to whom thou hast been gracious: not of those against whom thou art incensed, nor of those who are ill directed.”

The Lord's Prayer is certainly not more venerated by Christians than is the Fathiat of the Arabs by the worshippers of Islam, and hence it is selected as the standard for attesting public and private faith, or for any particular emergency in joy, tribulation, or doubt, between the interests and feelings of opposite parties.

complacency, yet with a dignity that created admiration and respect, for it was even more than national. The features of the monarch were placid, yet serious, with the exception of his eyes, which seemed rivetted in good-natured admiration, although they were not permitted to convey this feeling to the muscles of his face. The salutation murmured by the sovereign was re-echoed by an officer in attendance, and reported to me as follows: "Sai thanks the gods he sees you, and the other white men, and all your people."

The royal chair was a specimen of some ingenuity, yet the workmanship was rude. Its arms and legs were carved from the solid into grotesque forms, and embossed with little ornamental casts of gold. Several Caboceers in waiting were decorated with massive gold breast plates, chains of the same metal, and solid lumps of rock-gold, of the weight, perhaps, of a pound or more each. The royal messengers stood behind the sovereign, shouldering by the blades large crooked sabres, the emblems of their offices, and displaying the reversed hilts, cased in thin gold sheathing. In another position, at the back of the king's chair, a select few stood erect as guards, and were armed with common English muskets in gold casing, and habited in grotesque apparel, which consisted of a large helmet or plume of feathers of the Argus bird, sloping backward over the head, in form not very unlike those which, according to history, were worn by the inhabitants of America, and particularly in the empire of Mexico, by the warriors of that nation. In front of the plume was an arching pair of ram's horns, cased in gold, and attached by the centre to several charms and amulets, neatly sheathed in morocco leather. A scull-cap united the whole, and a long tiger's tail flowed down over a close-bodied jacket, that concealed every part but the arms, in a perfect mail of magical charms, also richly ornamented in gold, silver, or stained leather. A simple covering of cloth girded about the loins, fell half way down the thigh, and left the rest of the body bare. In addition to guns, the weapons and accoutrements of these officers were bows, and a quiver



C. Williams. Sc.

Drawn by A. Dupuis.

Paints or Magicians of Ashantee, invoking the National deities.

of poisoned arrows, suspended from the back by a belt, which at the same time supported the weight of a string of case-knives and a large powder pouch. The most ludicrous part of the equipment consisted in a large gold, silver, or iron bell, suspended by a rope that girded the loins, and overhung the posteriors, causing at every movement a dull tinkling sound, like the pasturing bells used in Spain. Over these bells were suspended gold or silver epaulettes of European fabrication, more or less tarnished. Some of the officers wore small turbans of silk taffety, or figured cotton and muslin; and beside were decently dressed in robes of various striped cotton, folded round the loins, and gracefully turned over the left shoulder, exactly as the Hayk or Alhayk, is worn by the Arabs of the western and southern deserts. The king was modestly habited in a large cloth or Hayk of figured cotton, cast off from both shoulders, and resting negligently in loose folds, upon the loins and thighs. From his naked shoulder was suspended a thick silk plait or cord, to which were attached a string of amulets cased in gold, silver, and silk. A massive gold chain encircled his waist, in the form of a zone, below the navel; and a variety of clumsy gold rings covered his fingers, thumbs, and toes. On the left knee he wore a bandage, or fillet of silk, and plaited weed, interwoven with gold beads and amulets, terminating in a tasteful tassel, that hung as low as the calf of the leg.

Monday being a day of religious importance, the king, I was privately informed, had been engaged in the forenoon in the rituals of his faith, and three human victims, in addition to cattle, had been offered to the favoured deities; but their lives, as I afterwards found, were already forfeited to the law. The chief priest, or, according to the phraseology of Cape Coast, the head fetische-man, occupied a position on one side of the throne, and was surrounded by a group of aged disciples, and youthful attendants, disfigured with stripes of white clay upon their faces, breasts and legs. In the midst rested an earthen

pot and a small box, containing, as it was imagined, relics, or offerings for the tutelary deities of majesty.

As I was about retiring, the king motioned with his hand to impede me, and by a significant nod indicated his wish that I should still remain. In the meantime, the other gentlemen who were following my steps and actions, came to the spot, and were in turn saluted by his Majesty with equal serenity, his eyes all the while rivetting themselves upon the persons and features of every stranger; while tranquillity beamed from a countenance that never even for a moment underwent the slightest alteration. At last I retired amidst renovated peals of drums, horns, rattles, and other mellifluous instruments of the kind.

As the position occupied by the king stood nearly in the centre of a large semi-circle, above a moiety of the ceremony was still in reserve. The king, or tributary chief of Banna, a monarch subordinate to the sovereign of Ashantee, happened to be at this time at Coomassy, and was stationed at no great distance from his liege lord. His retinue was splendid and numerous, comprising, besides his own people, several moslems of inferior rank, and their slaves. The vassal prince was simply attired in an African cloth, decorated with amulets, &c. sheathed in gold and the skins of beasts. Gold rings ornamented his fingers and toes, and little fillets of gold and aggrary beads encircled the thick parts of each arm. The incessant din that occasionally reigned in all parts, naturally gave rise to a feeling of sincere contempt—disgust I may say, for the music of Ashantee, however grateful it would seem to have been to the auricular organs of Mr. Bowdich, whose harmonic taste is upon record in his work. The illustrious negro prince was seated upon a chair studded with silver coins, such as dollar and half dollar pieces, which were riveted against the frame work, none being permitted to sit enthroned in gold but the “King of Kings.”

A warlike band, who guarded the person of this tributary, were martially habited in the skins of beasts, chiefly the hides of leopards,

and panthers; their weapons were bows and poisoned arrows, javelins, guns, sabres, clubs, and case-knives. Many were in a state of nudity, excepting the shim or girdle, three or four inches wide, that passed between the thighs, bracing round the lions and under the posteriors. Chieftains of rank, governors of provinces, and allies of the Ashantee empire, were next in order to the King of Banna, and the intervening space was occupied by caboceers, captains, and other officers of less note. At the expiration of two hours, I had the happiness to arrive at the extreme end of the crescent, where several of the king's ministers stood in waiting to receive and conduct me to a resting place: this was a spot of clear ground shaded on the margin by some tall trees.

After a suspense of some minutes duration, the renewed discord of drums, gong-gongs, &c. in full concert, announced a movement on the part of the court. The clamour became more and more general, and its effect, for an interval, deafening. The chiefs advanced at a tardy pace, followed in successive ranks by their vassal captains, personal attendants, and slaves, armed and equipped in their full military habits; some with iron chains suspended round the neck, others round the body in the form of a zone, while the men at arms, belonging to the household establishments of each Caboceer, brought up the rear in close embodied masses.

To prevent interruption, the leading ranks were compelled to use a moderate share of dispatch, and to induce this promptly, my guards armed themselves with palm boughs, which they flapped upon the ground, sometimes threatening, and at other times striking the twig on the naked legs of those who were too tardy in their movements. The principal performers in this discipline were the two captains, Ado and Quako, aided by the whole troop in British uniform. Yet some of the people were a little indignant at the harsh reception they met with, although the far greater part capered along in merry mood.

Chiefs of the first class now arrived on the spot, and saluted with courtesy; the reserve of a first introduction was banished from every

countenance. The band of each of these officers preceded the march, and was followed by a group of parasites, whose business it was to proclaim in boisterous songs the strong names of their masters. The bellowing of these heralds, the discordant din of war instruments, and the clamour of my guards produced a chaos of harsh sounds that would baffle the efforts of the pen to describe. The feelings of many of the caboceers, and especially those of a youthful deportment, were conspicuous, in defiance now and then of an affected serenity: their countenances from composure relaxed into smiles, and even a stifled laugh was more than once exacted by the persevering adulation of their attendants; but not wholly forgetful of what was due to their own dignity, they frequently affected displeasure at the unblushing flattery with which they were assailed. As it may not be uninteresting to the reader, I shall give the translation of one of these songs as my linguist interpreted it.

“Where shall we find such a warrior as the strong and beautiful Apacoo Kudjo, whose eyes are like the panther in fight? O great slave of the king, how you are beloved! your victories delight his ears. Who fought the Gamans and killed their Caboceer Adouai? Apacoo Kudjo! Where are the women and the gold? Apacoo Kudjo has them. He is a rich man; a mighty man! His enemies die when he is angry. He is invulnerable, his fetische (amulet) no man can look upon and live.”

The evening began to close in apace, yet still the pageant displayed unbroken ranks, and no movement had yet taken place in the king's retinue. The Moslems, accompanied by their captains, and headed by the Bashaw under his canopy, advanced in order and gave the salutation with a decorum peculiarly korannic. No barbarous music, no osseous relics; no gambols of the war dance; no sycophants to sound poetic titles and achievements; even the courtly strut was softened down to a character modest and reserved. The contrast was thus favourable to education, and the superior rank of these people in the classes of African society could not be more pre-eminently contrasted.

As the king of Banna approached, he silenced his band and sycophants together, by an authoritative wave of the hand. Then advancing until he had gained a position exactly opposite to me, he snatched a scimiter from a youth in attendance, while his people formed a silent and distant circle. He then commenced an harangue, which, by progressive degrees, degenerated into the most furious utterance, associated with rapid and vehement gestures, and flourishings of his weapon, within two or three paces of my feet. The bystanders, during the pause, gave a respectful attention to the discourse, frequently sympathised in the feelings of the orator, and oftentimes used soothing epithets, while the very eye balls of the royal chief glanced with real, or affected malignity; and the foam spurted from his mouth as from that of an enraged maniac. At last he ceased speaking, and his countenance subsided into tranquillity, as he cast the scimiter upon the earth. His relaxed features even wore the semblance of a smile, while he held me by the hand, saluted and retired. The interruption gave no satisfaction to my guards, who, after this shadow of royalty was again fairly obscured in the crowd, applied their twigs very smartly to his peoples' shoulders and legs, in revenge for the detention, for we were by this time almost enveloped in darkness. The anxiety I felt to know the substance of the speech could not be gratified at the moment; but subsequently I minuted down the following particulars from the memory of the linguist, which I introduce in this place from its obvious connexion.

“Ashantees; who is there so great, so good as Sai? No where can you see such a king. He says, destroy this country,—and it is a desert; the people are killed with his shot and his powder. When he makes war, he is like the tiger. Can any one fight the tiger? How foolish, then, are those who say they hate this great king, and speak with arrogance; for if they cannot fight, what will become of them. They cannot go in the bush, (northwards) for there is my country, Coransa, Takimah, and Bouromy: all this belongs to Sai,

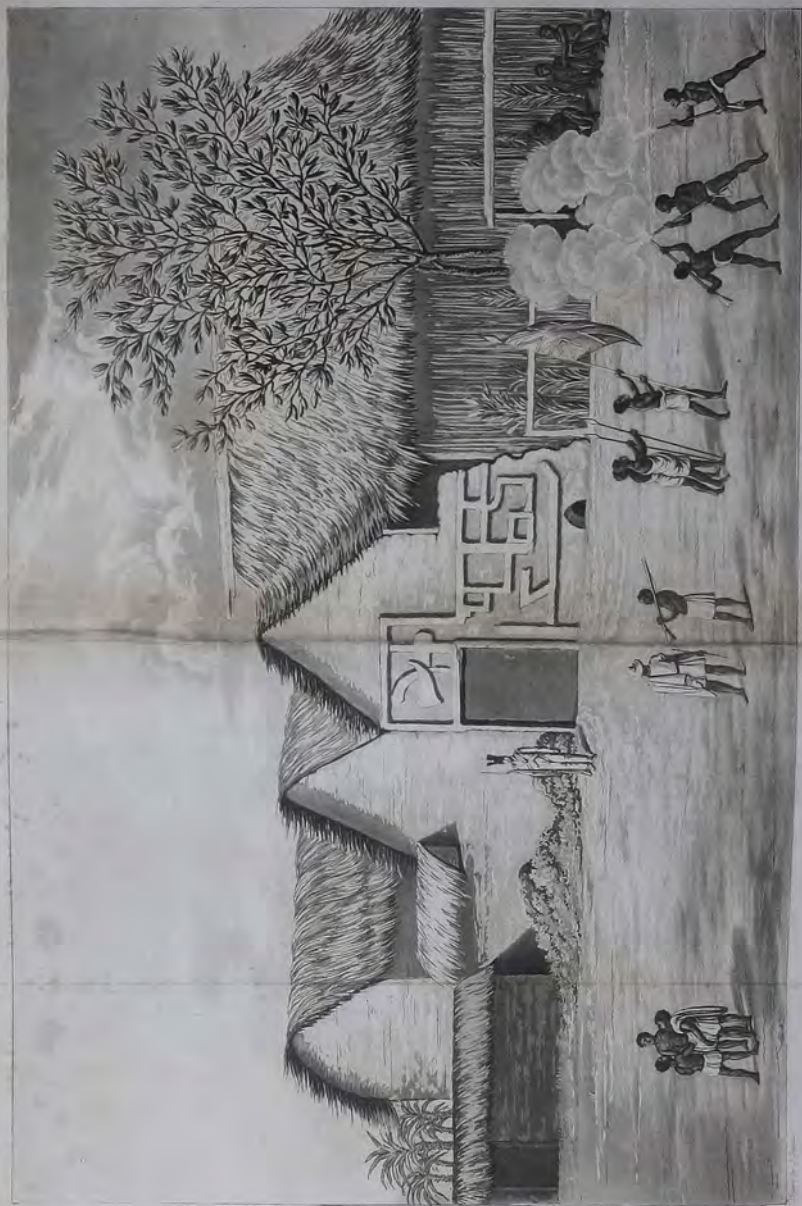
he is king over all the kings, and all the people, and his foot stands upon every one's neck. If they run to Adirai river, it is the king's fetische, and will kill them. They cannot pass Tando river. What then? there is only the sea. Will not that kill them too? You know I fight for the king; he is my master, and I love him. I fought with Dinkera (late king of Gaman) and he died, and the people died. If the king bid me make war on any country, I must obey; he is the master and I am the slave. If he desire me to go to Fantee, I swear the great oath, I will kill them all; I will cut up their bodies in pieces, and take out their hearts, and I will not let one live, because they are an insolent people. Now they hear Dinkera is dead, and they are frightened, and want to make a palaver between white men and the king, because they think he cannot then catch them. Is that reasonable? This white Caboocer comes up to talk the palaver. If he comes with truth in his heart, and with friendly intentions, it is well; but if he tries to deceive and dishonour the king, it cannot be suffered; and I shall kill all these people* and drink their blood, because they forget that they are the king's slaves," &c.

These particulars were repeated to me with evident reluctance, and under a promise of secrecy, as it was feared I might be offended, or the king himself be displeased; I learned, moreover, that this tributary had recently arrived at court, to claim his proportion of spoil from the sacking of Bontoko and Houraboh, the two capital cities of Gaman, which fell under the power of Ashantee, after the decisive battle that cost the life of the sovereign. The king of Banna had been extremely active during the campaign, particularly on one important occasion, when Dinkera, the king of Gaman, was on the point of gaining a decided advantage over his enemies. It was whispered that this ebullition arose out of circumstances connected with interest and

* The Fantees.

policy, in what regarded his situation at court and his expectations. A division of the unfortunate captives taken in the Gaman war had already occurred, when it appeared that four thousand seven hundred people of that nation, (men, women and children), were awarded to the king of Banna, as his share of living plunder. The gold palaver, or in other terms, the spoil of the enemy's government and towns, remained still in statu quo, subject to the award of the king of Ashantee; and although several conferences had taken place on the subject, yet each time the assembly had broken up without coming to a decision.

Several ministers and officers of high rank followed the petty sovereign, and darkness rapidly increased before there was a visible diminution in numbers. At last the ranks thinned; a few stragglers only came forward to warn me of the approach of the sovereign. On a sudden a number of blazing torches were seen in the distance, and a burst from the king's band announced his approach. Hitherto the preservation of our ranks had been attended with little difficulty, notwithstanding the tumultuous movements; but now I was to be initiated into a novel scene of regal splendour. By the time the foremost torches had advanced within fifty paces of the spot where I was seated, a most harsh discordance of yells, shouts, and howls, assailed the ears in a sudden peal, heightened by a re-animated burst of instruments. It naturally occurred to me that the impression was intended to paralyze the senses, by contributing to magnify the man of royalty. Thus ended a moment's reflection; for on a sudden my guards were forced by a rush of the king's guards, notwithstanding the most vigorous efforts they made to oppose the intruders. A rally was then made round my chair, to screen my person from the rude buffets of the warlike mob, but all efforts proved ineffectual, and another rush knocked over my seat, and almost threw me upon the earth. With some difficulty, aided by the bodily exertions of my friendly guard, who it appeared had suffered in an equal proportion, I recovered my feet, but with the temporary loss of sword and hat. The king's guards were now in the midst of our



G. M. 1850

The Palace of Oros, Alom, the Kings, Nghan-the Authors temporary residence at Compsie.



stood before me, and this redoubtable monarch again appeared with the same unruffled aspect, and with features rather more relaxed than before. He gazed a few moments with a penetrating glance, as if contemplating the effect created by the first impressions. He then took me by the hand in the most affable manner, and pronounced a laconic welcome: after which he saluted the other gentlemen, and the Fantees, and immediately moved off the ground.

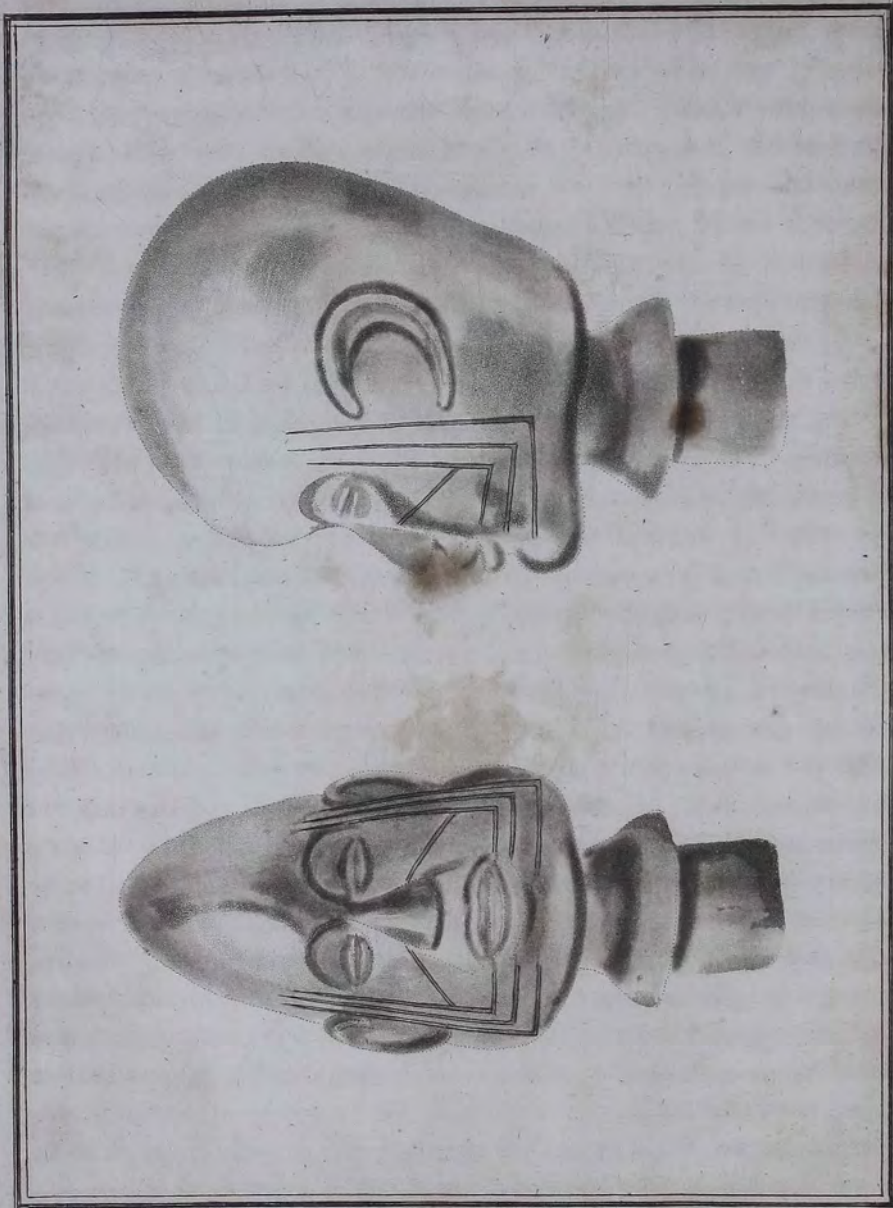
Some of the king's torch bearers were ordered to shew the way to the quarters. The king, it seemed, had allotted the house of prince Adoom for my separate use: thither I was conducted, and an adjacent house was appropriated to the joint use of the officers. I had scarcely crossed the threshold of the enclosure, before a party of slaves, headed by a captain, entered the place, loaded with a present from the king, of wine and honey, coupled with a complimentary enquiry whether I felt fatigued.

The building assigned for my use stood nearly opposite the palace, and consisted of two apartments thirteen feet long by seven in breadth, with a wall and fence, besides a long gallery or corridor, that served me as a sleeping place for guards and servants. Without the enclosure, opposite the entrance, was another recess belonging to the building, designed for the dispatch of public business. Rude as the fabric was, it was tolerably commodious, for the roof was well thatched, and the whole was perfectly secure against wind and rain, except when they happened to beat in the direction of the door-ways, or from the NE. Its architectural beauties may be classed with those of our own well thatched barns. It should be remembered, however, that under the torrid zone a barn is better suited to the climate, and certainly more adapted to the habits of the people than a more confined habitation would be. The annexed engraving is copied from a correct external view of the palace, representing that sort of hieroglyphical sculpture, in relief, which is characteristic of the style of decorating the houses of chieftains, and which, it would seem, Mr. Bowdich has so highly improved

upon. The foreground represents the etiquette of forwarding messages to the king. As the flag departs, some Ashantees are saluting it with discharges of musketry.

Thus terminated the journey from the sea coast to the capital of Ashantee, a tract which is formidable to the traveller, not as it regards distance, but from its natural obstructions. From Sarasoo to Coomassy the distance is six and a quarter horizontal miles, and the course north. The distance from Cape Coast to Coomassy, it will be seen, is rather short of one hundred and thirty-three miles horizontal; or one hundred and eighty-seven by the path.

As regards climate or atmosphere, the Gold Coast and places adjacent to the settlements, are more or less known to be unhealthy. But I will hazard an opinion that the countries inland are infinitely more salubrious, the air more pure, and the soil less humid and vaporous than at any station upon the Coast, between Cape Palmas and the Gaboon River. At Doonqua, at Mansue, and on the banks of the Praa, the temperature seldom varied much (except when tornados checked the heat), and the air was pure and exhilarating; for notwithstanding sickness tracked our steps from stage to stage through the wilderness, it must be allowed that the diseases of our party (unless, indeed, we include lassitude and lameness) were engendered at Cape Coast Castle. Mr. Collins and myself were more severely afflicted than the other Europeans; many of the natives laboured under attacks of fever, Guinea-worm, and inflammations; but it was clear to me that these distempers, and our own complaints also, were either the associates of our outset, or arose from the malignant germs which, lying torpid in the constitution, were stimulated, by exertion, into life. It would seem, however, that a country so intersected by watercourses, so humid and swampy, and withal so surcharged by forest trees and thickets, where noxious exhalations, oozing from the decay of vegetable substances, are likely to condense, could scarcely deserve the character I have given it for salubrity. Be this as it may, I leave it to others who are better able than myself to



A Specimen of Ashantee Sculpture.

account for apparent contradictions: I speak only of the reality of the fact, from personal experience, and the effect I witnessed on the constitutions of the party under my command. The deadly effluvia of African vapours are in general well known, for the rivers upon the western coasts of this continent have recorded but too many fatal proofs to leave the matter in any doubt. The Callebar, the Cameroon, the Logos, that of Sierra Leone, and the Gambia rivers, become the sepulchres of hecatombs of the human species. Whole ships' crews have even been engulfed in these waters, and the assigned cause is the pestilential exhalations of the air. These facts it would be superfluous to question, as indeed it would be a difficult matter to refute them by force of argument. May it not, however, be enquired, whether local circumstances are not connected with these cruel calamities; whether these noisome vapours do not imbibe a mortal venom from the putrefaction of vegetables indigenous to the sea coast, or to a mixture between salt and fresh water? Where the mangrove (for instance) is found—and it is presumed that this is the case not only in the rivers above-named, but at the mouths of every petty stream in tropical Africa—the infection is considered more contaminating, more pernicious in quality, and its action more deadly in effect to the constitutions of Europeans.

In reference to this hypothesis, I shall only observe, that the mangrove was rarely or never seen inland, and that the waters of the rivers, with few exceptions, are limpid, and sweet flavoured. I conceive, therefore, that the dry season of Ashantee is, beyond a doubt, equal in salubrity to what is experienced in any tropical country; and that the climate itself is superior to that of the Guinea Coast; and particularly so during those seasons of rain, mist, and earthy exhalations which prevail for eight months out of the twelve.

CHAPTER III.

COMMENCEMENT OF NEGOTIATIONS.

AUDIENCE OF THE KING—OBJECTS OF THE MISSION—DELIVERY OF PRESENTS—THE OATH OF FRIENDSHIP AND ALLIANCE TAKEN BY THE KING AND PRINCIPAL CHIEFS AND OFFICERS—INSPECTION OF THE PRESENTS, AND EFFECT PRODUCED—VISITS FROM THE ASHANTEE MOSLEMS—VIOLATION OF MOHAMMEDAN LAW—STATE OF RELIGION IN ASHANTEE—CHARACTERS OF THE CABOCEERS—SECOND AUDIENCE OF THE KING—HIS IDEAS OF EUROPE—HIS PRESENTS—VISIT FROM MANDINGO MOSLEMS—INTERRUPTION BY ADO QUAMINA—DISPUTE AND RECONCILIATION WITH HIM—MISCONDUCT OF THE FANTEES—THIRD AUDIENCE—PROSPECT OF AN AMICABLE CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS—PRESENTS TO THE GREAT MEN.

ON the morning of the 29th of February, I received a message from the king to the following purport:—"The king sends his compliments to you, and says, good morning. He wishes to see you when all his great captains are assembled." Upon this notice, I gave instructions for the officers to be in readiness, and to assemble the people. At ten o'clock, an extra guard of honour was in attendance at the outer gate, to escort the mission to the presence of the sovereign.

Upon arriving at the spot where the king was seated, a discordant peal of drums and horns burst out with a deafening clamour; but these sounds soon died away, and were succeeded by a silence uninterrupted even by a whisper. The monarch of Ashantee was enthroned in his state chair, under a large cotton canopy, ornamented with pieces of red cloth; and his ministers and captains surrounded his person.

Three or four guards only stood behind the chair, with musquets, and a number of priests were seated upon the ground to the left of the monarch. In the front, to a considerable distance right and left, the eye wandered over the heads of a crowded assemblage of chiefs of all ranks, mingled with their respective vassals. An avenue was left in this mass of human beings, just sufficiently capacious to admit ingress to the king; and through this passage I advanced. Our salutation was courteous: the king particularly enquired about the health of the officers, &c. I opened the business of the mission in terms of the following import.*

“ The king of England, whose servant I am, salutes the king of Ashantee in peace; and salutes all the great captains, his friends, and his people. The king of England, one of the greatest monarchs of the whites, having heard, by the return of some of his officers, who visited Coomassy three years back, that the king of Ashantee had received them with respect, and loaded them with kindness, rejoiced to think that the king was a friend. This induced him to make an acknowledgment, such as it was hoped would be agreeable to his majesty. He has, therefore, been pleased to appoint me the bearer of his sentiments; in token of which, I am entrusted with a present to deliver to the king of Ashantee. The king of England knew the king of Ashantee from his wars on the sea coast, long before his people visited Coomassy; but he did not know until that event, that his majesty was no less respected for his hospitable treatment of strangers, than renowned as a warrior. Influenced by these feelings, the king, my master, as a friend, earnestly invites the king of Ashantee to cultivate peace between the nations, and to assist him in encouraging a trade that would be productive of good to the country, and benefit the

* It is requisite to observe, that throughout the negotiations, I was compelled to adopt a style of language adapted to the understanding of the Linguist, who, although possessing a tolerable knowledge of the English language, comprehended only familiar terms.

people, I have been a long time on the coast, more than twelve moons, waiting in anxiety to see his majesty ; but was prevented travelling at an earlier period, in consequence of the interruption of intercourse by the Gaman war, and also of the rainy season.

“ The dispute between the king and the governor has been a subject of disappointment and regret to me, because it could not fail to give dissatisfaction to the king of England, and his great captains, that the whites and blacks should have any cause of dispute, and particularly at a time when so much had been done for the good of all.

“ If, therefore, the king of Ashantee has any thing to say against the white men, let the *palaver* be spoken, for I dare affirm that the king of England would not permit any of his people to give offence to the king of Ashantee, wilfully and without cause. At the same time it is my duty to declare to the king that if he injure the governor and white men, he may certainly expect it will deprive him of my master's friendship, and be attended with disastrous consequences.”

During this recital, which, in conformity to court etiquette, was first translated by my own linguist, and afterwards re-translated into a superior dialect, the king was musing ; but no sooner had the linguist ceased speaking, than his features relaxed into a smile of satisfaction and self-importance. Turning round to his captains, he said aloud, “ You see how much honour the white king does me. The gods have done me all this good instead of my ancestors ! Who shall disobey me, now the white king is my friend ? ” Turning his face towards me, he smilingly said, “ This is well, I am now very happy, because you are come, and can see with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears, what is true ; and now you shall settle all disputes.” With this assurance I was dismissed.

In the evening I received a message requiring my attendance at the palace, on the day following, with all the presents except

the rum, guns, and powder. * Some pots of palm wine were afterwards brought, a part of which was, by the king's desire, distributed among the Fantees.

On the first of March I went to the palace, where I found a number of workmen in readiness. The king, who was seated under a shed, surrounded by a few favourites, received me this time with the most open affability; and having directed my chair to be placed in front of his own, he introduced some significant questions about England and her king; demanding to know his name, (which he endeavoured to repeat after me, and *at perfection* articulated *Shorshi*,) the kind of house he inhabited, the number of his women (*wives*), slaves, &c., the manner in which he made war, and a variety of other questions. He declared that he knew the English king to be king over all other white kings, and that his subjects were the most powerful and warlike of the white nations: just as he was the black "king of kings, and his people the greatest black warriors." This eulogy he concluded by saying, "the great God of his fathers, whom he serves, preserve him long upon the stool (throne), and make his enemies die before him. The king of England had chained his heart to him."

He repeated the enquiry whether I was actually from England or not, for the other white man † told him, he said, that he was sent by the king of England. This I conceived to be a fit opportunity for dispelling all doubts, by introducing my credentials. One of the officers, to whom I delivered my commission, read it aloud, while the linguist interpreted at each period deliberately. The king listened with attention, and when the recital was over, he bounded upon his feet, and grasping a scimitar that was handed to him, he gravely folded his clothes about his loins, eyeing me at the time with a scrutinizing glance; and as he stood in that posture, commenced an energetic speech,

* These articles, however, were conveyed privately to the palace at the same time.

† Mr. Bowdich.

while his captains flocked tumultuously together, half surrounding their sovereign. At intervals the king flourished his weapon in the air, elevating or depressing the point of the blade as low as my forehead. When he had concluded he retired backwards to his seat, and cast the weapon from his hand, making a signal at the same time to his chief officers with one finger. The sign was understood. Adusai (a confidential minister) advanced next, and spoke with his characteristic volubility, imitating at the time, the transport before described. This officer was succeeded by Kankam (another minister), Apoko, the chief general of the army, Ado Matta (an aged officer of high military rank), and Agampong, all favourites of the king, with whom their influence was great.

This striking novelty in court *etiquette* naturally excited surprise. The king perceived it, and desired Adusai to explain to my linguist that the ceremony I had witnessed was an oath of inviolable friendship and fidelity, whereby the king pledged himself to the king of England, to serve him and to fight for him, as I should direct, &c.

At my leisure I obtained copies of the oaths, from the memory of my linguist, * and the Fantees who were present. That of the king was thus construed—

“ I swear a great oath, by the great God and the Fetische, and that great oath of my ancestors (the battle of Accromanti) that that book (commission) is what I approve of; and I will remember what is just. The great king has secured my attachment; he is my master, and I will serve him truly, and do all I can to give him satisfaction. I will send my soldiers to the right and to the left whenever you say he wishes to make war on the wicked; then all these countries will know that I am a true friend, and that the white king is my king. I will do much

* I had but one linguist when I arrived at Coomassy, a man every way qualified for his office as interpreter; another, named Abroah, came up some days after, and without my knowledge, whose presence was inauspicious: at least the king was jealous of him.

to benefit the English in this country, and the people shall know that I love them better than the Dutch and Danes; but I like all white men. Hear this, captains; my master has sent me a great officer to take care of, and he must have whatever he wants, for he is now the same as my son, and the people must know I love him very much."

The oath of Adusai was as follows:—

"This is a great day for Sai (the king) because we see his name is known in the white country. My gold, my life, my wives, children, and slaves all belong to Sai, for he is the great king here; and I swear by all the king's great oaths (those by which he swore) to do all that is right as the king says; I will fight and I will die for the white king, if he tell me."

That of Kankam ran thus:—

"It is many moons since the white men came up before. When they went to the white country, they spoke the truth to the great king, and said, Sai is your good friend; and when he hears that Sai is a great king also over the black countries, then he knows that Sai has a good heart. Now, I am the king's slave, and I shall serve him faithfully. I swear the king's great oaths, that I will do what he commands, and I will fight and die for the great white king. Thus, because he is a good friend, all the black men are his slaves."

Apoko took up the scimitar in turn. It was not unknown to me that the political sentiments of this chief, whose influence was powerful, were hostile to the Fantees. His rank in the army rendered his voice in the cabinet the most important, perhaps, in the list of caboceers. It should be recorded, however, that although he and his party were adverse to a reconciliation with the natives of Cape Coast, they did not openly implicate the governor and council in the quarrel, unless as accessaries to the conduct of the Fantees. The king of England, Apoko one day said, could not know the truth; for, as the governor had at least taken a secondary part in the quarrel, and had broken the law (treaty), he would not surely write a true book to the

great king. The sentiments of this man, to be gathered from his speech, were naturally interesting at this crisis.

“ Chief of the white men,” said he, “ that book is good, the king likes it, and we all like it. Sincerity appears in your face. The great god you serve knows what is in the heart; but I think you cannot tell a lie. I see the great king sends good things to Sai, because he thinks he is a true friend, and will take care of his forts, and the white men, and make a good trade. But the white captain, who came up before, told the king lies; because he made a book of friendship, and then cheated the king. Sai is a true king, I am only a captain. If he say—Make war, and kill the people, I must do so. If he say—Be friends, then I certainly cannot fight. Now I hear the words of that book (the commission), I like it, because the great king wishes to make Ashantee and England all one. Sai knows I tell him what I think is good for him; because I cannot sit here when I see people insolent, and hear them say he is not the king. I fought in Fantee and Assin, with Apoutay and Cheboo. If Sai be not king, as the Fantees pretend, why does the white king now send him a true captain, and presents? But they lie! and it is their deceitfulness; because they do not wish him to see the king. The white men know very well that Ashantee is mighty in war; and it is not right for the governor to say to the people, ‘ Make a wall, and fight the king.’ That is not like a true friend, according to the book. This palaver, Captain, (addressing me) is what is in my heart: I think it very shameful in the governor; but let that pass. I swear the king’s oath, that what he says, I will do; and if he say, fight for the great king, I will kill all his enemies, so that all the people shall serve him here as in the white country. Sai is our master, and the great king is our master too.

“ Then for you, Captain, you are all the same here as our wives and children: nobody shall hurt you.”

Agampong and Ado Matta swore the oath; the former without passing any particular comment; the latter, however, a respectable old

chief of the first rank, said, at the close of the ceremony, "I am an old man now, but I have fought many times against the king's enemies, and now I see all the towns conquered, and the people know that Sai is king; it is only foolish men who speak evil; but they know not what they do. Suppose, then, Cape Coast refuses to pay what is just, this white captain will look to it, and restore a good understanding; and then the trade can go down to the water side as the great king wishes."

The presents were then opened for inspection; and it unfortunately happened that the most unsightly articles presented themselves first to view. A turning lathe, in particular, attracted the king's notice, not unmingled with a look of disappointment; yet he examined the parts with minute attention, as he inquired its use. Some British silks of Indian patterns, and some little carpets which were spread before him, again brightened up his countenance, although he endeavoured to affect indifference. "All was good," he said, as he bestowed commendations on the usefulness or beauties of the presents. A convex mirror attracted universal attention, and gave the monarch so much delight, that he marched off with it to the harem, to shew it to his wives.

The next articles were an admiral's full uniform, richly embroidered, a service of china, a bronze lamp, a repeating watch, a musical box, and some pieces of rich gold flowered silks. A few of these articles, it was evident, gave him great delight; but he would not approve of one in particular, lest it might be considered a disparagement to the others. He repeated his approbation of the whole, and then passed them over for the inspection of some of his chief officers. "I love the great king," said he, "even without a present. I like the good things he sends me too; but if he sends me a corn stalk it is enough, I shall always love him." His majesty required an explanation of the properties of the organ, lathe, musical box, watch, &c. Unfortunately the organ had sustained more injury than any other article. The mechanism and harmony of

the other articles excited a degree of superstitious regard, until the king was perfectly assured of their harmless powers: the box in particular was supposed to possess talismanic virtues. The two drums, probably gave as much real satisfaction as any of the articles. The case containing them and the cymbals stood apart from the others, and the Fantees, thinking no doubt, that their virtues would be better explained by a specimen of the effect, struck up a peal without any ceremony. The king, at first, did not seem to notice the sound, but as soon as he was made acquainted with the cause, he desired the noise to cease; his countenance at the same time indicating a sense of suppressed mortification at the liberty taken. Last of all, one case of musquets was opened, and their quality minutely inspected; as if these deadly weapons were, after all, deemed of more intrinsic value than any thing else.

It was already dusk, and the king appeared anxious to escape from the bustle. He desired to know, precisely, whether or not the present was sent to him by the king of England. My answer satisfied him that it was. "Then," said he "I am happy. I have conquered all the countries down to the sea with my own powder and shot, and the gods have made me known to the great king of white men, whose officer brings me good things. This is a great honour, which I cannot forget. If my country contains any thing good for the great king," said he, addressing the conversation to me, "it is his, for he is my master too. His present I like very much; and I like him, for he is my good friend, and his people are all my good friends." As he concluded the sentence, he arose from his seat and retired.

On the following morning, March 2d, a deputation of the Moslems waited upon me to deliver a message of congratulation on the prospect of peace. The deputation consisted of Mohammed al Ghamba, or Baba as he was commonly called, Bashaw, or Caboecer of the Moslems, attended by Abdallah ben Gatta Shoumou, Ali ben

Mohammed, Shellom ben Cantoma, Ibrahim al Yandy, Abou Becr Atolo, Jelelly ben Kadsy al Bouroumy, and Al Hadge Ambaric al Slaghy; nine of the principal traders, besides a proportionate number of the inferior classes, and slaves. Many of these people enjoyed rank at court, or were invested with administrative powers, entitling them even to a voice in the senate. The party having seated themselves, the chief explained the purport of the visit, commenting at intervals upon the pacific disposition of the king towards white men, his prowess in war, the extent of his dominions, &c. Although Moslems, many of these people, in common with the heathen Africans, were addicted to the use of spirituous liquors, and it was frankly insinuated by some of the bystanders that a little rum would be acceptable. The chief, however, took the precaution to dismiss the whole of his retinue, with the exception of a few friends. These failed not to indulge in swallowing a few goblets of that *delectable* spirit, although, with a moderate degree of affectation, they rejected the first offer.

When they had sufficiently regaled, and as the liquor exhilarated the company, I took the opportunity to introduce a sort of satire used by the Arabs against drunkards. The astonishment, not to term it superstitious terror, with which these *religious men* were struck at the sound of the language exceeded any conjecture I could have formed. The sentence was well comprehended by the Bashaw, whose countenance betrayed a confusion that gave me pain to witness. At length one of the party, with pure simplicity, replied, "Chief, whatever you may really be, for God alone knows, you have spoken wisdom to shame us before the infidels, because we who are true believers are sinners, and break his holy law. This is certainly a direction from the Most High. In the name of God who are you, and from what country do you come?" Although I satisfied their enquiries, by a confession that their religious language was known to me, from a long residence among the Arabs, still

I found it impossible to renew the hilarity of the scene. The liquor was neglected, and an affected austerity was employed to cover the former excess. From this day forward, neither the Moslems nor any of their proselytes would indulge in the use of spirituous liquors in my presence.

In the evening the Bashaw returned, in company with his friend Abou Beer only. In the most serious and unaffected manner they enquired if I were not a "true believer," and a Talb, or priest. To both these questions I thought proper to return evasive answers.

I found that the knowledge these people possessed of the Arabic was limited, generally speaking; although a few of the most intelligent were sufficiently skilled in the language to hold a conversation with fluency. This qualification the chief and his friend, particularly the latter (Abou Beer), were gifted with to a degree exceeding most of their brethren. Although their idiom was sometimes obscure, yet all serious obstacles to a direct communication of thoughts were removed. Thus early I could not fail noticing that their pronunciation resembled that of Egypt and the Deserts: notwithstanding an intermixture in the dialect of a few uncouth expressions, which savoured of the original African. In this language our correspondence was renewed, and when they could not gain a satisfactory reply on the subject of religion, they produced a Koran, and turning over the pages, pointed out two or three passages relating to the unity of the Supreme Being, the resurrection of souls, the future state, &c. These they requested me to read, and putting a favourable construction upon my compliance, the controversy ended. It appeared in the sequel, they indulged the belief that our faith was the same, in theory at least; or that I was actually a true believer, according to their own acceptance of the word; and for political reasons I never was desirous of undeceiving them.

In reminding me of the sarcasm I had used in the morning, the Bashaw told me that his feelings had been wounded, because he stood

in the character of Patriarch, and therefore had suffered degradation in the eyes of his friends.

The familiarity of our intercourse entitled me now to a greater degree of confidence, and accordingly I was given to understand, that the "Prophet's cause" was not neglected in these regions of ignorance. "When I was a young man," said the Bashaw, "I worked for the good of my body. I traded on the face of God's earth, and travelled much; as my beard grew strong I settled at Salgha, and lastly removed to this city. I was still but an indifferent Talb, when, God be praised, a certain Moraboth from the north was sent to me by a special direction, and that learned saint taught me the truth; so that now my beard is white, and I cannot travel as before; I am content to seek the good of my soul in a state of future reward. My avocations at Coomassy are several; but my chief employment is a school which I have endowed, and which I preside over myself. God has compassionated my labours, and I have about seventy pupils and converts at this time. Besides this, the king's heart is turned towards me, and I am a favoured servant. Over the Moslems I rule as Cady, conformably to our law; I am also a member of the king's council in affairs relating to the believers of Sarem and Dagomba; and I trade with foreign countries through the agency of my friend Abou Becr."

This confession was in some points open to a prejudicial construction, inasmuch as it looked ostentatious; but from the general conduct of the man, his modesty and urbanity, I could not bring myself to think so uncharitably.

In adverting to the religious opinions of the Ashantees, the reply was, that they were poor wandering heathens; but that many of the chiefs were bigotted infidels, not excepting the king himself; although that monarch would sometimes give ear to the law, (of Mohammed) and never opposed the believers of Ghunja; but on the contrary was a friend on whom they could always rely for protection. Although the king, added my informer, was a misguided infidel, he

was yet superior by far, to many other sovereigns, and particularly to the king of Dahomy, his eastern neighbour, who was an infidel of infidels (Kaffar ben al Koufar).

This sovereign a short time back was an avowed enemy to the religion of Islam, and actually put a number of the "Prophet's children" to death in his country. God, however, they said, had changed his heart, and now the brethren of the true faith travel even to the sea side in safety, and gain numbers of proselytes in his dominions. Reverting again to the king of Ashantee, they asserted that with the exception of many barbarous practices, such as the libations of human blood at sacrifices, and the horrid cruelty of his wars, he was a good man, and wholly undeserving the name of tyrant. The character of true believers, they added, stood very high with the king, for he consulted them upon many important occasions, where the interests of their nation were concerned; and moreover, he never engaged in any warlike enterprize without their society,

In the case of the recent war of Gaman, they informed me that they both accompanied the king.* It was the bloodiest campaign they had ever witnessed, for many thousands of Moslems perished in the war, as Ghobagho and Kong (both Mohammedan countries,) had united their forces with Dinkera, king of Gaman, who had cast off his allegiance to the king of Ashantee, and transferred a tribute which he formerly paid him to the Sultan of Kong. In describing some of the characteristics of the war, they declared they had actually witnessed the

* Subsequently I learned that the Bashaw deserted from the army, the evening after the great battle of the Tando river, and returned to Coomassy. This conduct enraged the king, who swore that had he not been a holy man, he would have put him to death. After I became acquainted with this little history, I took a favourable opportunity to insinuate its contents to the chief, who, in reply, admitted the truth; but alledged in his defence, that his character as well as his life were at stake; for in regard to the former, he could not without deserving to be stigmatized as infamous, witness the horrid butcheries in the camp, so contrary to the tenets of his religion, and what would it have booted him in the world to come, had it pleased God to have destroyed him in the ranks of the infidels, when he was not fighting for the faith, but against it.

massacre of ten thousand old men, women, and young children, besides numbers of chieftains, who were put to death by tortures the most revolting to humanity. The Ashantees, they affirmed, were, as enemies, the most terrible of mankind, and in war, were justly dreaded even by the true believers.*

Religion was a favourite topic of discussion. With this preference I purposely complied, that I might gain the confidence of my new friends. To my enquiries relating to the geography, &c. of the interior of Africa, they gave replies which proved their capacity and inclination to oblige. Their account of these matters will be found in another division of this work.

During the remainder of the evening these valuable friends continued to furnish me with many useful lessons, calculated, as they affirmed, for my guidance at court; nor did they exempt from the catalogue the private characters of several of the king's friends and courtiers. Apoko in particular, they declared to be the most ferocious chief in the kingdom, and one whose delight was to wallow in human blood. Amon Koitea, a man whose rank was second only to that of the king, and who governed the country as lieutenant or viceroy, was a tyrant equally blood-thirsty, and in his sacrifices the most inhuman of monsters. Little more reputable were the characters of Ouso Cudjo, Ado Quamina, Amo Nahim, and other captains of the king's troops.

* This political conduct on the part of the king appearing to me a little enigmatical, and as it did not tally with what I had been previously told of the respect entertained for Moslems, I suggested the question as an apparent inconsistency. But I was readily informed that his majesty's affection for true believers was limited to the more eastern districts, and to Talbs or priests of all nations, but more especially those who came from Egypt, or any part of the Holy Land. His western wars were strictly political. Yet the prisoners he took in battle, if Moslems, were never put to death like infidels; on the contrary, they were well used, and generally transferred to the eastern division of the empire, particularly to Bouromy on the Volta. If they fell in battle against the king, it was considered their "blood was upon their own heads."

My entry into Coomassy they affirmed was signalized by the sacrifice of a number of human victims; slaves and malefactors, who had been reserved by the king and his chiefs for many days previous. The number of victims offered up at the palace, they added, were nine, and every chief was compelled to furnish an additional quota to the sanguinary offerings; but the king knowing the abhorrence with which the white men viewed these butcheries, had conducted the sacrifices in secret, and had prohibited all his chiefs from exercising the like barbarity in public during my stay in Coomassy.

On the 3d of March, Agampong, the captain of the palace, or of audiences, waited upon me with a message requesting me to attend the king.

I lost no time in obeying the summons, and found his majesty seated in his palace, under the same shed as before. Several of the presents lay scattered before him, as if he had been engaged in the inspection. The reception he gave me was as friendly as could be desired, and he caused me to be seated by his side.

A conversation upon various desultory topics opened the audience, and the king, throughout, manifested by his enquiries an intense curiosity regarding the affairs of Europe; but more especially of England. His knowledge on these points appeared, as in fact it really was, extremely limited. Europe, or the "land of white men," he supposed to contain several tribes or families, of which the English was the most warlike, and powerful, of the day; and the Portuguese the most ancient, and formerly the mistress of all the other tribes. These several tribes, he imagined, inhabited a number of large islands which were subordinate to the king of England (or the English island) who received annual tributes from the whole. Besides the Portuguese, the Danes, Swedes, Americans, Dutch, and Spaniards were names familiar to his understanding, although his information respecting them was equally contemptible; so much so, indeed, that it would have warranted a mean opinion of his majesty, had I not known from

experience, that it was possible for nations less remote from Europe, and infinitely superior in acquired knowledge* to think as vaguely.

The king pointing to the lathe, required to be informed of its properties; but when this was done, he could not be prevailed upon to value it at a high estimation. It seemed to him too mechanical for a royal present; at least his countenance conveyed this impression, although courtesy prevented his evincing any disappointment. The properties of the organ were better understood, yet it was discovered to have sustained material damage in the humid vaults of Cape Coast Castle. The task of winding up the watch and musical box required a degree of care foreign to the comprehension of the king; it was requisite, therefore, to put the mechanism in motion each time. At last the king consigned the lathe and organ to the care of Mr. Salmon; as this gentleman expressed his confidence of being able to put them in order; and here the audience broke up.

Early on the 4th of March, the king sent me some bottles of palm wine, coupled with an injunction to hold myself in readiness to meet him in the great area, where he designed to distribute some bulky presents before the people. I felt something like repugnance at meeting his majesty's wishes in so public a manner, and this objection I insinuated to the Bashaw; but my scruples were totally beyond the comprehension of this worthy Moslem; nor could he conceive that I was sincere, until I hinted a thought of sending to the palace, to request that the intended presents might be postponed until the

* In Morocco I have conversed with Arabs or Moors of superior education, whose notions concerning the geography of Europe, differed not very materially from the opinions of the Ashantees. England, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Hamburg, Lubec, and some other trading countries and cities were conceived to be islands in the Ocean, contiguous to each other, and of no extraordinary magnitude, although England was admitted to be the largest and most populous. Their notions concerning France, Italy, but more particularly Spain and Portugal were more accurately defined, doubtless from ancestral tradition preserved from the records of their forefathers, the conquerors or inheritors of that extensive Peninsula.

evening. "How can you," said the chief, "think of such a thing? the king already loves you like his son, and why do you wish to shame him in his own country, when he is going to treat you the same as he would a king, and do you a great honour before his captains and all Coomassy? The people," added the Bashaw, "are already assembled, the great officers are in attendance, as well as our own people, and I shall be with the king; therefore come in God's name, and it will be well for you: but if you do not, the king will surely think you are angry."

The approaching ceremony, it is true, created a certain feeling not far removed from disgust, as it seemed to interfere with the character I was bound to support. It was pleasing, however, to witness the anxious solicitude of the Bashaw and Abou Beer, who could only have been guided by the purest motives of friendship, and I submit these remarks, in contradiction of what has been insinuated to the prejudice of the Moslems, respecting their political sentiments.

About one o'clock, the king sent me a guard of honour, and a message intimating his readiness to meet me at the appointed spot. I accordingly sallied forth with the other officers. The whole body of Fantee carriers brought up the rear, with countenances beaming with satisfaction; for, as they were heard to say, it looked auspiciously, and foreboded a reconciliation. On turning the angle at which my quarters joined a row of huts, a full assemblage of the people opened to the view; and in the midst of the multitude the king was seated under his canopy. Our seats, by his majesty's direction, were placed under the shade of some trees, and after a formal salutation he retired a few paces in front of our ranks. His majesty's countenance beamed with more than usual satisfaction, which it reflected upon all around him. The chiefs enjoyed in secret the ostentatious gaiety of their sovereign, while the multitude, less attached to decorum, and elated with the bare glimpse of royal smiles, were animated to bursts of enthusiasm and

uproar. These feelings of good will were not lost upon the Fantees, whose happiness seemed little short of what was manifested by the Ashantees themselves.

Adusai was directed to distribute some little silk packages which the king placed in his hands. In obedience to this instruction, the minister came pompously forward, and advancing towards me, as he held up the packages to public view, he delivered one into my hand, saying, "The king gives you seven ounces two ackeys of gold, as a token of friendship." The other little parcels of gold, in the proportion of two ounces and upwards, were afterwards distributed to Messrs. Collins, Hutton, Salmon, and Graves, each in proportion to the estimation his majesty was pleased to put upon their respective ranks. The king was attentive to what was transacting; yet he occasionally turned round to his courtiers, inquiring as it were, by his countenance, whether their feelings sympathized with his own.

A pause of some duration ensued, and his majesty directed his eyes full, and steadily upon us, while every muscle indicated a joyous satisfaction, augmented as it seemed by the hilarity of the people. A messenger now advanced to acquaint me that the present of provisions was approaching, and soon afterwards a file of about two hundred men and boys, laden with provisions, passed in the order of review, and were then conducted to my quarters, where they deposited their burthens. The supply consisted of two cows, several sheep and goats, poultry, eggs, yams, plantains, bananas, honey, oil, palm, nuts, and wine, cankay bread, and a large pig. The court then broke up, and we were permitted to retire. Upon approaching the avenue leading to my apartments, the scattered heaps of provisions which had been cast promiscuously on the ground, nearly choked up the way. The abundance that now reigned in the quarters, gave licence to excesses among the people, and as the diet was in itself somewhat novel to the Fantees, many of those people suffered from intemperate indulgence. This princely donation lasted, however, but a few days,

for added to our own daily consumption, the town's-people occasionally invaded the quarters by stealth, and pilfered the bread, wine and nuts.

In the course of the day, the king sent me a horse, which he desired I should make use of during my stay in the country. This animal, although of a diminutive breed, and of unsightly appearance, was moderately fleet and active, possessing a share of Arabian vivacity. The saddle and trappings were in the fashion of West Barbary, although the workmanship was uncouth, and some of the ornamental appendages were wanting.

Abou Becr and Cantoma, the two Moslems, whose names have been already mentioned, paid me a visit in the afternoon, bringing with them a few manuscripts, which they said belonged to a friend of theirs, who was then absent on a trading journey at Killinga. Cantoma was moderately well skilled in the Arabic language, which he said he had studied in Haoussa. From these Moslems I learned that several Mandings and Mountaineers were in the city, who only waited an invitation to pay their respects to me. I had no sooner expressed an inclination to meet the strangers, than these two friends departed, and in a few minutes returned again with three Moslems, who said they were natives of Kong, that they belonged to a Mandingo tribe called Argoul, who having opposed the Ashantees in the Gaman war, it had been their lot to fall under the power of the king. These men were incapable of holding any conversation in Arabic, and one of the three only was able to read in that language. Ado Quamina happening to enter the apartment at the time, put a total stop to the harmony of the meeting; as they did not care to converse in the presence of an Ashantee chief. My endeavours to get rid of my new guest were unavailing, as he politely assured me that the king had appointed him to prevent the people from being intrusive. Finding that my new acquaintance were not disposed to retire, he spoke in an angry tone to them; the effect of which was evident, as they suddenly took leave. The interpreter said that Ado Quamina threatened to report them to

the king, upon a suspicion that they had been giving me information about the western countries.* This recital kindled some indignation on my part, and in turn I peremptorily insisted upon his quitting the quarters, threatening to relate the whole matter to the king, and complain that the first insult I had received was from the man who called himself my protector.

The resentment conveyed in this threat effectually softened down the austerity of the chief, who was now anxious to conciliate; offering to restore me my friends; but I did not deem it politic to renew the intimacy at this time, and Ado Quamina departed. Cantoma and Abou Beer whispered me before they left, that I should be on my guard against Ado Quamina, who acted as a court spy. The king, they added, would not object to my intercourse with them, although he might not approve of an intimate connexion with his recent enemies;

* In pages 48 and 49 of Dalzel's History of Dahomy, it appears that a prejudice coinciding with the one abovementioned existed in that kingdom. The passage is as follows: "In the evening going to take leave of the great captain, they found in his tent two of the Muley or Malaye people, of which there were about forty at that time in the camp. They were black, dressed in long gowns, with a kind of turban on their heads, and sandals on their feet. The interpreter told Captain Snelgrave that they belonged to a nation far inland, bordering on the Moors, had been taken in different wars as they were trading from one country to another, and were, like the white men, possessed of the art of writing. The king treated them kindly, in return for which they dyed goat and sheep skins of divers colours, out of which, amongst other uses, cartouch boxes and powder bags were made for the soldiers. The author was desirous of conversing with them, but was informed it would give offence to the great captain; knowing the jealousy of all the negroes in like cases, he desisted, and having paid his visit, returned to his tent."

This is a more accurate account than any given by the preceding writers, some of whom supposed them from the name to be natives of Malacca. It seems probable that Guinea is indebted to these wandering Mahometans for many of its customs, and Europe for the knowledge of the inland countries.

It is this jealousy that has stopped the progress of all the European inquiries into the geography and history of this part of Africa, and which will probably remain an insuperable obstruction to it for many ages, unless we could employ these Moors or Malayes, if found adequate to the task, and willing to undertake it. They seem to be the only people who have a *passé par-tout*, and who travel much farther than the *Caravans*. The Malayes here are detained as being prisoners of war; but traders would not be under such restrictions, as we may see by comparing the treatment of Lambe with that of the other people.

but when it should be known that our religious language was familiar, he would not certainly be very scrupulous, and therefore it would be necessary to tell his majesty the truth. Ado Quamina returned again at this juncture, bringing with him a small pot of palm wine, which he presented to me as a reconciliatory offering, and grasping Cantoma by the arm, he entreated his mediation. It would have been impossible to harbour resentment, had I not persuaded myself that it was necessary to consult other feelings than those which were personal. Again he departed in a pensive mood, and as the sun went down, returned once more, bringing with him his band of musical performers on horns and flutes, and commencing a serenade opposite the outer gate. Whilst this was transacting, he seated himself very demurely in the street, beating time with his hands, and chaunting occasional stanzas. During the entertainment, the Bashaw and two or three of his friends entered the quarters, and Ado Quamina again followed with his pot of wine, and some honeycomb, which he had added to the present. When he had placed the articles at my feet, he renewed his petition to these Moslems, one by one, requesting their mediation with me, and called to my own servants, by name, intreating a good word from them. It was more than enough; I felt as if I had really injured the man, and could hold out no longer. I accepted of his offering, and buried all animosity by permitting the musicians to enter the enclosure.*

The Bashaw informed me he had recently come from the palace,

* Of all the musical instruments of Ashantee, the flutes and small horns are the most tolerable to an European ear. Enough has already been said upon the discordant notes of a full concert of martial music. The flutes and horns form, however, an exception, and in truth, the harmony produced by an unison of these instruments is far from despicable; the former being melodious and plaintive, and the latter approaching the sound of the human voice, perhaps beyond any other artificial contrivance. Indeed so clear and distinct are the tones which they utter, that conversations are usually carried on by distant parties of performers, and war songs, and deeds of heroism are recited, by which they work an audience up to a pitch of phrenzy.

and that the king knew I could converse with the believers, but he could not acquaint me by what means his majesty obtained that information. The king, he said, was not angry but astonished, and he believed my *Fetische** to be a very powerful one. The conduct of Ado Quamina I found had been already promulgated abroad by himself, and my visitors candidly avowed that they came to reconcile me to Ado Aquamina, who dreaded the power of my "Fetische" as much as he did the risk of incurring the displeasure of his sovereign.

The Bashaw introduced a number of young male slaves whom he had adopted in his family, and who were under his religious tuition. These lads, he assured me, were the children of infidels in various countries, and some were Ashantees, given to him by the king, or purchased with his own property. Every true believer, he added, adopted the same plan in proportion to the extent of his income; and as it was an act highly meritorious in itself, so all the faithful who visited these lands made a merit of redeeming at least one soul

* The application of the word *Fetische*, so commonly in use with Europeans and Negroes in this part of Africa, requires elucidation; yet it would, perhaps, be impossible to select from any known language a term of corresponding signification. Sufficient may be said, however, to explain its general import. *Fetische* is evidently a corrupt relic of the Portuguese, introduced to the country, probably, by the original explorers of that nation, and adopted by the Africans to accommodate to the understanding of their visitors, such things connected with religion, laws, or superstition, as could not be explained by the ordinary use of a few common-place expressions, and that could not be interpreted by ocular demonstrations. Religion, we know, was a leading feature in the Portuguese and Spanish armaments of those days. Any exclusive power, or faculty in human nature, is deemed an inspiration of the *Fetische*, such as slight of hand, necromancy, invocations of departed spirits, and witchcraft. The religious laws of particular sects or casts, (for they are probably as various in Africa as elsewhere) are described to Europeans, at the present day, under the denomination *Fetische*. The talismanic charms and sentences from the Koran, worn about the body, have the same appellation in common; and generally whatever is held as sacred, including trees, stones, rivers, or houses, whether ancient or of recent dedication to any invisible spirit or matter, are comprehended within that signification. Thus if a man should swear by the religious observances of his ancestors, an interpreter would say he called upon his *Fetische* to witness the truth: and the same invocation may be applied to other cases, where the oath is upon trivial affairs. An invocation of the wandering spirits or *Genii*, which also bear the name *Fetische*, is considered inviolable.

from the jaws of perdition, according to the injunctions contained in the Koran. One of these youths was pre-eminently conspicuous from his fellows, by personal beauty, and a countenance of prepossessing benignity, and the Bashaw noticing the attention with which I eyed his convert, instantly offered to dispose of him, provided I would be a purchaser. But when I assured him that my curiosity was confined to a knowledge of his native country, he told me that he was from a town in Bouromy, on the banks of the Bahar Aswada, or, the Volta River. The young man's features were exactly of the Arab cast. He, as well as his compeers, was incapable of comprehending a single sentence, or even a word of Arabic, beyond the little gleanings of his religious study. The Bashaw, however, was unwilling to leave upon my mind an impression so unfavourable to his scholastic capacity; selecting, therefore, one of the pupils as a specimen, he desired him to rehearse a part of his acquirements. This, the young man complied with, and recited the * Fatha and Bismillah verbatim, but his pronunciation denoted that redundancy of vowel terminations so peculiar to the languages of all negroes. This circumstance I could not fail to notice, because his delivery was an exception to the pronunciation of his patrons, who, although African negroes also, generally spoke the language with a tolerable share of fluency, and with a pronunciation which would not have disgraced even the Caba. As the conversation turned upon the features of internal Africa, the Bashaw informed me that, as in his youth he had travelled a great deal, the thing he regretted most was that he never took up the resolution to visit Mecca and the Holy Land. Now, added he, I am an old man;

* The Fatha has been already described. The Bismillah (In the name of God) is another prayer; or more properly that part of the Islam creed which teaches its votaries the unity and indivisibility of the Godhead, and held in high repute. The words are—

“ In the name of God the merciful and compassionate. Say God is one (and indivisible). The Eternal God: he begetteth not, neither is he begotten, and there is no one like unto him.”

the mountain rain has fallen upon my head, and I am incapable of long journies; or, at all events, I would close my days in the land of the faithful. In reply to my enquiry how far he had been to the northward, "I have never, said he, crossed the Quarra River, yet I have been in Sarem, in Dagombah, in Killinga, in Yarraba, and all the countries upon the great waters."

Agamong arrived at a late hour in the evening, bringing with him a large pot of palm wine, which he delivered to me in the name of the king as of a superior growth and quality, adding, "The king drinks your health in his house, and wishes you to do the same by him."

On the 5th of March, I attended the palace to return the king thanks for his present. His majesty put on a scrutinizing, although a good-natured look as I advanced, and when the acknowledgements were interpreted to him, instead of noticing the purport of the visit, he significantly motioned his head, repeating in a voice moderately audible, as if to himself, "Salamo, Alikom, Alikom Salam Alikom Salam, Salamo Alikom*," his eyes being still riveted upon me. My two friends Cantoma and Abou Becr were seated upon the ground, near the state chair, in the attitude of counting their beads, when the king abruptly inquired of them where I gained a knowledge of their language; but made no remark upon it.

This audience was the least pompous of any. The king was habited in a simple garb that covered his loins, leaving the remainder of his body exposed; nor had he any ornaments of gold, silver, coral, or aggrý beads, as is customary on state occasions. A few only of the principal officers and captains were in attendance, besides the two before named Moslems. Two guards stood behind the monarch armed with musquets, and this etiquette alone distinguished him from the subject. After the lapse of a few seconds, (during

* The Korannic salutation.

which I felt some anxiety to know in what light the king might view my intimacy with the Moslem laws and language) the reserve passed off, and his majesty spoke upon several topics. At last, resuming the business of the mission, he spontaneously said, "The great king (of England) is my master; he is my friend too, he sends me good things and makes my heart glad; thus he does me great honour before all my people, and puts shame on my enemies faces. I see your face, that is enough; I have no more palavers with white men, and I have no longer a *bad* palaver in my head. All the evil the Fantees have done shall be settled, I am a true friend to the great king, and will do what I can to please him." The audience soon after broke up, and I returned to my quarters under a buoyancy of expectation that led me to entertain with confidence the hope of a speedy termination of all differences.

The news soon spread from the court through the city, and in less than an hour, the Moslems assembled to congratulate me upon this happy turn of politics. The Fantees, who had hitherto confined their perambulations to the vicinity of the quarters, from an apprehension of insult, or personal hostility, now roved at pleasure through every section of the city; and from questioning these individuals I found that the greatest harmony existed. Indeed the difficulty that remained was to keep the people, and particularly the servants, to their respective duties. This unanimity, moreover, introduced licentiousness into our party; who, no longer awed by apprehensions, indulged themselves in excess.

One night after I had retired to rest, I was disturbed from sleep by a clamour among the people, and throwing a cloak about me, I proceeded to the apartment from whence the noise issued, and there discovered a number of Fantees regaling over a keg of rum, and some pots of palm wine, which they had purloined. Several women and young girls were seated amidst the group, or rolling over the laps of the men in the most wanton and indecent postures. My intrusion

put a stop to the conviviality of the meeting. The lamp was suddenly extinguished, to aid their escape from observation, and every one who was able fled from the scene of riot into the town, although I posted myself at the outer gate to intercept the fugitives. This tended to increase my surprise, but at dawn I was no longer astonished, when I found there was a private avenue cut between the wall and the reed fence that surrounded the apartment. This had been made as a private sally-port, to gain access to the city when the quarters were closed at night.

I received visits from several Ashantees of rank, and amongst others Ouso Bannahen, the king's uncle, came in some state, attended by forty or fifty retainers, amongst whom were a group of boys. This man was of a disposition happily mild, and indeed, with the Moslems, I found he was considered comparatively of an humane temper, although they would not admit the term in an unlimited sense, for they repeatedly affirmed that every chief was more or less prone to cruelty or oppression, and that they were educated to deeds of ferocious barbarity from childhood.

In the evening the king sent me a present of palm wine, and some live fish in a large silver tureen; these the messenger assured me were caught daily for his majesty's table, in the Bussem Echouy, a large lake of water on the Akim path. His majesty's good wishes were added to the present, with the usual "good night" and an injunction "to make myself happy, for he was my good friend; and if I wanted any thing to let him know."

The following day was chiefly employed in distributing presents to the king's officers and relatives. But before this very essential part of the negociation could be carried into effect, or before any chief would presume to accept the intended present, it was necessary to obtain permission from the king. The message returned from the palace was gratifying. "The great king," said his majesty, "has sent me good things, and he sends good things for my captains; this is

a true friend. White men know what is right, so do every thing you please." With this licence I drew up a list of those in power, whose influence at court was most important to my views, and to these men I distributed presents in proportion to their rank.

Here I shall observe, that the system of negotiation at Morocco, does not materially vary from that of Coomassy; and as I have frequently conducted missions of this character to the sultan, I was at no loss in a negro court.

In Ashantee, however, the wives and concubines of the sovereign, are not permitted, neither do they expect, to participate in the gifts of foreign ambassadors. Their mediation is considered unavailing; and their occupations too servile and domesticated to entitle them to notice in state affairs. Whereas female mediation, as it is well known, is absolutely of the first importance as well in Barbary as in the East, where the fiat of the sultan frequently originates in the harem or the seraglio.



A Street in Comnabiy leading to the Palace.

CHAPTER IV.

NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUED.

ARRIVAL OF THE INTERPRETER ABROAH—PREJUDICES OF THE KING AGAINST HIM—THE KING'S SISTER—ACCOUNT OF HER PROMOTION TO THE RANK OF GOVERNESS OF THE EMPIRE—MAGICAL RITES AND SUPERSTITIONS—BARBARITY OF THE KING TOWARDS HIS WIVES—COMMENCEMENT OF A HISTORY OF THE KING'S WARS FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE KING OF ENGLAND—SUSPICIONS ENTERTAINED AGAINST THE INTERPRETERS—THE KING'S NOTES FOR CAPE COAST CASTLE—REMARKS ON THE CONDUCT AND STATEMENTS OF MR. BOWDICH RESPECTING THESE NOTES—THE KING'S ARGUMENTS AND DECLARATIONS—QUALITIES AND PRICES OF GOODS SUPPLIED FROM CAPE COAST—HUMAN SACRIFICES—ATTEMPT OF THE CABOCEERS TO SOUND THE BRITISH AGENT—CONFERENCE ON THE SKETCH OF A TREATY—MESSAGE TO THE KING FROM CAPE COAST CASTLE—DISPUTES RESPECTING A PENALTY ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN REPRESENTED AS INSERTED IN THE FORMER CONVENTION—RETURN OF MR. HUTTON TO CAPE COAST—ERECTION OF A FORT BY THE KING—MISUNDERSTANDING RESPECTING THE KING OF JUABIN (DWABIN)—CONTINUATION OF THE PALAVER—LITTLE ADAI CUSTOM—HUMAN SACRIFICES—AUDIENCE OF CEREMONY—PRESENTS FROM THE KING—INSTRUCTIONS FROM CAPE COAST—INDIGNATION OF THE KING—EXHIBITION OF THE MAGIC LANTHORN—APPOINTMENT OF A DAY FOR THE AUTHOR'S RETURN, ON HIS SOLEMN REQUISITION.

ON the 7th, a Mulatto, named George Abroah, arrived at Coomassy from Cape Coast, with a letter recommending him to me as interpreter to the mission. His knowledge of the English language was rather superior to that of his coadjutor and predecessor; but as I afterwards discovered, he was very deficient in diplomatic courtesy, frequently giving unintentional offence by the omission of certain acts of ceremony and decorum. His presumptuous address excited some displeasure in

the king, even on the day of his arrival in the capital, when he was ushered into the presence of that sovereign, and imprudently started the topic of the "Fantee Palaver." The king also obtained information (but by what means I could never discover) that Abroah was a relation of De Graaf, the linguist of Cape Coast Castle, whom he was pleased to consider his political and personal enemy. This circumstance also weighed heavily on Abroah's reputation at court, and indeed operated to the disadvantage of the mission, by checking that open confidence which had hitherto been so strongly manifested by the king and his council. These disqualifications compelled me to remonstrate warmly with Abroah.

The king's sister entered my quarters in the forenoon, bringing in her train a troop of about one hundred and fifty women and young girls, many of whom were described as the daughters and wives of men of high rank. After taking a seat she motioned to several females who were her intimate attendants, to enter the place, whilst the remainder stood or seated themselves upon the ground without. Her speech was laconic. "She was happy," she said, "because I was her brother's good friend, and the friend of the captains, and she thanked me for the present I had sent to her." This woman's relationship naturally established her in an elevated rank, but she was doubly dignified by an employment which, perhaps, may not improperly be termed Governess of the empire, or Queen over the females; all of that sex being immediately responsible to her government, and subject to an arbitrary controul under her vice-governesses.

With this employment she had been invested only a few months, and since the king's return from Buntoko. Her elevation proceeded from a cause somewhat remarkable.

When the king was about to open the campaign against Gaman, he collected together his priests, to invoke the royal Fetische, and perform the necessary orgies to insure success. These ministers of superstition sacrificed thirty-two male and eighteen female victims,

as an expiatory offering to the gods, but the answers from the priests being deemed by the council as still devoid of inspiration, the king was induced to *make a custom* at the sepulchres of his ancestors, where many hundreds bled. This, it is affirmed, propitiated the wrath of the adverse gods. The priests then prepared a certain Fetische compound, which they delivered to the king, with an injunction to burn the composition daily in a consecrated fire pot within the palace; and upon no account to neglect the fire, so as to suffer it to go out; for as long as the sacred flame devoured the powder, he would triumph over his foes.

When the king joined his army he commissioned his eldest sister (then governess of the kingdom), to attend strictly to the sacred mystery, telling her that his crown and life both depended upon her vigilance, and the fulfilment of his order. He selected also three wives to whom he was more attached than the rest, to watch by turns over the mysterious rites, in conjunction with his last-mentioned sister.

During the king's absence, this arbitress of his fate formed a connexion with a chief of Bouromy, whose ambition suggested a plan to seat himself upon the throne.

In this conspiracy, seventeen of the king's wives and their families are said to have joined; the fire-pot was broken to pieces, and the chief commenced arming his party. But the king, added my informer, who had sustained heavy losses in the early part of the war, *and was unable to account for the audacity of the enemy*, performed an incantation over a certain talisman, which gave an insight into what was transacting in the capital. He therefore dispatched a body of men under Ouso Cudjo, who, after an impotent struggle on the part of the enemy, effectually crushed the rebellion. When the king returned home, he called a council to deliberate upon the punishment due to the offenders, and it was finally decreed that his wives should suffer death by decapitation. His sister, to prevent the profanation of spilling royal

blood, was ordered to be strangled. The chief, her paramour, and all those of his party, were doomed to the most cruel deaths at the grave of the king's mother. These sentences were carried into prompt execution, and it is affirmed that above seven hundred people were sacrificed, or fell in resisting the royal forces. After this the younger sister, my present visitor, was made governess.

While these butcheries were transacting, the king prepared to enter the palace, and in the act of crossing the threshold of the outer gate, was met by several of his wives, whose anxiety to embrace their sovereign lord impelled them thus to overstep the boundary of female decorum in Ashantee; for it happened that the king was accompanied by a number of his captains, who accordingly were compelled to cover their faces with both hands, and fly from the spot. This is said to have angered the monarch, although his resentment proceeded no farther than words, and he returned the embraces of his wives. But being afterwards told by some of the superintendents that these women were more or less indisposed from a natural female cause, he was inflamed to the highest pitch of indignation, and in a paroxysm of anger caused these unhappy beings to be cut in pieces before his face; giving orders at the time to cast the fragments into the forest, to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey.* Nor did the atonement rest here, for six more unhappy females were impeached of inconstancy, (a failing, I believe, very common among them), and they also expiated their faults with their lives. Like another Ulysses, his majesty then devoted himself to the purification of his palace, when

* The law of Ashantee, although preserved only by tradition, is equally influential over the morals of all ranks. That regarding the treatment of women is of some interest, from its approximation to the Levitical, or, perhaps, more intimately to the Mohammedan law, as related in the second chapter of the Koran, where it is enjoined that the men shall separate themselves from the women when naturally indisposed, this being deemed a pollution. In Ashantee, a woman is unclean from the same cause, and cannot approach her husband, or any male branch of her family, until the disorder has left her, and she has undergone certain purifying ablutions.

to sum up the full horrors of these bloody deeds, two thousand wretched victims, selected from the Gaman prisoners of war, were slaughtered over the royal death stool, in honour of the shades of departed kings and heroes.

In the course of this day I repeated my visit to the palace. The king was at this time listening to a palaver between a Moslem and an Ashantee; but my entrance put a stop to the discussion.* His majesty instantly invited me to a conference, and having assembled around him a few of his captains, he commenced with great volubility, a narration of his original intimacy with Assin and Fantee; retracing from its commencement, the political connexions that existed between Ashantee and the states before-mentioned, together with the causes that induced his country to make war upon them and other neighbouring states. These particulars the king expressly desired me to write upon paper, in order to justify his conduct to the king of England, who, he said, could not possibly know what evils had been inflicted upon his people, through the bad faith and hostile policy of his neighbours.

I instructed one of the officers to minute down the particulars as they were described by the king, through the usual medium of interpretation; but in an early stage of the narrative, the king, who had been eyeing the linguist Abroah with a look of suspicion and distrust, objected to his services, protesting that he was a man, who, of all others, was most prone to deceit, and who was purposely sent to pervert the truth, and "put bad palavers in my head." This was uttered with vehemence, and a corresponding gesture, which failed not to have due weight with the party to whom the accusation was addressed. The thread of the narrative was thus interrupted, and the king wandered from the argument to the dispute at issue, between himself and the authorities at Cape Coast; thus reviving feelings which could only tend

to procrastinate the evils under which the British Establishments had so long suffered.

In the first transport of anger, the king exclaimed, with much bitterness of expression, against De Graaf (the mulatto linguist at Cape Coast) upon whom he lavished every abusive epithet. "He is the man," said the king, "who encourages the people to rebel; and his intrigues in the castle made the white men enemies to their best friend. His heart is bad, and he suggests falsehoods to the governor, telling him that another king sits upon the stool of his ancestors in the place of Sai, who was killed by the Bontokos."

The king occasionally evinced symptoms of extreme anger, which now and then degenerated into scurrility and malicious satire, as he dwelt upon the character of the Fantees and his former wars with that nation. At length this transport subsided, and by degrees his eyes recovered their usual good-natured expression. He declined, however, continuing the history, neither was I permitted to retain possession of the manuscript in which the narrative had been commenced. When I returned it to him, he said he would consider of it, and as he wished the great king to know the truth, he would send some of his friends as ambassadors to England, for he could not tell what the paper spoke.

The next topic of discussion related to what is termed the "king's notes," being, in points of fact, a sort of feudal bonds for the ground rent of the Castles of Cape Coast and Annamaboe, which, by reversion, after the subjugation of Fantee and its reduction to vassalage under the yoke of Ashantee, became the property of the king.

The following are copies of these notes which are still in my possession. The reader will, by inspection, be qualified to form an opinion whether or not the king, in complaining of the Fantees, was justified in conceiving his title to the sovereignty a good one.

“ Cape Coast Castle, April 1, 1817.

“ Zey Tooto Quamino, King of Ashantee, at 160s. per month.

(Signed)

“ JOHN HOPE SMITH,

“ Governor in Chief.” L. S.

“ This note was held by Amoney, Caboceer of Annamaboe, but in consequence of the conquest of the Fantee country was claimed and transferred to Zey, king of Ashantee, by the consent of the former owner.”

“ Paid to ultimo, July, 1817.

“ Goods

(Signed)

W. SMITH.

8oz.

“ Paid to ultimo, December, 1817, in

“ 10 Ankers Rum, 1oz.

W. S.

10

“ Paid to December 31, 1818, in

“ 24 Kegs powder

W. S.

24

“ Paid to December 31, 1819, in

“ 66	Lead bars	-	-	-	-	oz.	2	1
“ 4	Ankers Rum	-	-	-	-		4	0
“ 4	Kegs Powder	-	-	-	-		4	0
“ 13	Cottons	-	-	-	-		1	10
“ 1	Ditto Bandanoe	-	-	-	-		0	8
“ 2	Taffeties	-	-	-	-		2	0
“ 5	Glasgow Danes	-	-	-	-		1	14
“ 1	Fathom Scarlet	-	-	-	-		0	8
“ 8½	Pieces Long Cloth	-	-	-	-		4	4
“ 3	Romals	-	-	-	-		1	2
“ 5½	Manchester Toms	-	-	-	-		2	1

oz. 24 0 W. S.”

The other note is as follows :—

“ Cape Coast Castle, April 1, 1817.

“ Zey Tooto Quamina, king of Ashantee, at 160s. per month.

(Signed) “ JOHN HOPE SMITH,
“ Governor in Chief.” L. S.

“This note was held by Adooco, Caboecer of Abrah, but in consequence of the conquest of the Fantee country was claimed and transferred to Zey, king of Ashantee, by the consent of the former owner. The note of Adooco was only 60s. per month, now increased to 160s. as above.”

“ Paid to ultimo, July 1817.

“ In Goods (Signed) W. SMITH. 80z.

“ Paid to ultimo, December, 1817, in

“ 10 Ankers Rum, at 10z. each W. S. 10

“ Paid to December, 1818, in

“ 24 Kegs Powder W. S. 24

“ Paid to December, 1819, in

“ Goods as per note of Amoney, at this date W. S. 24

“ This is the note of Cape Coast Castle.”

These wretched bonds were objects of contention in an early stage of the negotiation between Mr. F. James (the conductor of Mr. Bowdich's Mission) and the *Cabinet* of Ashantee, in the year 1817. The king's arguments, although they were vehement ones, were supposed even then to be convincing; or at least, to show something like justice on his part; nor can it be said that the forts ever attempted to exact a recognition of sovereignty, beyond the precincts of those forts, castles, or factories. So far, indeed, to the contrary, that not only Cape Coast and Annamaboe, but every other establishment on the Gold Coast, were fettered to Ashantee, by bonds not very dissimilar; and their payments, since the conquest, reverted to the king by the right the sword had given him; or were relinquished by that monarch in favour of his maritime allies, as in the instances of the tributary king of Apollonia, and the chief of Accra.

The following extract from Mr. Bowdich's Mission (pages 46 and 47) wherein that gentleman, for himself and coadjutors, Hutchinson

and Tedlie, endeavours to justify a conspiracy against their superior officer Mr. James, may be useful to refer to here.

“ We were sent for to the king’s house ; he was only attended by his privy counsellors, &c. The king said he wished to talk ; he desired Mr. James to explain to him two notes which he produced, written by the governor in chief at the request of Amoney, king of Annamaboe, and Adokoo, chief of the Braffoes, making over to Sai, king of Ashantee, four ackies per month of their company’s pay as a pledge of their allegiance and the termination of hostilities. The impression seemed to have rooted itself in the king’s mind, that this was the governor’s individual act,* or that he had instanced it ; his countenance changed ; his counsellors became enraged ; they were all impatience, we all anxiety. Tell the white men, said the king, what they did yesterday made me much pleasure, I was glad we were to be friends ; but to day I see they come to put shame upon my face ; this breaks my heart too much. The English know that with my own powder and shot I drove the Fantees under their forts, I spread my sword over them, they were all killed, and their books (notes) from the forts are mine. These white men cheat me, they think to make *Shantee fool* ; they pretend to make friends with me, and join the Fantees to cheat me, to put shame upon my face ; this makes the blood come from my heart, &c. The irritation spread throughout the circle, and swelled even to uproar.”

Page 48. Mr. James said in reply, “ The governor of Cape Coast had done it, that he knew nothing about it, &c. The king asked him to tell him how much had been paid on these notes since his demand, that he knew white men had large books which told this. Mr. James said he could not recollect. Nothing could exceed the king’s indignation. White men, he exclaimed, know how many

* Whether Mr. Bowdich doubted the fact I stop not to enquire ; but the reality of the act, agreeably to the king’s suspicions, was notorious.

months pass, how many years they live, and they know this, but they wont tell me: could not the other white men tell me?"

For the sake of brevity I must pass over some long panegyrics, which it would seem the author with no parsimonious hand has stamped upon his own zeal, promptitude, and talent, such as these qualifications stand recorded at the expence of the unfortunate James, whom in the same breath he stigmatizes with many disqualifications.

In page 49, the subject is renewed. "The Moors of *authority* seized the moment, and zealously fanned the flame which encircled us; for the king looking in vain for those testimonies of British feeling which presence of mind would have imposed, exclaimed, I know the English come to spy the country, they come to cheat me, they want war, they want war. Mr. James said, no, we want trade, &c."—The king continued, "I will send a captain to-morrow to take these books, and bring me the heads of all the Fantees under the forts; the white men know I can do this, I have only to speak to my captains. The Dutch governor does not cheat me; he does not shame me before the Fantees, he sends me the whole four ounces a month. The Danes do not shame me, and the English four ackies a month is nothing to me; I can send a captain for all: they wish for war. He drew his beard into his mouth, bit it, and rushing abruptly from his seat, exclaimed Shantee foo! ah! ah! then shaking his finger,* &c. would have burst from us with the exclamation, If a black man had brought me this message I would have had his head cut off. Mr. James was silent."

* Ingenious as this specimen of the Ashantee language may seem, it is only remarkable, as I am credibly informed, for being a specimen of the author's limited erudition: he forgot however to insert its meaning, if he knew it. *Shantee foo* implies, simply, Ashantee people, as we may say Englishmen. How the king could have applied such angry words to threaten poor Mr. James and his band, would seem to require some little philosophy to explain. The ah! ah! is O! O! This is the *exposé* of all the hidden mystery of this terrific exclamation. Mr. James knew more of the Ashantee language than any white man in the country, judge then how dreadfully alarmed he must have been at such a menace from such a monarch.

Page 54. "Whilst we impress the surprising power and influence of the king, we must do him the justice to acknowledge the convincing manner in which he urged the injuries and forbearance which preceded the Fantee war; his willingness to do every thing for the forts, and the conduct of the Dutch governor in giving him the whole of the four ounces, were impressively and ingeniously associated."

But dismissing this digression, the goods that were sent to the king under my charge in payment of the notes were subjected to a rigid scrutiny, after which his majesty demanded to know their respective prices, as they stood valued upon the list. When these charges were read over, he affected the greatest astonishment, mingled with anger. "What," said he, "is it thus the governor shews his friendship for me, charging me an ounce of gold for an anker of rum, or a keg of powder; six ackies for a romal, an ounce for a piece of taffety silk, and all the other goods at the same high prices? Is this treating me like a friend and a king? Truly, I see he makes this extravagant profit, *because I would not receive the notes at four ackies a month.* This is not proper conduct in white men towards the blacks. The great God gave them much sense, and they make books that ought to speak truth; but this book is not true, for the governor puts down whatever he chuses, because he knows I cannot read. This is shameful, for when I made the book (treaty) with the other white men, I was too happy, and I sent all the trade to the governor's warehouse as he told me,* and I sent him a present of gold and slaves, and a present of slaves to the governor of Annamaboe. When I do good in this manner, how can the white men say, I wish to quarrel and make war? I like all white people, for God has made them better than the blacks, and they hold my heart. Mr. White was a good man; he always told me the truth, and never quarrelled with me or cheated me; but this governor proposes to be my friend,

* Mr. Mollan.

and when I accept his offer he deceives me, and shames me before my captains and the Fantees. When I went out to fight against Dinkra, I sent to Cape Coast for fifty kegs of powder and some lead to make shot, because I liked Englishmen best; but the governor sent my messengers away, because they had not gold enough; they then went to El Mina, and the Dutch governor gave them the powder and shot, and sent my gold back. Which was the best friend? Suppose I make an alliance with a king and he wants gold; I give it him: if he wants me to help him, I must go and fight for him too; and then he knows I have a true heart, and love him like a brother."* God made white and black men: he loves all men; he does not say they must not be friends because they differ in colour. White men read books, and know the great God, therefore the blacks say, these are strong people; their fetische is good. This is true, but then they must not do evil. Now when I send gold to Cape Coast to buy goods, and the governor does not know it, so I buy powder at two and three kegs to the ounce, and three ankers of rum to the ounce, and seven ackies for the best guns, and I get one hundred bars of lead for two ounces. The Dutch governor always pays me fairly, he same as if I buy in the

* During the speech of the king, the parties mentioned in page 117, were again called forward to await judgment. The palaver itself was subsequently explained to me by Kantoma. It seemed a relation of this man, having married a very young girl belonging to a good family in Coomassy, carried his bride away, with intention to solemnize the nuptials at Coransah, among his own tribe, a race descended from a branch of Moslem Mandings called Salkoh. On the route, at a short distance from the capital, she had been clandestinely seized upon by a party of men, dragged into the forest, violated, and beaten in a cruel manner. The assailants then effected their escape, leaving the unfortunate girl to her fate in a trackless thicket, where, after long search, she was discovered, in a bruised and lacerated state, but could give no account of those who had injured her.

The accused, a heathen, pleaded, in the course of his examination, a prior claim to the girl, who, he alledged, had been betrothed to him from infancy; but he denied all knowledge of the criminal transaction, or indeed that his intended bride had ever been disposed of in favour of another. The Moslem, who, it seems, had selected this man upon suspicion only, was unable to establish proof, and in this stage of the trial, the king commanded the accused to pass the ordeal termed the "fetische of truth," a poisonous beverage usually administered to suspected criminals.

town, and I get good things; but when the governor of Cape Coast sends me articles, they are bad;—the rum is watered, and the powder is all dust, like charcoal. I think a white man cannot do this; therefore I say to my captains, See what the Fantees do; they cheat me, and dishonour the English governor. Then my captains take up the sword, and swear they must march to the water side, and live in the towns. But I do not want to kill old men and women and children for their gold, as my soldiers do, I prefer friendship.

“The Cape Coast people, I know, are insolent; but as the governor made a book, he should not listen to them. The poor people cannot help it, if the Caboceers tell lies; but then the governor knows better. That man,” added the king, pointing to Abroah, “is bad, for he belongs to the family of De Graaf; I think he was sent to put a bad palaver in your head. Then there is Aggry; he wishes, no doubt, to be thought king of Cape Coast; but he does not wish me to know that. I am the king, and there is no other king in my country. If I chuse, I can send my captains and bring his head to Coomassy. He thinks I shall not do so, because I am afraid of the castle; but this is not true. Did I not fight the Fantees under Annamaboe fort? and when the great guns killed my people, did I not fight the white men too, and did they not put out a white flag to make peace? I cannot do this now, for I know the great king, but I think he does not know the truth. Now I thank the gods you have come to see me, for you will know every thing.” Here the king paused.

In reply, I defended, as far as in reason it could be done, the governor's charges. To deny that the goods might have been purchased at a much lower rate, would have required a considerable share of effrontery. I therefore maintained an argument founded upon precedent from the year 1817, admitting the possibility of purchasing goods at a lower rate, but insisting that the opportunity of doing so was accidental. I refuted his imputations to the best of my ability, although, to adopt the sentiments of Mr. Bowdich, the *king's arguments were plausible even to conviction.*

In the evening I was again summoned to the palace. I found the king seated in the society of a few captains, who were again examining the quality of these goods. "Do you tell me," said he as I entered, "that the prices I am charged are fair?" I replied evasively; but this not proving satisfactory, I affirmed that if the communication with the interior existed as formerly, they possibly would realize the prices charged upon the list. This was tender ground, I knew. In truth the prices were exorbitant. The king, not knowing how to direct his anger, abused Abroah. "Mulatto men," said he "look white and sickly, so they want to be all Caboceers, like white men." Breaking the thread of this conversation, and turning abruptly to me, he said, casting the old treaty* down, "What is the use of that book? I sent it back to the governor, and now he returns it to me. I am afraid it is a bad book. If I fight I cannot keep the book, for friends don't fight." I suffered these *royal* transports to subside, and at the close of the audience had the satisfaction to hear the king reiterate his pacific intentions.

The 8th of March was a day dedicated to superstitious rites. My friendly Moslems waited upon me in the forenoon, bringing in their train several natives of Zogho and Killinga, who had recently arrived at court. The sacrificing blade, they emphatically said, was in action at the chieftains' houses, and many human victims had been dragged into the palace yard for slaughter. "The king, they continued," is wrathful to-day. The angel of death hovers over the city; but Allah, the all-powerful, will protect the faithful." As no access could be gained either to the palace or the houses of the great officers, all public business was at a stand, and I indulged in rambling over the capital: it was desolate; no human beings were seen in the streets, and very few in the enclosures belonging to their houses; those few rejoiced at the sight of white men, and bowed their heads at a distance with timorous humility. The death drum and the horn were distinctly recognized under the outer

* The convention made by Mr. Bowdich in 1817.

walls of the palace. After the lapse of an hour the gates were again thrown open, and the people again filled the streets, resuming their customary occupations.

Upon returning to my quarters, I found several of the king's officers in waiting. They were guardedly reserved with respect to the transactions of the morning; but assured me the court was then open. Upon this information I dispatched a messenger to solicit an interview with the sovereign: but he returned unsuccessful, in company with a captain of the palace, who had been deputed to apologize on behalf of his master, for declining the meeting. This message was followed up by Adusai, Ado Matta, Kankam, Agampong, and Ado Quamina, all men of superior, and some of the first rank in the cabinet and army. My former visitors retired, as the second party seated themselves and opened a desultory conversation. I was prepared for matters of more importance, to which I imagined this was a prelude.

Adusai, taking the advantage of a pause, suggested that it would afford the king great satisfaction to bring all differences to an amicable issue. "You, white captain," continued the chief, "are beloved by the king, even as his son. The Caboceers like you, and the people say, that is a fit man to talk the palaver, for the king knows he cannot tell a lie. You know the people of Cape Coast are bad; they have incurred the king's strong displeasure, because they built up a wall and said they would fight him. Now what do you think is fit to be done?" My reply was an evasive one; but as they renewed the question, I desired to know whether they had been deputed by the king to learn my sentiments privately, or whether they had been invested with authority to negotiate with me at the quarters? The answer was in the negative; they protested that their visit was one purely of courtesy, and consequently they had no diplomatic authority. On this assurance, I declined, as a matter of course, entering upon a conversation of that public importance. This resolution, which I thought would have

excited displeasure in my guests, had quite a contrary effect; a shout of approbation, coupled with a train of compliments, too fulsome to repeat, convinced me that although I was mistaken in my conceptions, these great men were not altogether so innocently engaged as they pretended.

The Bashaw and Abou Becr called in the evening; they cursed the sanguinary disposition of the government, alledging that six men and nine women had been sacrificed in the morning to the king's household gods; that these butcheries were kept from my knowledge, for two reasons: the one, that they concerned the Mission, as the king had been imploring the aid of his idols, to incline the heart of the great King of England towards him—the other that I should not have to report that the sovereign of Ashantee delighted in spilling human blood, which it was well known gave as much offence to white men as it did to Moslems.

March 9th. The audience of the 7th had excited a train of conjectures regarding the complexion of court politics, as they related to Fantee.* The interview yesterday with the chiefs had not tended to raise my hopes, and the ambiguous conduct of the court prompted me to bring matters to a speedy issue. Accordingly I framed certain preliminary articles upon the fundamental parts of the old treaty, strengthened by one or two clauses contained in my instructions, viz. for the establishment of a factory between our chief settlement and the capital; a guarantee of safety and protection to the persons and property of individuals, who might be induced to visit the interior on trading speculations, or to inculcate christian knowledge, &c.

* Strictly speaking, the town of Cape Coast is nominally distinct from Fantee, although the Ashantees class the people together as one nation, or family. The king invariably spoke of Cape Coast Town as a Fantee town.

A particular clause also specified that Cape Coast, and every other town under the guns of a British fort were to be considered entitled to the protection of the British government, and subject to the controul of the garrisons; also, that in consideration of the friendship manifested by the king of England, and the appointment conferred upon me, all grievances and disputes of a past date, and particularly the "palaver of Cape Coast," should be buried in oblivion. That the peace should be re-established by an act of renunciation on the part of the king of all and every claim or pretension, particularly those claims whereby his ambassador had been authorised to demand 1600 ounces of gold from the governor, and 1600 more from the town of Cape Coast. Thus prepared, I made my arrangements for the next audience.

At an early hour in the forenoon, a messenger came from the king, bringing in his arms a child, and under his escort several other male children, sons of the monarch. The purport of the visit was to return thanks in his majesty's name for some little presents of sugar which I had distributed among the members of his family. "Sai," continued the messenger, "says white men have good hearts, for they love little children."

I repaired shortly after to the palace, in company with the officers and Fantees. The reception I met with from the king was promising. Accordingly I explained my sentiments upon the propriety of arranging the palaver. To this the king assented, and I then solicited his attention to the preliminary articles as already explained. One of the officers read them over to him, allowing sufficient time to the linguists for interpretation. The article explanatory of the royal oath, according to the etiquette of the 1st of March, afforded the king much satisfaction. "That is proper," said the monarch. "The great God take care of your king. You must put in the book that whatever he bids me do, that I will do; for I am a true friend to my master, and I must fight when he commands."

The article guaranteeing security of life and property to merchants and missionaries visiting the interior, passed this time without a comment; as likewise that for establishing a factory on the road to Coomassy. The one relating to the encouragement of trade afforded delight. "This," said the king, "is what I want. I don't want war, that is only the talk of bad men."

The article relating to Fantee and the legislative influence of the castles on the line of coast, was listened to with great attention, but did not afford satisfaction. An interruption ensued, and the king warmly declared that he should insist peremptorily upon receiving from the Cape Coast people, as a matter of right, that obedience which was due to him in quality of their sovereign, and which they had hitherto been in the habit of paying him. They had used, he said, the most insulting language towards his person and government. Dare they fight him? If they thought so,—why pray to white men to make peace? When he was absent in the Gaman war, did they not abuse him, and say he was no longer king; that the Buntokos had killed him, and conquered his country? His captains knew this to be true, and when they were angry they said, "O king, the Fantees are a bad people, they insult you and us, you must let us go and kill them." "But," added the king, "I told them no, that would be wrong because of the treaty. When my messengers went to Commenda, with the jaw bones, the people laughed at them, called them liars, beat them, and turned them into the bush. Then they went to Cape Coast and complained to the governor, but he would not listen to them. I then sent more messengers; but they all say the Governor refuses to attend to me. He made the people build up a wall, and told them that if they would fight the king he would help them. Then he tells me that if I can come in twenty days that will be better than forty. Is that a fit message? Does he want war, to kill poor women and children and old people? Were any king to send me such a defiance, I must

undoubtedly go and fight him. But I say, captains, never mind; this is a white man's palaver, you can't talk it. The great God makes them strong people; and I don't mind the governor's talking foolishly. This I tell my captains," continued the king; "but it breaks my heart, because I love the whites. But why did the governor send to me before, to make a book of friendship, and then build a wall to fight me, and keep the people's gold himself?" By way of illustration, he added, "Suppose your king were to send a great captain to this country, with orders to enforce the obedience of the white people; and that captain were to think that because the king lives at a great distance, he would take all the gold and not pay any thing; and were to send to me and say, be you my friend and help me to fight the great king, and I will reward you; would that be right? No, certainly; I cannot do so."

The courtiers warmly approved of what the king had said. Had not the great king, they continued, sent me to reconcile all parties, and speak what was true, of whites as well as blacks? If that were the case, I could not say the king of Ashantee was in the wrong.

The king resumed the argument, and in an animated tone declared he never could or would relinquish his right of sovereignty from the conquest of Fantee, over the whole country. Elmina Town, which for wealth and population, greatly exceeded Cape Coast, acknowledged his supremacy; and the Dutch governor compelled the people to obey him, for that reason he was the friend of the Dutch. The natives themselves were his friends, and he never had any palavers there. Danish Accra, English Accra, Tantum and Apollonia never disputed his title; the people never gave him any trouble, and therefore if his power was acknowledged so far to the east as Accra, and so far to the west as Apollonia, he must surely be the master of Cape Coast which lay in the centre. The king of England, he added, was his great master, he would do all in his power to give him pleasure; but he could not think that a poor black town was an object worthy his notice. "I don't want

war," said the king emphatically, "I want the people to serve me, and serve white men. It is true I told the governor he must pay me gold, but now I see your face I am willing to relinquish that. Cape Coast, however, must give me gold, for they are my people, and if they will be insolent I must punish them : for unless I do so, all these countries will laugh, and say, What kind of king is this? The governor knows I am right, for he now sends word the people are unable to pay 1600 ounces, and that if I will abate something it will be paid. What I tell you," added the king, noticing my surprise, "is very true : here is the messenger," pointing to the man who brought the message up. This man confirmed what the king said, and concluded with an observation which he affirmed the governor had made, that the object of my visit was merely to convey some presents to him from the king of England. The linguist Abroah was pointed out as a witness, who interpreted the very message in the castle hall. "Do I speak the truth," said the messenger emphatically, "or do I tell a lie before the king and the white captain?" The linguist confirmed his statement. "Then," said the king, addressing his conversation to me, "I must be paid. I shall look to you, to the governor, and to my nephew : but it is the governor who must see to it, for he now says he will settle that palaver with me."

The arguments with which I opposed those of the king palliated the alleged offences of the Cape Coast people as far as it was practicable, although it would have been impossible to deny what in substance the king had related. I retorted, however, that the sixth article of the old treaty had been violated, in which the king pledged himself to encourage the trade of his subjects with the Cape. This article I maintained had been infringed upon, by the act of cutting off the communication between his capital and the settlements. In reply, the king said "Yes, I made that book, it speaks true now ; but that is not my fault; Cape Coast did the first wrong: they sold some Ashantees off the Coast, and seized their property. Fourteen traders went to Tantom, and the Fantees stole all their gold and ivory, and sold them

for slaves to a ship. Another time they seized two Ashantees, and killed them for the Fetische. When the traders heard these things it made them stay at home, for they were frightened; and so those who wanted trade went to Elmina, because the Dutch governor takes care of my people. If the traders will not go to Cape Coast, I cannot help it. I did not break the law, the governor broke it."

I desired to know upon what grounds the king had thought proper to demand gold of the governor. The reply was laconic, "For breaking the law." This, I maintained, was illegal and unjustifiable, either upon the face of the treaty, or by the laws of nations. The answer was, "I made that book (clause) with the white men; they told me if I broke the law, I was to pay gold; and if the governor broke it, he must pay it. Now all the people know it was the governor who broke it; for when Cape Coast was insolent, he would not hear my palaver; but told them to give the gold to him, and fight the king. Here is the book," added his majesty, handing me the treaty to peruse. "You will find the gold mentioned in it." Upon inspection, I assured him that no such clause was to be found. "No!" said the king, musing as he spoke, "then true it is the other white men cheated me. Here are my captains, they will speak true; and here," pointing to one of my own servants, "is a Fantee who came up to Coomassy with the white men the other year, he must tell true." This man, whose name was Coffee, declared he was present when the treaty was read over, and that it was explained to the king precisely as he had stated. I then told the king that I would neither dispute his word, nor the evidence; but certainly I knew that neither Mr. Bowdich nor his uncle were authorized to agree to pay money on account of the king of England, in a case of that kind; for when my master was forced into palavers, nothing but war could settle the dispute.

The discussions had been protracted to an unconscionable length, and fatigue only terminated the business of the day.

The importance of evidence, at this crisis, prompted me to obtain

it of those who were present. The following is a sketch in abstract from an original document.

We, the undersigned officers and gentlemen, who accompanied the Mission under charge of Consul Dupuis, were present at the audience of the 9th of March, &c.

The king declared it to be his fixed resolution not to give up his lawful claim to the sovereignty of the maritime towns and provinces of which Cape Coast formed a part. He declared that the governor, so far from disputing that point with him, was actually negotiating for the people, and had appealed for a reduction of the demand of 1600 ounces of gold, which it was represented was more than they could afford to pay. The messenger and the linguist Abroah both corroborated what had been stated, the former with many vehement protestations of sincerity. The king moreover declared, that as he had "seen the consul's face," he gave up his pretensions of 1600 ounces of gold demanded by him of the governor.

He (the king) protested that he had been deceived by Mr. Bowdich, who had distinctly told him before his captains, and in the presence of the consul's servant Coffee, that the penalty for breaking the law was a fine of gold, &c.

The consul told the king that he did not dispute his word; but a treaty so framed was not valid, nor was it a treaty, as the governor had no authority to pay him money on account of the king of England.

Witness our hands, &c.

Signed BENJAMIN SALMON.
FRANCIS COLLINS.
D. MILL GRAVES.
WILLIAM HUTTON.

The second declaration was as follows:

I, George Abroah, recently appointed linguist to the Mission, &c. do certify that the message sent by the governor to the king, and interpreted by me, &c. was in substance as follows :

“ The king must not demand any gold from the castle, and for the claim upon the town of Cape Coast, the governor promises to settle that palaver, provided the king will take something off, &c. The gentleman who was carrying up presents from England, had nothing to do with the palaver, and merely came out from the king of England to see him.”

In witness, &c.

The mark of ✕ GEORGE ABROAH.

Witnesses,

FRANCIS COLLINS.

DAVID M. GRAVES.

The clauses in the former convention which the king pointed out at as militating against the governor, were as follows :—

Article 4. In order to avert the horrors of war it is agreed, that in any case of aggression on the part of the natives under British protection, the king shall complain thereof to the governor, and that he will in no instance resort to hostilities without endeavouring as much as possible to effect an amicable arrangement.

Article 7. The governors of the respective forts shall at all times afford every protection in their power to the persons and property of the people of Ashantee, who may resort to the water side.*

* The Treaty, as published in Mr. Bowdich's work, compared with what was actually written, and deposited with the king, is a garbled statement. I cannot say less. In the original document, which is now in my keeping, the pompous name of Boitene Quama, king of Dwabin, is nowhere to be found. It would seem that this association of two sovereigns was calculated to awaken a more lively interest, and thus only can I account for an attempt to deceive government and the public, by means, I believe, unprecedented in the annals of British diplomacy. The article, No. 9, shewing the king's disposition to send his own children to Cape Coast for education is falsely inserted, and every other article is disfigured or misrepresented more or less.

I cannot dismiss this subject without adverting to the 3d Article of the same convention, which, by comparison with its fellows, and particularly with the two above quoted, carries upon its face an air of absurdity. It runs thus. "The king of Ashantee guarantees the people of Cape Coast from the hostilities threatened by the people of Elmina." How such an article will harmonize with the assumption of a legal jurisdiction over the towns in Fantee, &c. I know not; neither does it seem to become the dignity of the British Government in Africa to stipulate for the independency of its towns with a native prince, and in the same contract to expose its incapacity to afford protection to the inhabitants, even against a single town of the Ashantee confederacy.

Mr. Hutton having expressed anxiety, for some days past, to return to the coast, I gave consent to it; but the king affected some scruples which it required a little management to remove. "What," said the king, "is he already tired of stopping with me. He must not leave, or he will carry down a bad palaver to the castle." The fear of denial increased the anxiety of the applicant; so at least his countenance indicated. "Tell him to stay," said the king, "and not to be afraid. Never mind the palaver, I am a true friend to the English for all that, and I cannot hurt him." Finding that this exhortation had not the desired effect, he added "Stop with your captain, and I will make a great feast and call all my caboceers together, that they may give plenty of presents to my friends." Mr. Hutton's perturbation was more and more visible. "I see," continued the king "he is fearful that I shall not do what is right." "Is it your wish," addressing himself to me, "that he should go?" "He has my permission," I replied. "Then let him go," said the king; "but tell him he is my friend too, the same as other white men, and, therefore, when he goes back he must not talk foolishness, and tell lies, or he will do you wrong as well as me." With this congé and a cordial shake of the royal hand, Mr. Hutton departed for Cape Coast, much gratified, by his own confession, at his release from what he conceived hazardous duty.

On the 10th of March the king secluded himself within the palace, and declined transacting public business; the day was considered of an ominous cast. It being Friday, and consequently the *Sabbath* of the Moslems, I received the visits of my old acquaintance the Bashaw, Kantoma and Abou Beer, attended by a numerous party of their friends from the interior; among whom was an aged Sheikh or chief, a native of Kassina, who had been many years established in Yandi. The intelligence he communicated of the interior was founded upon a long residence at other courts, particularly those of Bargho Zogho, Youry, and Dahomy. He had never, he said, been so far to the eastward as Bornou. This man affected all the austerity of a Morabth (maraboo), among the Arabs, with whom he claimed consanguinity, by descent, from the conquerors of the Niger.

March 11th. I received some presents of wine, fish, and fruit, from the king, with a message couched in the usual form of salutation, and an injunction to meet his majesty in the palace. On repairing thither, I found him actively engaged in a crowd of artificers, soldiers, captains, and labourers. "I am building," said the king to me as I entered, "a fort like Cape Coast Castle; but I shall make it very high that I may look out and see all the town." A number of large and small trees had been cut in the forest and dragged to the spot with infinite labour. These were sunk two or three feet in the ground, and reared at certain distances apart, forming in mass a small quadrangular enclosure, supported by other trees of less dimensions, attached crossways by horizontal and diagonal supporters, lashed together by fibrous vegetable cordage. "Do you know, captain," said his majesty, "why I sent for you? That building you see is to be made very grand. The inside shall be gold, ivory, and *brass-pan*;* so you must tell my great master I do it for his sake to honour him, that the people may know it was a great day when I saw your face; and that all the black countries may

* The Fantee term for brass, which is always imported in the form of pans.

know I am a great king here. Now white men know me, I must live in a great house as white kings do; then I shall not be ashamed when more white people come. You must say a strong prayer to the great God, and make proper Fetische for me, the same as my master's Fetische. Those workmen," continued the king, pointing with his finger to some who were engaged, "were sent me by the Dutch governor, for Ashantees are fools at work; they can only fight."

The king was in a vein of good humour, laughing immoderately at the awkward manner in which his own people, courtiers and labourers together, elevated the stems and secured the lashings. The building in every part was so thickly covered with human beings, of the sable hue, in all postures and attitudes, that it required but a small effort of the imagination to compare the *coup-d'ail* to a legion of demons, attempting in mockery a *Babel* of modern invention. So eager were these men in their occupation, and so delighted were they to catch the smiles of Royalty, to which they responded with shouts, songs, and even *capers*, that it is astonishing some fatal accident did not occur.

Deeming this an auspicious moment to attract the king's attention, I endeavoured to prevail on him to talk upon business. But he replied, "I sent for you to-day to laugh and play with me, because my heart is glad. To-morrow I shall hear the palaver. It is true the Fantees make me very angry; but never mind, you must not take too much trouble."

In the course of a promiscuous dialogue, I suggested that it would afford me pleasure to meet the king of Juabin (spelt Dwabin.) "The king," replied the monarch, with some appearance of jealous indignation, "who is he? Am not I the king? Is there another king then besides me? Does the book say that too? If so, it spreads a shameful lie in the white country. Ah!" said he, with increased irritation, "I see—I see white men can tell lies, and put them in books too. Ask my captains," added the monarch, throwing himself ostentatiously back

in the chair; "ask all the Fantees, if they know any other king besides me. Shame! great shame!"*

March 12th. An audience was granted this morning. The king desired that the articles of the new treaty might be explained to him again. He listened patiently throughout; after which, with great emphasis, he reverted to many of his former arguments, insisting as before that Fantee, with all its towns, was inseparably united to the empire, from the date of its conquest; and that he had always received tribute, more or less, from the days of governor Torrane, and that his just title should never be wrested from him, unless by force of arms. "Did the king of England," continued he, "say that the people should be exempted from paying gold to their king? If not, how could I attempt to vindicate the conduct of his rebellious subjects. I think," said the monarch, in thundering indignation, "that the governor told the other white men to cheat me, for the book does not speak the truth: yet even so I have never broken the law; but the governor has broken it, for he promised to take care of my people." It was no pleasure to him, he said, to make palavers; but he could not submit to insults before his captains. The king of England he knew was a powerful monarch, and white men were superior to blacks; but the great god made justice for all, and oaths of friendship written in a book were sacred; they were sacred, he added, in Africa, where men did not write them down on paper: they were the same as Fetische. For his part, it was well known his people could fight, and if he thought proper he could easily destroy every fort in the country; but it neither suited his inclination, nor his policy; because himself and his ancestors owed all they possessed to the trade they enjoyed with white men. He loved all white

* The reader by a reference to page 125 of Mr. Bowdich's work, will be able himself to detect what does appear a deliberate imposition; for the author therein admits that Boitinnee Quama only attested the treaty of 1817, as a witness, certainly the day after its ratification. *Ahen* which is the title of king, in the Ashantee language, does not even belong to him; although he of Banna, and the ruler of Gaman, are both entitled to it.

people; but particularly the English, from the knowledge he had of governors Torrane and White: they gave him up his great enemy king Cheboo. When the white flag, said the king, somewhat exultingly, was lowered over the battlements of Annamaboe Castle, was it not done to make friends, for fear the place should be taken the next day with all the goods and money contained in it; and when he made peace did he not give a convincing proof that he was a king and a friend? The whites sold him guns and powder; he liked that trade, for his was a *war country*; he could not therefore carry them back to the sea coast to turn against his best friends: yet Mr. Smith* made him very angry, and if he had not seen my face, and if he did not know that his great master wanted peace, and a good trade, he would surely visit Cape Coast with destruction, and people it with better men. Then he would make a palaver with "*Smitty*" in his own house.

It would swell this volume to an enormous bulk were I to recapitulate each argument the king employed, and its numerous repetitions. They were, however, extremely convincing. My duty, nevertheless, was clear; and policy suggested the necessity of resisting the force of such language; but my efforts were not successful, and I was about to depart on this occasion without being able to soothe the angry monarch, who, however, observed my chagrin, and before I could escape sent a captain to call me back. "Don't be angry," said he; "I love you much; I must do what old men say; I cannot help it." This was the eve of a religious festival called Little Adai.

On the 12th this custom was ushered in by the discharge of fire arms, and the sound of many barbarous instruments. Numbers of victims were offered up to the gods, although secretly, in the palace and the houses of the chieftains. The poorer classes sacrificed cattle or poultry. The city itself exhibited the most deplorable solitude,

* The king having about this time learned to pronounce the governor's name, he frequently spoke of him personally by the name of *Smitty*.

and the few human beings who were courageous enough to shew themselves in the streets fled at the approach of a captain, and barricaded the doors of their huts, to escape the danger of being shot or sacrificed. The doleful cries of the women vibrated from several quarters of the city, and the death horns and drums within the palace seemed to stupify the obnoxious prisoners and foreign slaves with horror, as they contemplated the risk they were exposed to. I wandered about during this awful day, until fatigue and disgust led me to seek my quarters. The Fantees now did not care to stir abroad, and my Moslem acquaintance kept within their houses, as they afterwards assured me, to avoid the sight of the butcheries. Oppressed with bodily and mental fatigue, I mounted my horse and rode into the forest. The business of the day was not over at my return, and my efforts to gain access to the palace were ineffectual.

The following day, one of a similar train of horrors succeeded, and still I was left in suspense, for my own linguists and messengers were not hardy enough to knock at the royal gate. They dreaded, they said, the Fetische men, who guarded the avenue, and who alone were suffered to enjoy free ingress. The society of the Moslems, however, in some degree reconciled me. By these people I was given to understand that seventy men and women had been put to death the day previous in the palace only; besides those who were sacrificed in private houses, and in the forest. Most of these unhappy beings were Gaman prisoners of war, who had been purposely reserved as an offering to the gods; the others were criminals, or disobedient slaves. Such was the explanation I received.

This evening a courier arrived from Accra, bringing me letters from a correspondent. The journey he had accomplished with some labour and difficulty in fifteen days.

The 15th was the last day of the custom, and I received a summons to attend the king. Anxious as I was, I lost no time in

complying with the requisition, attended by Messrs. Collins, Salmon, and Greaves, the three gentlemen who staid with me; but my disappointment was renewed upon perceiving the order of the day to be that of ceremony.

The courtiers were habited in full costume, as on the day of entry. The king himself was clothed in an under garment of blood-stained cotton; his wrists and ancles were adorned with fetische gold weighing many pounds. A small fillet of plaited grass, interwoven with gold wire and little consecrated amulets, encircled his temples. A large white cotton cloth which partly covered his left shoulder, was studded all over with Arabic writing in various coloured inks, and of a most brilliant well formed character. His body in other parts was bare, and his breast, legs, the crown of his head, and the instep of each foot, were streaked with white clay. It was remarkable that this distinction was not general throughout the assembly.

Upon receiving the king's hand, which he presented with the utmost affability, I noticed a streak of dried blood upon his forehead, and this token appeared to be universal, as well among officers of distinction as their slaves and retainers. It denoted their participation in the late sacrifices. The royal death stool, clotted with the still reeking gore of its victims, stood on one side of the king, under care of the captain executioner, who attended with his band of assistants. At the feet of the sovereign, stood a small firepot, and a trunk fitted up with a compound medley of relics and charms soaking in blood

Before I could gain access to the King, I was surrounded on all sides by a juvenile band of warriors, who flourished their knives, axes, and scimiters over my head, as on other state occasions.

The Moslems also were assembled in a separate band, to the number of about three hundred, who had also met together by invitation, to congratulate the king and partake of his good cheer at the custom.



The Close of the Slave Customs.

His majesty sent me a canopy and a royal troop, desiring I would seat myself among his great captains, as he was going to distribute presents. This he did with a liberal hand to every chief, and my share of the bounty was a fat sheep, and a bottle of rum. Even the Fantees received for their portion four sheep and two kegs of rum.

When the distribution was over, the captains rose, and one by one saluted the king in martial procession. Having no better occupation on hand, I devoted my leisure to sketching a representation of the close of the custom.*

I received a message from the king, on the 16th of March, running thus "The king thinks you talk reasonably; but then, when you say the Fantees must not pay him, he thinks you are a better friend to the Fantees than to him."

As I foresaw that no good could be done by a distant correspondence, I once more demanded an audience. The request was granted, and the king opened the discussions, by various conciliatory arguments, styling the king of England his great master, the king of kings, the king of white men, &c." He refused, however, to talk the palaver that day, alleging it was a bad day. I acquiesced, but demanded to be informed what were the expectations regarding the people of Cape Coast, that I might know whether my duty warranted a longer stay in the capital, or not; but the question being artfully evaded, I was compelled, however reluctantly, to return to my quarters unsatisfied.

The Caboceer Boitenee Quama, sent me, on the 17th of March, a fat kid and some vegetables. The bearer delivered a message, saying "Boitenee salutes you, and makes his best compliments. He is glad to hear you are the king's friend, for that makes you his friend too."

I waited in suspense the whole of this forenoon for the promised

* See the Plate.

audience, and at last sent the canes to the palace. The king, however, did not return me an answer so promptly as was due; and as I was then in possession of a public letter* from Cape Coast Castle, specifying the amount of tribute awarded there as a peace offering to the king, I determined to urge the business. Thus resolved, I sallied forth, attended by my party, at a late hour in the afternoon. My messengers and the linguists were waiting at the outer fence. But as I approached, the palace gates were thrown open, and the king soon appeared and took his seat. I pleaded the long suspense he had kept me in; the many fruitless conferences, &c. and the great expence attending the mission: added to which, the inflexibility of his disposition tended to render abortive all those benevolent views which my sovereign entertained for his benefit and that of his people. All these advantages and more, I continued, he was likely to be bereft of, by his personal inflexibility, and his attachment to councils which teemed with hostility against an object comparatively below his dignity to notice; and actually so as competing with those great objects for which I had been sent to his court.

The king listened with lively attention, then instinctively rising from his seat, he said, "White man, what you say is good. I like you because you speak the truth, and I am sure you are my friend; but what can I do? I must listen to what the old men say." Turning his head round to the captains, he said, "Hear this talk, it is rational; and it is a strong palaver, for it belongs to the king of kings. We must look to it." Here his majesty paused; but the answer not satisfying me, I proceeded to state that it was my intention to return to the Coast, requesting that a day might be appointed for my departure, unless he would pass his word to settle the palaver at an appointed time. The reply was, "I am sorry to hear you say so, for all my great captains are

* This letter from the governor and council stated that 100 ounces of gold was the utmost the people were inclined to pay, and that I should not (at the risk, it is presumed, of every object of the mission), negotiate upon any other terms.

coming to town to see you. Never mind the palaver, we will talk it over at another time." I demanded to know, as he declined talking upon business, why he detained me, contrary to my duty; and whether or not I was to consider myself a prisoner. At the bare mention of the word the countenance of the king changed, and he evidently laboured under anxiety, as he said I had broken his heart. "Do you think," said he, "I can act thus to my great master's, captain? No: were he to send me a slave, and say he did not want me for a friend, I could not do that." At this pause I made a sort of ambiguous apology; but being resolved to gain a decided answer, I assured him that I did not doubt his word, but was instigated by a sense of duty to my sovereign's great officers, to whom I must account for the time that had been expended.

I next introduced the dispatch I had received from Cape Coast,* and read its contents to the king. A pause, of the duration of a minute or more, added to a fiery glance of the eye, convinced me of the operation of his mind; nor was the brooding tempest longer confined within its boundary, for raising his voice to its utmost elevation, and assuming a countenance of demoniacal phrenzy, he threw himself convulsively back in his chair, clenched his fists, and stretched forth his arms and legs, assuming, as it were, the rage of madness, while he bellowed out the most direful imprecations against the natives of Cape Coast, not excepting those present, or even my soldiers; nay Mr. Graves also participated in these anathemas. The foam all the while flowed down his beard in copious discharges, and the saliva spurted from his mouth upon all around him. His ministers even betrayed emotion; some stood aghast, and others applied their forefingers to their heads and breasts, muttering all the while their

* This letter, I should have observed, had been detained by the king for several days before he transmitted it to me. He was jealously suspicious of the arrival of any letters or messengers from the Coast, during our conferences.

respective charms, to avert impending evil. Occasionally the king spoke with less acrimony; his paroxysms were less violent; then again he would relapse into all his former fury, calling to his aid all the powers of his household gods, the Fetische of his country, &c. At one interval he vociferated, "White men come to my country to trade—what have they to do with my slaves? They build castles and houses to live in; they stay as long as they like, then take the gold and go home again; but they never take mulattos and blacks, for they are their servants: the great God made them so; they are bad men. *Smitty* cheats me, and joins the Fantees to raise a laugh. The forts are mine, because I hold the books (notes), but I don't say they belong to me to keep. I say they stand in my country to trade with the people. By that great oath (the battle of Cormantine or Accromanti), the Cape Coast people ought to die. Let me go there," said the king to me, rising from his chair—"let me have the jaw-bones of Aggry and De Graaf. I don't want their gold: I want the blood of bad men to wash my stool. I cannot fight the whites, they are my friends."

The Fantees stood petrified with fear. Exhaustion alone seemed to overpower the king, and I thought it advisable to leave him time for cool reflection. My forbearance had the desired effect, for after the lapse of some minutes, he said, in his usual tone, "Forgive me, captain; this is what the bad people do to me, therefore be not angry. Do not tell my master I am angry, because I have a good heart towards him and all white men. I have no palaver with them. But for the blacks, *I am king*, and I will be paid, or I will kill them. Why does the governor send a message, saying he will settle the palaver with me, and then send you a book to pay a hundred ounces of gold?" Muttering this, the royal indignation seemed to have entirely evaporated. Another pause ensued: and at length the king said, "This palaver, I see, cannot be talked here; but you shall settle it for me with my nephew at Cape Coast, and what you say is right I will

take." Anxious again to gloss over the breach in his manners, he alleged that he was overcome by anger ; but if I thought him a friend, such as he really was, I should forgive it.

Torches were introduced, (for it was already dark,) before the discussions ceased. The king having expressed a wish to see the properties of the magic lantorn displayed, the powers of that instrument were exhibited by Mr. Salmon. As the figures were made to perform, the king involuntarily seized me by the coat, then by the hand, as if apprehensive that I should quit him in the dark. He thought it was *Fetische* ; but being assured to the contrary, he said, " Ah ! I see then it is made for laughter and sport." Indeed it afforded no real interest. It was enquired if the great king (of England) amused himself so. At last the monarch turned his back upon it, leaving the entertainment to his courtiers. The friendly obscurity concealed the colour that suffused my own cheek, when I replied that it was an instrument adapted to the Harem, and the amusement of his children. This seemed to agree with his own conceptions, for he instantly added " I see it is good for that ; good night." At parting he said he would *sleep over the palaver*, and see me again in the morning.

March 18. The forenoon passed away in anxiety, for no messenger came from the palace. My Moslem friends paid me a visit in the interval, and from them I learned that the king was engaged in close conference with his ministers ; that Apoko, Ado Quamina, Agampong, and the whole of the army interest were implacable in their resentment at what they termed the presumption of their vassals, who had dared to stipulate for the price of their own insolence ; and that a very great majority in the assembly of chiefs loudly cried out for war. Yet the king was averse to it. He, Adusai, Amon Koitea, Kankam, and Ado Matta, opposed the torrent. " We have just given our opinions," said the friendly Bashaw, " to the king in private, that a war will ruin him in the land of the whites, and perhaps your Sultan will

send a great army to conquer the country. We should not be sorry," said he, in a laughing whisper, "to see white men here; but we have told the king what we believe to be the truth, for that is our duty, and he has been good to me. The Bashaw sent Abou Becr again to the palace to get information." At his return I learned that the king threatened every opposer in the council, and insisted upon an unconditional submission to his plan of negotiation.

The hour of four succeeded, and still no invitation came from the palace, I therefore dispatched another messenger, demanding an interview in the most positive terms. But this messenger was also unattended to. Again I renewed the application, forbidding the linguists to return without obtaining an answer. The lapse of another hour convinced me that they had met with no better success. A little irritated at this neglect, I assembled the officers and Fantees, with whom I proceeded to the outer gate, which was instantly thrown open at my approach. It was then dusk, and his majesty was seated by torchlight among his chief captains. Some of his children of both sexes were playing about his knees. My reception was courteous, and I was forced to place my chair by the side of the king, who assumed a look of inquiry, indicating a desire to know the purport of my late visit. This opened the business, and I requested to be informed what resolution had been adopted regarding the palaver. To which he replied, he could not tell me more than I knew: the palaver, he thought, must be talked at Cape Coast. I complained that insincerity lurked under his answer. "By the great God you serve," said the king, "and by my gods, what I tell you is true, you shall settle all for me." Still I persisted; the necessity of returning was now greater than before, and I hoped he would appoint the day. "you must not go," said the king, "you have done me good, and I must do you good." Being determined to bring the business to an issue, at all reasonable risks, I insisted that my detention looked like political craft, and as

such, it was impossible I should think otherwise than that I was kept as a hostage for the liquidation of the demand made upon Cape Coast, however exorbitant it might be.

Sable as the royal countenance is, I distinctly saw the blood mount to his cheeks. His concern was mingled with real anxiety. "What," said he, "do you still think me a bad man? Do not leave me; you cannot go now, for you must make me a book to be good friends with the king of England, as the other book tells lies." I assured the king, I was convinced of his friendly disposition; but as he chose to oppose a settlement of the palaver with the natives, it was not clear to me that my duty warranted a longer stay in the capital; and therefore I was necessitated to insist upon having a day appointed for my return. These words were strengthened by a formal invocation in the name (upon the head, as it is called in Africa,) of the king of England.* The linguists hesitated at the interpretation. The king perceived it, and desired they would interpret truly. This injunction was reluctantly obeyed. They attempted to soften the

* The words were—"I swear upon the head of my master, you shall settle the palaver in three days or appoint next week for my return to the Cape. If you do not I am surely a prisoner, and you may put me to death." This style of invocation is considered too serious to be trifled with, and perfectly in consonance with African customs, although its application by natives, particularly to crowned heads, or men in power, is often attended with dangerous consequences. This by way of illustration—

An Ashantee of good family visited the Cape at the time Mr. Bowdich was at Coomassy. As he was passing the castle gate, a Fantee sentinel upon duty desired him to cast off his cloth, to leave the shoulders bare, in conformity to a custom exacted from the towns-people. The fiery spirit of the Ashantee refused compliance with a law which he could not comprehend. A scuffle ensued, and the offender was securely conveyed into the fort, where, by Mr. Smith's order, he was thrown into a dungeon, known by the name of the "slave hole." Probably no greater injury would have been done the man than a night's imprisonment. Be this as it may, the Ashantee resisted, and suffered some injury in so doing, when he invoked Sai (the name of his sovereign), swearing upon his head that Mr. Smith should hear his palaver or kill him outright. The appeal had no effect, and in the morning he was dragged from his subterranean lodging a corpse, having strangled himself, as it is understood, on the governor's head. Mr. Smith, indeed, wrote a letter, as may be seen in Mr. Bowdich's work, to palliate or justify his conduct, for what had occurred, and the affair was buried in oblivion, through the king's declared affection for white people.

force of the language by a partial translation. It was enough, however; the countenance of the king fell; grief and vexation were strongly portrayed on his features, and he started from his chair with a sudden bound, saying, "you break my heart! you break my heart! Indeed I cannot do wrong. But the great king is my master, and I must go to council." He then retired to the council chamber, followed by the captains who were in attendance.

My duty prompted this step, but let me confess I was struck with remorse at the pain I had given him; for I had abundant reasons for feeling respect and even attachment to this prince. After the lapse of some minutes he returned, and appointed Monday the 27th of March for my departure. "Then, said the king, you shall settle all with my nephew there, for he must be paid, and the soldiers must be paid; but I want only what you shall say is proper to settle a great palaver. You were angry and used high words, but I think you are a friend, and I overlook that."

CHAPTER V.

RETURN OF THE MISSION.

PRESENTS FROM THE MOSLEMS—DIPLOMATIC ADVICE—FAREWELL VISITS—FORT GEORGE—PROPOSED EMBASSY FROM THE KING OF ASHANTEE—EXAMINATION OF PLATE OF VARIOUS EUROPEAN MANUFACTURES—MERCHANDIZE SUITABLE FOR AFRICAN MARKETS—VISIT FROM THE KING TO THE QUARTERS OF THE MISSION—JEALOUSY OF THE ASHANTEE CHIEFS—DISCUSSIONS ON THE CAPE COAST PRICES—ON THE SLAVE TRADE—THE KING'S WARS—BARDIC RECITATIONS—EXPOSURE AND HARSH TREATMENT OF A CAPTIVE PRINCE—SIGNATURE OF A TREATY—THE KING'S COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL PLANS—PECULIARITIES OF AFRICAN COMMERCE—AUDIENCE OF LEAVE—TROOPS OF SLAVES INTENDED FOR THE KING OF ENGLAND—INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ASHANTEE AMBASSADORS—PRESENTS TO THE KING OF ENGLAND—TO THE ENVOY—CEREMONIES OF NAMING THE ASHANTEE FORT—EXTRAORDINARY CONDESCENSION OF HIS MAJESTY ON TAKING LEAVE—MORTIFICATION OF THE MOSLEMS AT THE AUTHOR'S REJECTION OF THE KORAN—DEPARTURE—HEAVY RAINS—LIBERATION OF A SLAVE—JOURNEY TO CAPE COAST—DISAVOWAL OF THE TREATY BY THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL—PREPARATIONS FOR WAR—FANTEE CONSPIRACY—PROTEST—SIR GEORGE COLLIER REFUSES TO CONVEY THE AMBASSADORS TO ENGLAND—CORRESPONDENCE—OBSERVATIONS—RETURN OF THE AUTHOR TO EUROPE.

MARCH 19th. The king, as usual, sent me the morning salutation.

The Moslems again visited me in their robes of ceremony; each, according to his rank, bringing with him a present of vegetables, bread, fowls, honey, &c. The hospitable gifts of the chiefs were more considerable. From the Bashaw I received a sheep, a large cotton cloth, &c. Kantoma gave a sheep and a small collection of national weapons. Abou Becr, Soumah, and many more, made presents in proportion. They felicitated me on the settled disposition of the court

for peace. The king, they observed, had expressed his sentiments that morning, declaring in the most decided terms, that he would leave his interest in the negotiation to his nephew and myself. The governor of Cape Coast was to have a voice also. "Allah is my witness," said the Bashaw, "I have served you as I would my own son; and I thank him the king's heart was open to my advice. We shall all be sorry to lose you; but come up again as soon as the palaver is settled, for the king loves you much, and you may do great good for whites, blacks, and Moslems. But if you could settle it here, that is what I should like. Can you not give the king 400 ounces?" "No," I replied, "I am not authorized to do so." Abou Beer joined in the conversation: "Give," said he, "300 to the king, ten to Amon Koitea, the same to Adusai, and six to Apoko, and I am sure you will settle it at once." "It was impossible," I said.

March 20th. This day I received several deputations from chieftains who govern the surrounding country, and others; Ado Matta and Apoko were of the number, and each was attended by a select band of armed men, preceded by musical instruments. In the course of the day the arrival of some of the king's sword-bearers announced the approach of some members of the royal family. These were the king's sons, named Ouso Kro Ahen, Ouso Akoteah, Ouso Gamadouah, Ouso Yaou, and Ouso Quantabisa. These young men were between the ages of twelve and twenty-five. They had received instructions from their father, they said, to pay their compliments to me; and each came attended by a number of slaves, bearing loads of provisions.

The Bashaw and a party of Moslems called upon me again this forenoon. They had seen Adusai, they said, in private, and that minister was disposed to negotiate with me, provided I would pass my word to the king for three hundred ounces, and about thirty more to be divided among the disaffected chiefs at the capital, and the little army at Cape Coast. "Do this," said the good Bashaw, "and you will immediately have a party that shall carry all before them

in the cabinet ; for the king is disposed to do all he can for you, but he must not oppose his great captains, because they say it is for his good. The king does not want gold, and if you were to give him a thousand ounces, he would distribute it all among his captains, to make them friends to the whites. Do so, do so, my son," added the chief, "give him three hundred, it will gladden all our hearts, and we will then go boldly to the king, with Adusai, and those of his party, and I promise you, by the assistance of our holy prophet, we will not leave the court until every thing be adjusted to your satisfaction, and the king's. If you have not gold enough, never mind that, for we will lend it you to any amount, if you will only stay with us. The king himself will lend you gold, if you prefer it." Abou Becr and Kantoma united their entreaties, but all was in vain ; the decided tone of the letter from Cape Coast was imperative. I had long esteemed these friends, but now they were possessed of my whole heart. Indeed the Moslems, in many unrecorded instances, evinced a genuine solicitude for the welfare of the Mission, and anxiety for my personal good.

The king sent for me towards the close of this conversation. I found him on foot, taking a circuit round the palace walls. " Ah ! " he ejaculated, as I approached him, " thank the gods I see you again with a good face ; you are not angry with me." I assured him that so far from having been moved by real anger, I had done violence to my feelings, in urging a demand, which was exacted from me by a sense of duty only. But, I added, I never should forget his hospitality. A smile of great good-nature was the only reply. The king shewed me the progress he had made in building the fort. Then turning abruptly, he said, " You must write me a book to my master, and tell him, if he wants to make war upon the blacks, to let me know, for they shall serve him as myself. But tell him the Ashantees love him very much, because he has done me honour."

Again I demanded to know, if he had any thing to say about the native palaver. "True," replied the king, "I shall tell you more before you go. I see *Smitty* does not wish to serve the people, so he takes their gold, and says he will talk the palaver with the king. Then he tells them too, you must build a wall and fight Ashantee. By and by he sees that is a strong palaver, and he tells the people that the king is very angry, and says he must kill them; but never mind that, says he, bring me more gold, and then I will send a proper book to the king of white men, and tell him that it is his palaver, and he must send plenty of ships and soldiers. But this is all cheating; the Fantees cannot fight, and being much frightened, they ask the white men what they are to do. Then *Smitty* says, have you any more gold? but they say no, because they think he does not care for them. Well, says he, I shall see what to do; the white king will send soldiers by and by. But they say that will not do. Then he tells *Aggry*, and *De Graaf* and *Biney*, now I shall make a good palaver for the town, and the people must pay an hundred ounces to the king. This is all the talk among black men. My great master does not hear this; he does not know the governor keeps all the gold himself. So you must put down in the book what is true, then white men will not say I have a bad heart, and want to kill people to take their gold. I only kill my enemies and bad men. This is strong talk, captain, but never mind now, for I have no more disputes with white men, they are my friends, and I do not ask them for any thing; but black men must pay me."

On a former occasion, the king had proclaimed his intention of sending some of his people ambassadors to England with presents; I requested now to be informed if he still persisted in that resolution. "Yes," he replied, "I shall do so, and you must get a good linguist to tell the great king what I say." I neither opposed nor made any objections to these arrangements, which, according to my thinking, afforded a rational hope that great advantages might ultimately

accrue from it, to the renown of the British government over the wide spreading plains of Africa, and the benefit of the mercantile interests. According to the reception given to the ambassadors of this monarch, I conceived that other kings might feel inclined to tread in the steps of the sovereign of Ashantee, whereby a preponderating influence would be given to British councils either at home or on the Gold Coast, (in African affairs), and the negro potentate, with more probable hopes of success, might then be persuaded, on the return of his caboceers, to listen with attention to those humane overtures which the compassion of the age so earnestly desires to convey to the hearts of the kings and princes, who rule our sable brethren.*

On the 21st, several caboceers of rank visited me, and each deposited a small package of gold, varying from four to twelve ackeys. It was impossible to refuse acceptance without giving offence. Ouso Bannahen and Yaho Korakoo, † entered into a long detail of the Gaman war: then shifting the conversation, they said, "The king knows you are a friend to all the people; but if he thought you came up to look at the country, and then go back and send for white soldiers to join the Fantees and fight him, he must certainly kill you. Bogiabi Adoom, the king's canopy-bearer, and Ouin Bendah, a captain of the palace, paid their compliments, about noon, by the sovereign's express order. The day, as usual, was spent in the society of the Moslems, and in visits to the houses of the chieftains.

March 22d. Numerous caboceers, many of whom were from the country, called at my quarters. These were followed, in succession, by a long list of inferior captains, who were all authorized to swear attachment to the king of England. They were desired to

* The deputation of Ambassadors, however uncouth these semi-barbarians might have appeared here, is strictly in unison with African customs, and would not, it is presumed, have been more *outré* than that of the Cherokees during the American war.

† The king's stool or throne bearer, an officer of rank in the army only.

do so, they said, by the king; but they were friends independently of that, for they liked *my* palaver, and they liked me. "Now," added they, "the great king is a friend to Sai, it is all the same; he is our master too, and we will serve him."

March 23d. The preceding day, and part of this morning, had been devoted to private councils in the palace, at which the king was again compelled to exert his authority against a few ambitious chiefs of the opposing faction, who were hardy enough to persist in demanding war. Towards the afternoon, Adusai called to conduct me to the king's presence. I found his majesty seated amidst a confused heap of old battered silver utensils. "I want you, captain," said he, shewing me a tureen of that metal, "to tell me in what country this was made." I concluded it (from the stamp) to be the workmanship of Holland. "You are right," said the king. He then shewed me a bowl, a coffee-pot, some cups, &c. Some of them, I replied, were the manufacture of Spain and Portugal, others of Holland; this was also satisfactory. Lastly, he pointed to a richly chased urn, a kettle, ewer and basin. I had the good fortune again to satisfy his enquiries.

It appeared to me that the king was practising an innocent device, to put my veracity to the test. He desired next to know if they were all silver, requiring me to select the base, if any, from the pure metal. Having done as I was requested, the king said, with a smile, "I know, captain, you speak true, and cannot tell me a lie. I get these things from the whites, and I like them much, because there is no silver in this country. Some of them came from Christiansborg, some from Fantee, when I conquered the Braffoes; but most from Elmina, for the Dutch are good to me. Governor Torrane gave me a few, and many more I took in Gaman when I killed Dinkera. I spoke this to the other white men,* and they said the

* The mission of 1817.

good silver was English, and the bad Dutch; but I knew that was a lie. Now I shall give much gold to my ambassadors, and you must tell them how to buy plenty of good things, and plenty of silver like this, for I must provide every thing suitable and live like a white king."

Some very rich brocades, of various coloured patterns, were shewn me, together with pieces of crimson damask, and fine cotton cloths, which the king had just received in part of a present from the governor of Elmina. "I shall make a fine canopy of these, said the king, to carry over my head. Tell the merchants to bring plenty of those goods, I will buy them all; for what I dont want I send away to my caboceers, and I give many to the kings who live in Dagomba and other countries, near the great water (Niger.) ? *Volta.*

In obedience to a signal from the king, some eunuchs entered the Harem, and brought from thence an enormous bundle of silk and cotton goods. The latter were prints, in furniture patterns, and British chintz: the larger the pattern the more it was esteemed. The king, however, shewed some predilection for roses upon a pale blue ground; green taffety silk and Scotch plaids, in particular, were the greatest favourites of their kind. I was desired to bear in mind his choice, that I might procure him a quantity of the same patterns, for which he would pay gold, he said, to any amount.

"All my captains like these things," continued the king, "so if the great king will make a proper trade, tell him to send goods like this, and plenty of rum, and powder, and guns; and I will take care he shall have plenty of gold: not brass pan gold like what the Fantees make, but true gold. And if he likes ivory he shall have more than he wants; because, now I have no war, the people must go into the bush and shoot elephants."

I promised his majesty to bear this strictly in mind, and at a late hour returned to my quarters.

March 24th. Two of the king's sword bearers called to announce

his majesty's pleasure to honour me with a visit *at home*. To pay due respect to kingly rank, I *marshalled my forces*, and accompanied by the officers, soldiers, and Fantees, sallied forth to meet him. The sovereign of Ashantee was borne upon the heads of some captains, in a sort of litter, made of wicker, and covered with brocade. His chief officers, with the king of Banna, and a multitude of soldiers, and armed men, were on foot. As soon as the king was advised of our approach, he desired Apoko to lead me to a gateway, attached to an adjoining ruin. Here the king descended from his vehicle, and as he entered from the opposite side took me by one hand, and gave me a sort of half embrace. We then retired to one side as he motioned with his hand, that the procession should move forward under the same gateway. They inclined their bodies in passing, and the Moslems gave their *salam*. I recognized my friends, the Bashaw, Abou Becr, Kantoma, and Soumoh, the smile of self-approbation was stamped upon their countenances.

When the king entered my apartment, he instructed his linguist to inform me that the palavers had been a source of vexation to him, inasmuch as they had hitherto deprived him of sufficient leisure to visit me in a familiar way. His majesty, in compliment, accepted of a small glass of brandy. He then reclined upon my couch, telling me he had been indisposed. His nephew, Ado Braddie, seated himself at the feet of his uncle, with a large palm fan, which he waved to keep off the flies. On a sudden (as was usual with him) he started up, and addressed me in the following terms:—"White captain, I know you now, and I love you much, for what you tell me I think is good, therefore, if I should be angry, regard it not. I believe all you say is true, and I do not think you can tell lies and cheat me. To-day, you see, I come to your house for pleasure and amusement, by which the people will know you are my friend, and that I am the friend of white men. Now I have one palaver in my head which I must tell you. You say the great king sent you to my country to

make us good friends; he wants a good trade, and he does not like people to make war and fight. Then, you know, you talk much about Cape Coast and Fantee. But this palaver the great king does not hear, so he cannot tell what is right, and what is wrong. All this my captains talk among themselves, and then they say to me, take care, king, we are too much frightened: perhaps this white man comes to Coomassy to look at the country, and see if Ashantee has strong towns and people. We think he is a friend to Smitty, and the Fantees, because the people were never so insolent before he came to Cape Coast. He will go back to the water side, and say—Now bring your strong men, and fight the king; and do not pay any gold, for the great king will send plenty of men, and powder, and guns. This is what my captains say, added the monarch, for they are alarmed about me. I do not think so—I cannot see lies in your face; but then I wish to please my captains; so I told them, come with me to the white man's house, and see him with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears what he will say.

I replied with as much composure as I could assume, although with secret indignation, that if the king doubted my sincerity, and the sacred character of my mission, it would be in vain to negotiate; for unless the confidence were mutual, all the arguments I might urge in justification would be fruitlessly expended. In other countries, I added, where diplomacy was conducted upon a different system, such injurious insinuations would have been construed into a premeditated insult to the sovereign, who was represented in the person of his officer. At Ashantee, however, I knew the customs were different; yet as I did not doubt the sincerity of the king, I did consider that his majesty had been ill-advised, by calumniators, and a faction that had secret interests in keeping alive the embers of discord. After entertaining me so long, as the ambassador of a great king, who sent him presents, after hearing the king of England's book (the commission) read over; and swearing his great oath before

the people, how could the king now say I was a deceitful character, and only wanted to fight him? It was a scandal, I said, which I never expected to have heard from his lips: but now all discussions ought to be suspended, and the king might suffer me to return or not as he thought proper. I compelled the linguists to do as much justice to the interpretation as they were capable of; for the subject came home to my feelings.

“White man,” replied the king, “the great God has given you good sense. I was sorry to talk so; but it is not my palaver, it is my captains; they forced me to do it against my wish. Now they hear what you say, that is enough, they cannot talk evil again: so you must not be angry, and you shall do what you please, for black men are fools, and you know best what is for my good.”

The king having concluded, Apoko rose from his seat, and in the name of his compeers, said, “That is good, O king, and we are all the white men’s friends, when they are yours, and do not join the Fantees to dishonour you. This white captain, therefore, must not think we want to do wrong, because we tell you to beware of the Fantees. He is a great man for his king, and says what he thinks true, and we do the same. But we are good friends for all that, and now we believe all he says is true.”

The Bashaw rose, and said, “White men serve the great god, the same as ourselves, and they cannot do wrong to the king, for their law is the word of God and the great prophets.”

His majesty remained above an hour longer, discoursing upon various topics; but he previously dismissed the greater part of his retinue. “What is your custom,” said the king, “addressing himself to Kantoma and Abou Becr, when great men make friends?” “They swear upon the sacred book,” (the Koran) was the reply. “That is good,” said the king, “because then, if they keep evil in their hearts, the book must kill them.” “True,” added the Moslems, “the book contains holy words from the great God himself.” Our law is a

is a great law ; we say there is no God, but one God, the merciful, &c. Ah!" said the king, " I like that, it is strong sense ; it is the fetische of your country. Ashantee has no fetische like this ; but the Ashantee custom is good also. I know that book (the Koran) is strong, and I like it because it is the book of the great God ; it does good for me, and therefore I love all the people that read it." The Moslems instantly prostrated themselves, and prayed aloud : the king too extended his arms, looking upwards as if to receive a blessing.

In the afternoon I attended at the palace by appointment. The first topic of conversation related to the notes. " Look again at these books," said the king, addressing himself to me ; " do you think Smitty treats me like a friend, when he charges so much for the goods I buy of him ?" " I cannot say more," I replied, " on that subject." " Are they not *gold* books ?" he asked. " Yes," I said. " You tell true," continued the king. " Now I will not have any more goods at those prices ; and if I cannot get what is right, I will have gold. I dont say I will not take goods, for I like goods best ; but then I must have them at a fair rate, the same as I can buy them." I urged that those commodities were liable to fluctuate in value, whence it would be impossible to establish prices of currency. But this reply did not satisfy the monarch ; it had the semblance of a subterfuge ; for he could not comprehend, he said, why Mr. Smith, for instance, should sell him one gun for an ounce of gold, when he could purchase two anywhere else for the same money, of equal or superior workmanship. And again, that an anker of rum, or a keg of powder, should be put down on the notes at an ounce, when he could buy three, or even four of the former, and certainly two of the latter, separately, for that amount. Taffeties and other manufactured goods underwent the like scrutiny, and their prices were equally condemned.

Dismissing these arguments, without attaching to them that degree of importance, by which they were distinguished at Ashantee,

I shall briefly state, that many hours were consumed in discussing this topic alone; and that at last an amicable understanding was effected, by my guaranteeing such conditional reductions in price as the state of the market might afford, after the effectual re-establishment of tranquillity and commerce. "That is what I shall look to then," said the king, "but I will not trust Smitty again. *You* shall take my notes, because my master sent you to be my captain, and to look after my affairs: then I can lie down and go to sleep." I passed my word to transact his business in the character of an agent only, alleging that my situation did not authorise me to trade like the governor, and other white men in the castle.

"Now," said the king, after a pause, "I have another palaver, and you must help me to talk it. A long time ago the great king liked plenty of trade, more than now; then many ships came, and they bought ivory, gold, and slaves; but now he will not let the ships come as before, and the people buy gold and ivory only. This is what I have in my head, so now tell me truly, like a friend, why does the king do so?" "His majesty's question," I replied, "was connected with a great palaver, which my instructions did not authorise me to discuss. I had nothing to say regarding the slave trade." "I know that too," retorted the king; "because, if my master liked that trade, you would have told me so before. I only want to hear what you think as a friend: this is not like the other palavers." I was confessedly at a loss for an argument that might pass as a satisfactory reason, and the sequel proved that my doubts were not groundless. The king did not deem it plausible, that this obnoxious traffic should have been abolished from motives of humanity alone; neither would he admit that it lessened the number either of domestic or foreign wars.

Taking up one of my observations, he remarked, "the white men who go to council with your master, and pray to the great God for him, do not understand my country, or they would not say the slave trade

was bad. But if they think it bad now, why did they think it good before. Is not your law an old law, the same as the Crammo* law? Do you not both serve the same God, only you have different fashions and customs? Crammos are strong people in fetische, and they say the law is good, because the great God made the book; so they buy slaves, and teach them good things, which they knew not before. This makes every body love the Crammos, and they go every where up and down, and the people give them food when they want it. Then these men come all the way from the great water †, and from Manding, and Dagomba, and Killinga; they stop and trade for slaves, and then go home. If the great king would like to restore this trade, it would be good for the white men and for me too, because Ashantee is a country for war, and the people are strong; so if you talk that palaver for me properly, in the white country, if you go there, I will give you plenty of gold, and I will make you richer than all the white men."

I urged the impossibility of the king's request, promising, however, to record his sentiments faithfully. "Well then," said the king, "you must put down in my master's book all I shall say, and then he will look to it, now he is my friend. And when he sees what is true, he will surely restore that trade. I cannot make war to catch slaves in the bush, like a thief. My ancestors never did so. But if I fight a king, and kill him when he is insolent, then certainly I must have his gold, and his slaves, and the people are mine too. Do not the white kings act like this? Because I hear the old men say, that before I conquered Fantee and killed the Braffoes and the kings, that white men came in great ships, and fought and killed many people; and then they took the gold and slaves to the white country: and sometimes they fought together. That is all the same as these black

* Moslem law.

† Niger.



countries. The great God and the fetische made war for strong men every where, because then they can pay plenty of gold and proper sacrifice. When I fought Gaman, I did not make war for slaves, but because Dinkera (the king) sent me an arrogant message and killed my people, and refused to pay me gold as his father did. Then my fetische made me strong like my ancestors, and I killed Dinkera, and took his gold, and brought more than 20,000 slaves to Coomassy. Some of these people being bad men, I washed my stool in their blood for the fetische. But then some were good people, and these I sold or gave to my captains: many, moreover, died, because this country does not grow too much corn like Sarem, and what can I do? Unless I kill or sell them, they will grow strong and kill my people. Now you must tell my master that these slaves can work for him, and if he wants 10,000 he can have them. And if he wants fine handsome girls and women to give his captains, I can send him great numbers."

The wars of the king were shortly after introduced as a topic of general discussion. That of Gaman was the favourite subject, and the king occasionally took up the thread of the narrative, or elucidated such events as were perhaps not generally known. As he caused the linguists to interpret to me the particular feats of himself, the king of Banna and Apoko, his eyes sparkled with fiery animation, and at one period he threw himself into a sort of theatrical attitude, which appeared to be unpremeditated, and unaffected. He then seemed to be wrapped up within himself in delightful cogitations, and at this crisis, some of the auditors like the bards of "olden time," rose to the hum of the war song, and recited their parts in a pleasing mellifluous strain. The king enjoyed the scene in extacy, and frequently motioned with his body and feet in cadence with the metre of the verse. This reverie and the recitation occupied many minutes, and were ultimately succeeded by irony and satire cast upon the memory of his fallen enemy. "His scull was broken," said the king, "but I would not lose the trophy, and now I have made a similar scull of

gold. This is for my great customs, that all the people may know *I* am the king."

A slave was deputed to one of the apartments of the palace, and as he returned he deposited a chair,* which his majesty said was the regal seat of Dinkera. This piece of workmanship was studded all over with gold and silver ornaments, and silver coin of different European states. The slave again disappeared, and returned, bringing under his escort a son of that unfortunate monarch, one of the few male survivors of the race of Dinkera. A pallid hue, if so it may be termed, overspread the jetty features of the youth, as he bowed trembling before the king. The angry glance which marked his reception, excited the most painful apprehensions, and the countenance of the young man spoke woeful agony, as he endeavoured to scan the purport of the summons.

"Your father," said the king, addressing himself to the prince, "was a rebel; he was full of pride, and wanted to be a great king; he forgot when he was my slave. Is not this true? Then he wanted Sarem to help him, and sent gold to make friends. Is not that true, too? He forgot I was his master; he killed my sword bearers, and sent me an insulting message. Now I have his scull, and the jaw bones of his captains. His wives, and you, and all the people are my slaves; and when I tell you to die, you shall die as your brother did; but now you shall serve me."

The king then desired him to strip off his robe and shew me the wounds he had received in battle. The unhappy youth did as he was instructed, pointing to five or six honourable scars upon his breast, arms, and thighs, which had the appearance of gun-shot wounds. "Now," said the king to him, with a stern, sarcastic apathy, "you know your

* The stool or chair is esteemed the throne. It denotes supremacy and sovereignty in rank, not only in Ashantee, but in most eastern nations, as well as the states of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, &c.

father was a fool, and that I am the king; you did not know that before; and so now go home until I send for you again."*

It should have been recorded earlier, that the king, at intervals, before the 23d, during public and private conferences, renewed his application for the "Book," (Treaty) which he desired I should leave with him in token of "good friends," &c. with the great king. The old book, he repeatedly said, was a book of "lies and cheating," and he would by no means retain it in his possession. "Your book," said he, "will tell true, because my master sent you to me to do me good; besides, he will read your book himself; and it will be the words of friends, and of two kings. Then you must put down all he wants, and what you think will give him pleasure; and I shall look to it; for I love him much, and cannot do wrong to any of his white men; but I will fight for them and for him, if you say so."

Many more such conversations passed between us; and I framed a preliminary sketch of a treaty, which having been read over, he suggested certain amendments relative to Fantee, the town of Cape Coast, &c. Finally, on the 23d, the definitive treaty itself, coupled with certain supplementary articles, (at a later hour) received the king's signature, after a most laborious discussion, wherein every article separately was criticised and scrutinized by a full court, at which Apoko, Adusai Ado Matta, Kankam, Amon Koitea, Ado Braddie, Coffee Adukon, (the Caboccer of Amofo) Soabin, of Doompasie, Quaky Coffee, (a captain to Amon Koitea) Eshamo Cudjo, (the head captain over Assin and Fantee) Agampong, and a few others, were present. The king seemed perfectly conscious that the treaty covenanted many articles which were calculated for the benefit of his people. He was sensible, moreover, that the commercial clauses were at least mutually advantageous. But

* This illustrious prisoner was placed under the safeguard of an inferior captain, who employed him in work at his plantations. The negro has no tender sentiment for his humbled antagonist! He was compelled, in the presence of the king, to join a chorus in the cruel *Epicedium*, or death-song, which preceded his brother's sacrifice:—an execution which was performed in his presence, with torture, and amidst the mockery and derision of the whole court.

he wished to know, he said, how much he was likely to benefit individually, by encouraging a free export and import trade with inland states, such as I had on several occasions impressed upon his mind, by making his capital the depôt of British manufactured goods and African produce. I explained the usage of Europe in regard to commerce foreign and domestic, shewing that every article in bulk, and in proportion to its value, paid a relative custom to the great officers of trade, in support of government. "That is very good," said he, "for the great king; but I cannot do so, because the Ashantee fashion is different. None but kings and great men trade here, the same as myself. Sometimes I lend them gold, if they are good people; and then I cannot say, give me the gold back. If they come from another country to trade in Coomassy, they make friends, and give me a present; then, to be sure, I cannot tell them to give me gold, when they buy and sell the goods. Besides, some traders are kings' sons and brothers, and great captains: I must not say to them, give me gold, but I must give them gold and provisions, and send them home happy and rich, that it may be known in other countries that I am a great king, and know what is right. Thus I please my Gods, and they make me strong."

I adopted various arguments to convince the king that the establishment of a well-regulated intercourse with Salgha, Daboya, Houraboh, Yandi, &c. could not fail to increase the wealth of his subjects, even though he might not think proper to levy commercial dues, and by consequence he must be a gainer in the sequel. That was true, he admitted, but Ashantee was a nation of warriors, and the people did not understand these things like the inhabitants who lived nigher the great water (Niger.) If I would take the task upon myself, and regulate the trade of his country, he said, according to what I thought right, he should be happy and contented, and would make all the merchants obey me, and give presents, the same as to himself. "I will hear," added the monarch, "every thing you have to say, and my captains shall be told to obey you."

The king then introduced the officers he had selected as ambassadors to the British government ("the great king.") "This man," said he, taking the foremost by the arm, "is my *treasurer*; he takes care of my gold and good things. When he gets to the white country, he will talk all the palaver properly, and then my master will know that I have a good heart for him and his people, and that only bad men tell lies about me. I am preparing a present," he continued, "fit for him, and this captain will give it to him; but I shall give you a part to take care of, and when you go down to the water-side, you must see every thing put in the ship. I shall let him have five thousand ounces of gold besides, to buy me good things in silver-plate, cloth, silks, &c. and money for his subsistence."

The associates of this officer were six in number, comprising a suite whose powers were subordinate to the *treasurer*, although they owed little or no responsibility to him. This the king explained to me in their presence, as he introduced them according to their offices; namely, two royal bearers of the gold-hilted swords; two counsellors or advisers; one priest; one crier of the court.* They should all bear witness, said the cautious monarch, that "his treasurer spoke the truth, when he came back." I was also desired to procure a faithful linguist, who should likewise assist in buying the fine things he required for the use of his palace. It scarcely deserves to be recorded, that I acceded to all these requisitions. I do not scruple to admit, that I was gratified to the full extent of that feeling, at the brilliant harvest it promised to England,—the influence it gave her over a monarch so tractable, and a country so rich and barbarous, where, notwithstanding, a king of England reigned already in the hearts of hundreds—of thousands—perhaps millions

* With the exception of the crier, who was a youth of sixteen or seventeen, and whose profession was to keep order and silence during my negotiations at the palace, the rest were all men of rank and influence in the government; the priest was of the king's own family, and the others were in offices requiring their daily attendance about the person of the sovereign.

lions of untutored heathens or Moslems of all ranks, but chiefly of that which claims the first consideration.

“ If you go to the white country,” said the king, “ I place these captains under your protection ; they have served you, and you must serve them, for my sake ; instruct them in the ceremonies to be observed before my great master, and tell them how to give him pleasure. Then you must tell him that I like the present he sent me very much. But I like it because the great God of his fathers made his heart to be a good friend to me ; therefore if he should send me only a slave to say so, it is enough. Tell him my great oath. I will fight for him and his white men ; and every thing he wants he shall have : for he has brought tears of pleasure into my eyes ; but, tell him he must not believe the Fantees : black men’s hearts are not the same as white men’s ; and he does not know these people like me, for there is no truth in them ; they cheat him, they cheat me, and make fools of his white people.”

As the day of departure drew nigh, the king invited me to a full audience, which was attended by many thousands, including all the principal officers and their retinues. The din of martial *discord* rained heavily upon my ears by way of salutation, from a countless number of bands, as I turned the angle of the court of audience. The king, who was encompassed by a mixed assemblage of courtiers, of high and low degree, motioned to Agampong to place my seat by his side, “ that the city might know,” he said, “ that I was dear to him as a son.” “ I am going to lose you,” continued the king, “ it is the season of rain, which I hear is bad for white men ; and I do not know if you must go to the white country : but I shall make a strong fetische and pray all the gods to keep you well and bring you back to me soon again ; for I love you much. This is not talk of the tongue, it is my heart says so, and that must tell truth.” His fine countenance, indeed, corroborated his assertion ;—is it weakness to say I too was affected ? I assured him I felt gratitude for the treatment I had experienced, and that my attachment

personally proceeded equally from the heart. "My captains," added the king, after a momentary suspense, "love you, because they know the king of the whites is my good friend, and they believe you have a good heart for all the people, Fantees and Ashantees, Moslems, and those who serve my Gods; so now you shall hear what they say."

The appeal created a simultaneous movement in advance of the throne, and where I was seated. Apoko stood up, and for himself and coadjutors said, "Have we not sworn to be true to the great king? we will serve him the same as *Sai*, for we have made fetische, and cannot break our words."

The king of Banna had already returned to his dominions, little satisfied with the fruits of his negotiation respecting the spoil of Gaman. The sovereign of Coomassy was engaged in selecting presents from his stores, for the tributary princes and allies. These articles, in conformity to court policy, were displayed to the people with great parade and ostentation. To the king of Banna he sent five kegs of rum, two pieces of brocade, some damask and fine cotton goods, ten kegs of powder, and, as I was informed, one hundred ounces of gold dust. A present of much less magnitude was sent to the Caboecer of Coransah. To the Caboecer of Ghofan (below the desert), he sent the same quantity of rum, some gold and damask. To the king of Salgha, (Entaâ,) he sent ten kegs of powder, four pieces of brocade, some fine cotton goods, guns, and eight kegs of rum. The Moslems of Dagomba and Ghunja, headed by the Bashaw, Abou Beer, Cantoma, and Shoumo, came in a body to return thanks, in the name of their sovereign, the King of Yandi, (the capital of Dagomba) for a present he had already despatched to that monarch. They made an appropriate speech, in the dialect of Dagomba, thanking the king for his liberality, in language which seemed courtly and grateful. These Moslems, in common with other favourites, participated in the royal bounty. Besides merchandize, the king distributed, it was said, upwards of 2,000 ounces of gold. A deputation of the Moslems of Bouromy and the Volta, headed by their

Caboceer (an Arab by extraction), arrived at court, exactly as the king was dismissing the Bashaw. Stop, said the king to this officer, you must not leave until you make good friends between the white man and the Caboceer: he does not know those *Crammos*.* “I have sent,” said he, addressing me, “to the king of Dagomba, for fifty beautiful girls, and fifty boys; these I shall dress up in rich clothes and gold for the great king to serve him. Some of them are now here, and more will soon come. The other presents are all ready, and the ambassadors will go as soon as they have made good provision for their wives.” I told the king I regretted he had not communicated to me, at an earlier day, his intention regarding the boys and girls, for that quality of present, I feared, would not be agreeable to my master, neither could I promise to engage for their transportation to England. “Do not fear,” said the king, taking up the after clause only; “for I will send more provisions than the ship can carry, and plenty of gold to pay for their subsistence: you shall have nothing to pay.” I durst not undertake such a charge, was my reply, yet I was satisfied of the purity of his intentions. The king was dejected—he paused, and several of the courtiers renewed the pleading. It was impossible, I said; but whatever *inanimate* objects the king might have to send, I would take every care of. “If that is not a proper present,” said the king, “how can I please my master? and that I must do.”

The slave trade became a topic of conversation soon after, for the king abruptly cut the clue of the former conversation. “I think,” said he, “that the great king will do me much good, if he likes to make a proper trade for slaves as before. You must not forget that palaver. But I do not say he must do so, for he knows best what is good for him and me too: and if he says it will not do, that is enough.”

The ambassador and his suite again came forward, richly habited, and adorned with rock gold. They had been engaged, they said, in making a strong Fetische, to give them a good face before the great

* Moslems.

king. Their bodies were painted with white clay, fancifully arranged in flowers, stars, and streaks.

“ Now,” said the king, turning half round to these men, “ you are to tell my master this. He is my good friend, and I shall serve him faithfully. My people love him, because he is good to black men ; and he is the great king here, as in the white land. Tell him I send my ambassador, that he may hear what is true from my own mouth, and not believe what the Fantees say, for they lie, and cheat his people. I am pleased with the captain he sent me, with his book,* and his present. My ancestors loved white people when they only knew the name, because they knew they were strong, and prayed to the great God. But I loved them from the day I fought at Annamaboe, and met Governor Torrane. Tell my master that was a proper governor, and so was Governor White. I never had any palavers with them, for they knew I was the king ; they did me good, and I did them good. I never had a palaver with any governor before *Smitty*, except the palaver of Fantee, before Torrane knew me. I cannot fight white men : I cannot take their gold and their goods, as the Fantees did. If I make war upon the blacks, when they are stubborn, tell the king not to mind that ; for all this country is mine, and I shall do so to make the people know me and him, and to make them serve us both. He has only to tell me what will please him, and whatever he wants I shall send. If he likes peace, that is good for the people, because then they can trade ; and if he says, make war upon this country or that, I shall rise in the night to serve him. Tell him the Cape Coast people made me very angry ; and all my captains wanted war, because they said the governor would bring white men to help the Fantees. But never mind that now, we are good friends again, and I hold a true book. I shall therefore make plenty of trade, and do every thing to give pleasure to his people. His captain shall look to all that ; and whatever he says is proper, that I shall do. Tell him I am a great king here, and this is not talk like the Fantee caboceers ; for I can do him great good, and send him gold and ivory

* Commission.

as much as he likes. He is my master, and I have sworn the great oath that I will be faithful to him like a king and a true friend, and I shall take care of his captain, and of all the white men; and when he comes back to Coomassy, I can lie down and go to sleep. Then," added the king, as he directed the conversation more particularly to the treasurer, holding him at the time by the skirt of his vestment, "you are to give to the great king the present I am going to shew you, and tell him Sai sends you this, because your country is a long way off, and he cannot come and see you himself; but for all that, he knows you, and he loves you the same as a brother."

The discourse was interrupted by the entrance of a troop of eunuchs, bearing upon their heads various articles of the present, which were passed in review before the gazing multitude. These were a number of ornaments, in molten gold, such as small plates, circlets, twists, &c. besides some large specimens of rock gold; two fine camel's hair carpets, such as those of Mecca, Smyrna, Aleppo, &c. said to have been brought from Cassina; four more, of Yandy* fabric, coarse; nine large pieces of silk, curiously but preposterously fretted with thick gold wire and fetische ornaments; a sort of quilted cotton robe, partly covered with cabalistical scraps and sentences of Arabic: it was in fact a war garment, gifted, as the king said, with the virtue of resisting the power of a musquet bullet, or the thrust of a steel weapon; a long gold pipe,† neatly and tastefully decorated

* A carpet of this description was given to me by the king for a couch rug, intended, as he expressed it, to hinder me from getting sick on the road in the rains: I have it still in my possession. The texture is a coarse tropical wool, or rather hair, interwoven in stripes, with alternate blue, red, and white cotton, flowered and figured characteristically.

† The king desired me to report that, having himself smoked the pipe, the great white king might do the same, and then it should be considered a symbol of peace and friendship between them. It was a proper custom, he said, and grateful to his gods, who, when two people made friends that way, watched over the lives and prosperity of both.

The Ashantees are by no means singular in this practice, the same being observed by many semi-barbarous nations; but it may be sufficient to instance the Indians of North America.

with gold wire, the bowl being cast in the solid, and rudely sculptured ; a massive breast plate cast pure, of the same metal, divided upon the outer surface into compartments, and coarsely moulded into a sort of filligrane work ; a gold elephant's tail, composed of a thick bunch of wire :—a sort of fan or fly flap, used by the king, or rather to him alone ; besides a variety of the finest cotton cloths ; striped and ornamented with silk in the fashions of the country.

When these *treasures* had been sufficiently paraded before the assembled throng, the king ordered me to take charge of the pipe, the breast plate and the other trinkets ; his people, he said, would carefully pack up the rest. The small trinkets, however, he once more gave back to the charge of his ambassador, telling him to pack them also in the same box with the silks, and leave with me the pipe and breast plate only.

At a given signal, a man brought forward a beautiful pair of young leopards, secured in a bamboo cage. “ You are to take care of these yourself,” said the king to me ; “ they are for my master, and if he likes he can have plenty of all sorts of beasts.”

“ What you see,” said the king, “ is not half what I intended to send. By and by the kings of Banna, and Salgha, and Yandy, and Gaman, and all the great caboceers will send in their presents, but then you will be gone.” His majesty again entreated me to take charge, if not of the whole, of a part, at least, of the girls and boys, of whom, he represented, he then had forty in readiness, of the most beautiful he could select. “ It could not be so,” I replied, “ and it was not essential, for he had already shewn a kingly liberality, worthy the estimation in which the great officers of my master held him.” “ Then pick out as many as you like only,” said the monarch, “ it is always the fashion to send some young and handsome people, because then my master will look at them and *love me*.” Finding my reluctance was not to be overcome, he dropped the subject.