

AN  
ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
GOLD COAST  
OF  
AFRICA:  
WITH A  
*BRIEF HISTORY*  
OF THE  
AFRICAN COMPANY.

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BY

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## ERRATA.

- Page 34. Note. For Dahoney read Dahomy.
37. Lines 16, 17. For method of changing their dresses, read practice of wearing dresses.
52. Line 14, *Ashanta* (and wherever it occurs), or *Ashantee* or *Ashantah*, should in each place be spelt *Ahanta*.
87. — 26. For *Carmantyne* read *Cormantine*.
96. — 21. For *pynius* read *pynins*.
120. Reference to note should be placed after *practice*, line 12, instead of after *castle*, line 21.
217. Line 12. For *Papo* read *Popo*.
220. — 18. For *From Ningo* read *Near Little Ningo*.
- 21. For *From* read *Near*.
221. Note, and wherever else it occurs. For *Crabbo* read *Crobo*. The same remark is applicable to the Map; where for *Crabbo-hill* should be read *Crobo*.
236. Line 17. For *lepra gageorum* read *lepra Græcorum*.
240. — 11. Inverted commas omitted at the beginning.

## INTRODUCTION.

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*Winnebah Fort, Nov. 1st, 1811.*

TO THE  
MEMBERS OF THE AFRICAN INSTITUTION.

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GENTLEMEN ;

**T**HE intention of the following lines is, to endeavour to introduce into public favour, a part of the *Globe*, which has for many years been considered undeserving of our attention, if we exclude the accommodation it afforded, of supplying our *West-India* colonies with slaves, and the *Nation* with a portion of gold and ivory, collected along its coast. From observations and enquiries, made during a residence of some years on the *Gold-coast*, and from various notes, the following description has been compiled ; and I trust that, as it is the only description that has been

drawn of this part of Africa, since the days of Bosman, it will meet with public approbation.

Although, at present, the Gold-coast is almost neglected by the British merchants, yet I hope it will not continue long in this state; I trust some favourable change will take place under the auspices of the African Institution, and the Legislature, to increase the trade, and to attract the attention of the public at large to it.

Various, no doubt, are the opinions of those concerned in the commercial interest of the Nation respecting this country, and the changes which may ensue in the West Indies, in consequence of the abolition of the slave-trade. It may be supposed, probably, that those luxuries, which we were accustomed to import very largely from that country, will be gradually reduced in quantity, and consequently, so proportionably increased in price, that the middling order of the community cannot afford an ample use of them. Some persons hesitate not, perhaps, in pronouncing, that sugar, rum, &c. cannot be imported excepting on terms disadvantageous to the Nation, unless the slave-trade is restored; and others,

who place much confidence in their commercial knowledge, and profess a large portion of political sagacity, may affirm, that there is no alternative, but either to open the channel for supplying the plantations with slaves, or colonize part of Africa, otherwise we are likely to depend on our neighbours for a supply of sugar and rum, or dispense with the use of them altogether.

Let these opinions turn out as they may, there is very little doubt, that if sugar can be procured as cheap, and as palatable, through the " exertions and alacrity of a consciousness of freedom," as through the " gloomy, sullen indolence attendant on a consciousness of slavery," it will be more agreeable to the nation, and relished with more satisfaction.

Those who are acquainted with the soil and climate of the Gold-coast, and who have an equal knowledge of the West-Indies, will, doubtless, readily agree in this opinion, that the Gold-coast has the advantage of the West-India islands, not only in soil and climate, but likewise in seasons. The soil of this part of Africa is more uniform, and partakes of a more clayey nature; it is not

so intermixed with stone, and not so liable to be impoverished by gravelly and sandy particles, washed from the hills in the wet season: it partakes likewise of a greater variety of soil, than a country so intersected with high land as the West-India islands are. The climate of the Gold-coast will be found as temperate and salubrious as the West Indies; and if it were cultivated, it would probably surpass the West Indies in point of salubrity. The seasons here are as regular, and as congenial to cultivation, as they are in the West Indies; there is as much moisture throughout the year; the sea and land breezes are as regular; and it can boast of one most decided advantage,---it is not infested with those tremendous storms called Hurricanes, which sometimes destroy the prosperity, and check the industry of the planter: it is true we have tornadoes, but they are mild breezes in comparison to a West-India hurricane. If things be enquired into minutely, we shall find, that the hopes of a planter are very often frustrated, and his expectations disappointed, in the produce of his estate, from irregularities of seasons in the West.

If, therefore, the Gold-coast of Africa be entitled to be classed with the West-Indies in all those qualities, there remains no longer a doubt of its producing every article that will grow there; and as land and labour can be purchased at a lower rate, it would be strange indeed, if sugar, rum, coffee, cotton, indigo, &c. &c. could not be produced from it on terms as advantageous as from the West. In forming these comparisons, and making these remarks, the writer is not actuated by prejudice, nor is he governed by interested or partial motives: his wish is to endeavour to extend the commercial interest and prosperity of the Empire, by exposing to view a part of Africa, which has been ever enveloped in much obscurity.

It is, however, well known, that the Gold-coast, as well as other parts of the coast of Guinea, has been the source of much wealth; that it has given employment to many classes of our countrymen; and that it has contributed to support the great bulwark and glory of the Nation! Whether it be still capable of an extensive and profitable trade; of renewing the speculative spirit of the

merchant; of employing numbers of our tradesmen and artisans; of enticing the manufacturer to new designs and improvements, under circumstances more pleasing to the mind and more honourable to human nature, than it has yet done; are problems which admit of easy solutions.

The Gold-coast, as well as all tropical Africa, is capable of affording incalculable advantages, if the inhabitants can be excited to industry. It is enriched beyond the credibility of those unacquainted with it. Its hills are stored with various metals and minerals, and its valleys are blessed with a fertility, scarcely to be exceeded by any country under the same latitude.

In this examination of the Gold-coast, the characters and dispositions of the natives will be described with tolerable accuracy; their principal customs are related, and an historical sketch of the principal states is subjoined. I have dwelt particularly on the Fantee country, as it forms the most interesting part of the Gold-coast, in consequence of the changes it has lately undergone. The Ashantee war has been treated with atten-

tion, which will lead the reader to an acquaintance with that warlike and trading people. Abuses committed by the natives against the service, and against trade, are touched upon, with a view that the Committee for managing the British concerns in this country, may be aided by Government to apply a remedy. A short history of the Royal African Company, and the trade to this country, is annexed; which I expect will be gratifying to my readers. Upon the whole, much care has been taken to render this work as complete and as acceptable as possible to the publick; but particularly to those who are interested in the improvement and trade of the country.

It is by no means my intention to obtrude myself as an author: the following work has, doubtless, many faults, and will by no means stand the test of criticism; I have only endeavoured to describe what has struck me during many years residence in the country. Many others might have performed this much better, had they been pleased to have attempted it. If I have erred, it is not wilfully; the faults are all my own; and if my book afford any information or amusement, I claim the merit of it.

Captain Scobell, of His Majesty's ship *Thais*, was kind enough to give my manuscript a passage, and send it to a friend in London, to get it published.

I have the honour to be,

with much respect,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

HENRY MEREDITH,

*Member of the Council, and Governour  
of Winnebah Fort.*

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\* \* Mr. Meredith's MS. being written with very pale ink, many parts of it required writing over again, to make it intelligible to the printer. The gentleman to whom it was sent, has done this to the best of his ability, and believes he has preserved the sense, and generally, the words of the author.

Having resided on the coast of Africa himself for fourteen years, he has taken the liberty to add a very few observations in the form of notes, but not in any way to alter the original work.

THE  
GOLD-COAST.

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CHAPTER I.

SITUATION AND EXTENT OF THE GOLD-COAST.

---CLIMATE.---SOIL.---SEASONS.---WINDS.---  
APPEARANCES OF THE COUNTRY.---DISPO-  
SITION AND CHARACTER OF THE NATIVES.  
---ANIMALS.---VEGETABLE AND GENERAL  
PRODUCTIONS.---GOVERNMENT AND LAWS.

**T**HAT part of the coast of Guinea, known by the name of the *Gold-coast*, commences about twenty leagues westward of Cape Apollonia, and terminates at Accra. According to the most modern charts, it lies between four degrees and forty minutes, and five degrees and forty minutes of North latitude, and from the meridian, to about three degrees of West longitude: the whole extent of it may be computed at about two hundred and sixty miles.

*Climate.*

From the proximity of the Gold-coast to the Equinoctial, we might suppose that its climate is hotter than the parts of Africa situated nearer the Tropics; but this is not the case. It will be found, that on the Equator, and about five or six degrees on either side of it, are the most temperate parts of Tropical Africa. The Sun has less power there, than in more northerly or southerly situations, because he is more obscured throughout the year. In the month of December, when the Sun is at his greatest distance from the Tropic of Cancer, the heat at Senegal was found to be ninety-three degrees, and at Sierra-Leone ninety-eight degrees in the shade, measured by Fahrenheit's thermometer; and Senegal is laid down in about sixteen degrees, and Sierra-Leone is about eight degrees of North latitude. At Cape-Coast Castle, which is situated in about five degrees of North latitude, the thermometer has been known, at one period, as high as ninety-three degrees; but the usual degrees of heat, observed in the hottest months, were from eighty-five to ninety degrees, and Cape-Coast Castle is considered the hottest situation on the Gold-coast. At Tantumquerry, Winnebah, and Accra, countries situated eastward of Cape-Coast, the heat has been very seldom known to exceed eighty-seven degrees, and the quicksilver in Fahrenheit's thermometer has been observed as low as seventy-four degrees

at Winnebah, in June, July, August, and the greater part of September; and not higher than seventy-eight degrees. Hence the latitude of a place is by no means a true criterion to go by, as to the heat of its climate. Experience informs us, that the climates of Tropical countries vary, in proportion to their natural qualities, and to the extent cultivation is carried on. Open countries of a good soil have a milder climate, than countries which abound with forests and thick underwoods. High lands likewise contribute to a temperature of air; whereas, low countries, a light sandy soil, and little wood, add to their natural heat, as they afford but little evaporation, and the atmospheric air is therefore but seldom condensed so powerfully, as to produce heavy dews, to cool the surface of the earth; and it is only in the wet season that the inhabitants are relieved from a dry scorching air. To such or similar causes, may be ascribed the excessive heat of those sandy and almost barren regions, situated in the northern parts of Africa.

#### *Soil.*

There is a variety of soil to be observed along the coast, from a light sandy and gravelly kind, to a fine black mould and loamy clay: as we advance a little into the country, the soil assumes a more uniform, and in general a more favourable appearance; and if we continue to advance, it

will be found rich in the extreme, and in general fit for every purpose. About the distance of six or eight miles from the sea, the soil partakes of such happy variety, that it is capable of every sort of cultivation. It is very remarkable, that Tropical Africa, on an examination, will be found to possess the richest soil on the whole continent. The northern parts of it by no means enjoy exuberant fertility: for, excepting on the banks of the Nile, Egypt is almost destitute of cultivation; and if we were to pass from Tripoli to Morocco, we should find the soil of that extensive country as poor as it is in Egypt, and, very probably, not capable of such fertility. The Southern parts of Africa, particularly about the Cape of Good Hope, we are informed, consist of bleak and barren mountains of granite; and that the impediments towards cultivation were so great, that nothing but cool Dutch perseverance could have overcome the difficulties which appeared in the nature of the soil. From this prospect of the extremities of Africa, a person unacquainted with the Tropical parts of it, would hesitate not in pronouncing it a sterile, sandy desert, unfit for the habitation of man.

#### *Seasons.*

The seasons on the Gold-coast, may be considered similar to the seasons of every Tropical country, and may be divided into wet and dry.

It however has the advantage of two wet seasons in the year: one commences at the end of May, or early in June; the other at the end of October, or early in November: indeed, the last does not deserve the name of a wet season, in comparison to the very heavy rains which fall in the former. The first rains set in with a violence unknown in temperate latitudes, and continue without intermission, for two or more days. In the year 1801, rain fell for eight days with very little remission of its violence. The quantity of water that falls during the season, is inconceivably great: low lands are inundated, and rapid streams are formed with amazing celerity. After this deluge, the atmosphere brightens, and strong breezes commonly follow, and we do not expect any heavy rains to succeed. Some showers fall at the changes of the moon, which produce as much rain as would be known in England in a whole day. About the end of July, the rains are considered to be at an end; and shortly after, the foggy season commences; a season, if it may be so called, that is perfectly unhealthy, and the only unhealthy time of the year that is known on the coast. It is, however, necessary to remark, that, during the rains, much depends on situation; for in low, swampy, and woody places, the exhalations from the earth, when the Sun appears with his full power, are not quickly dissipated, and bad air will be generated. The strong breezes that

commonly blow during the rains, with a cloudy sky, which obstructs the Sun's rays, enables the inhabitants of this country to breathe tolerably pure air, in open and elevated situations, and prepares them to encounter an approaching season, highly pernicious to the animal functions. When this season of foggy vapour commences, (and which continues for two or three weeks,) it is a sure indication that the rains are over: during its continuance, the atmosphere is thick and heavy, or (to speak more correctly, perhaps), the air is light, so much so, that the clouds descend very low, the sea-breezes do not blow with their accustomed violence, and the land-winds are almost imperceptible. Asthmatic persons, and those whose lungs are at all diseased, feel the effects of this season considerably\*. About the month of October, another rainy season prevails, but by no means so violent as the first rains. They do not prevail in that continued manner, and are not succeeded by mists or foggy weather. The dry season is considered to set-in in November, and to continue for the remainder of the year; a change however intervenes, which has a greater connexion with winds, than seasons; and will be considered under that head.

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\* The foggy season is considered over about the 10th of August.

*Winds.*

The winds on the Gold-coast are as regular, and as mild, as in any part of the globe; the land-winds, which blow from the North and N. N. W., and the sea-breeze, which blows from the S. W. and W. S. W., prevail, with very little interruption, throughout the year. The sea-breeze commences about nine or ten in the forenoon, and declines at six in the evening; it ceases about eight or ten, and is succeeded by the land-wind, which blows until six or eight in the morning. The sea-breeze is stronger than the land-wind, and at the full and change of the moon, it generally blows with considerable force. As the Sun increases his altitude, this wind gains strength; and declines gradually as the Sun inclines towards the horizon: it is very refreshing, and is considered salubrious. Of the salubrity of the land-wind, much depends on the state of the country over which it blows: it is obvious, that if it blows over low uncultivated grounds, over marshes and swamps, it will acquire bad qualities; but if the country be tolerably clear, and in a state of cultivation, it will collect little or no bad air in its progress. In the dry season the coast is visited by two remarkable winds, called Tornadoes and Harmattans: the latter is the most extraordinary, and deserves a previous description.

A *Harmattan* is so fully described by Mr.

Norris, a gentleman who had frequent opportunities of observing its singular properties and effects, that it would not be acknowledging the merit due to him for his accurate description, were it not given in his own words.

“ On that part of the coast of Africa,” says he, “ which lies between Cape Verd and Cape Lopez, an easterly wind prevails in the months of December, January, and February, which, by the Fantees, a nation on the Gold-coast, is called a Harmattan \*. Cape Verd is in fifteen degrees of North latitude, and Cape Lopez in one degree South latitude; and the coast between the two capes runs in an oblique direction, nearly from W. S. W. to E. S. E., forming a range of upwards of two thousand one hundred miles. At the Isles de Los, which are a little to the northward of Sierra Leone, and to the southward of Cape Verd, it blows from E. S. E. on the Gold-coast from the N. E.; and at Cape Lopez and the river Gaboan, from the N. N. E. This wind is, by the French and Portuguese who frequent the Gold-coast, called simply the North-east wind; the quarter from which it blows. The English, who sometimes borrow words and phrases from the

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\* The Fantees pronounce it Harmanta; and we are at a loss to state as satisfactory a meaning of the word, as we would wish: they call it a *cold dry wind*; but the writer doubts whether this is its true signification.

Fantee language, adopt the Fantee word **Harmanta**. The **Harmattan** comes on indiscriminately at any hour of the day, at any time of the tide, or at any period of the moon; and continues sometimes only a day or two, sometimes five or six days, and has been known to last fifteen or sixteen. There are generally three or four returns of it every season: it blows with a moderate force, not so strongly as the sea-breeze, but somewhat more so than the land-wind. A fog or haze is one of the peculiarities which always accompany a **Harmattan**; the gloom occasioned by this wind, is so great, as sometimes to render even near objects obscure. The English fort at **Whydah**, stands about the midway between the French and Portuguese forts, and not quite a quarter of a mile from either; yet, very often, neither of the other forts can thence be discovered. The Sun, concealed the greatest part of the day, appears only a few hours about noon, and then of a mild red, exciting no painful sensation in the eye. Extreme dryness makes another extraordinary property of the **Harmattan**: no dew falls during the continuance of this wind; nor is there the least appearance of moisture in the atmosphere; vegetables of every kind are very much injured; all tender plants, and most of the productions of the garden are destroyed; the grass withers, and becomes dry like hay; the vigorous ever-greens, likewise, feel its pernicious

influence; the branches of the lemon, orange, and lime-trees, droop; the leaves become flaccid, wither, and, if the Harmattan continue to blow for ten or twelve days, are so parched, as to be easily rubbed to dust between the fingers. The fruit of these trees, deprived of its nourishment, and stunted in its growth, only appears to ripen, for it becomes yellow and dry, without acquiring half the usual size. The natives take this opportunity, of the extreme dryness of the grass and young trees, to set fire to them, especially near their roads; not only to keep the road open to travellers, but to destroy the shelter which long grass and thickets of young trees would afford to skulking parties of their enemies. A fire, then lighted, flies with such rapidity as to endanger those who travel: in that situation, a common method of escape is, on discovering a fire to windward, to set the grass on fire to leeward, and then follow your own fire. The parching effects of this wind are likewise evident on the external parts of the body. The eyes, nostrils, lips, and palate, are rendered dry and uneasy; and drink is often required, not so much to quench thirst, as to remove a painful aridity in the *fauces*: the lips and nose become sore, and even chapped, and although the air be cool, yet there is a troublesome sensation of prickly heat on the skin. If the Harmattan continue for four or five days, the scarf skin peels off, first from the hands and face,

and afterwards from the other parts of the body, if it continue a day or two longer\*. Salubrity forms a third peculiarity of the Harmattan. Though this wind is so prejudicial to vegetable life, and occasions such a disagreeable parching effect on the human species, yet it is highly conducive to health: those labouring under fluxes and intermitting fevers, generally recover in a Harmattan; those weakened by fevers, and sinking under evacuations for the cure of them, (particularly bleeding, which is often injudiciously repeated,) have their lives saved, and vigour restored in spite of the doctor. It stops the progress of epidemics; the small-pox, remitting fevers, &c. not only disappear, but those labouring under such diseases, when a Harmattan comes on, are almost certain of a speedy recovery. Infection appears then not easily communicable even by art.

“ In the year 1770, there were, on-board the *Unity*, at Whydah, three hundred slaves; the small-pox broke out among them; and it was determined to inoculate. Those who were inocu-

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\* To a European it gives the sensation of a *very slight* frost. The air is probably filled with minute particles of sand, such having been collected in the sails of a ship running up the coast in a Harmattan. It appears to be the same wind as is called in Egypt, the *Sammel*, or dry wind, and in the Mediterranean the *Sirocco*.

lated before the Harmattan came on, got very well through the disease. About seventy were inoculated a day or two after the Harmattan set in; but no one of them had either sickness or eruption. It was imagined, the infection was effectually dispersed, and the ship clear of the disease; but in a very few weeks, it began to appear among those seventy: about fifty of them were inoculated the second time; the others had the disease in the natural way: a Harmattan came on, and they all recovered, excepting one girl, who had an ugly ulcer in the inoculated part, and died some time afterwards, of a locked-jaw."

Doctor Lind, in his excellent "Treatise on Diseases incidental to Europeans in Hot Climates," speaks differently as to the salubrity of a Harmattan. He calls it a malignant and fatal wind. Very probably the Doctor's knowledge of it was derived from persons who were not long enough in the country to form a true judgment of its effects, as he had drawn his observations from the effects it might have produced in situations contiguous to deserts, swamps, and woods. To give every merit to such a respectable authority, I will suppose, that the salubrious effects of a Harmattan will vary in proportion to the nature of the country over which it blows.

Mr. Norris deduced his observations of its salubrity at Whydah; a country perfectly open and clear, and, excepting a few rivers near the sea, it

is covered, for a great extent inland, with verdure, open plains of grass beautifully decorated with clumps of trees, and some woods of no considerable extent: as to the soil, the surface is sandy, and below that, a rich clay of a reddish colour. We cannot expect, that a wind blowing over a country like this, will abound with much noxious matter. On the Gold-coast, a Harmattan does not produce any fatal effects, although it blows over a country, in some places widely different from that of Whydah. At Cape-Coast, which lies in the vicinity of hills and woods, no ill effect has been known to accompany this wind; on the contrary, the writer has known a sailor, in the worst stage of dysentery, to recover very rapidly, during the continuance of a Harmattan. The officers and gentlemen of the garrison have borne evident appearance of health and vigour during a Harmattan. I must therefore candidly pronounce this wind as salubrious: the effect it has on furniture that is not solid, is very extraordinary; it exposes the deceptions of the cabinet-maker in a most singular manner; it contracts the flooring of chambers so much, that light is admitted; and whatever is said above or beneath, may be understood. The process of evaporation during this wind, proceeds with astonishing rapidity; and from its constringing powers, we may reasonably admit that it contracts the fibres of the human body, consequently promotes vigour, and

a full exercise of the animal functions. The effect it produces on metallic substances, in course, is not so visible, as on bodies less durable; but that they do undergo some change, is by no means improbable; and the philosophic mind would doubtless be able to trace extraordinary properties in this way.

*Tornadoes* most commonly commence in **March**, and cease when the rains set in. They sometimes blow before or after the second rains, and sometimes precede a Harmattan; they, however, blow with greater violence before the first rains. Tornadoes invariably blow from the eastward, that is, from the S. E. to the N. E.: when they incline to the southward of S. E. they have more the appearance of steady gales of wind than Tornadoes. *Tornado* is a corruption of the Portuguese word *trevado*, a thunder-storm\*. It may be expected a day or two subsequent to the full and change of the moon, and gives sufficient notice of its approach, so that ships at sea and at anchor, have time to prepare for their safety. When vivid and successive flashes of lightning are seen in the Eastern quarter, not many degrees above the horizon, attended with thunder and heavy clouds, and the horizon appears clear and of a blueish cast, all these are tolerable (if not

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\* Dalzel's History of Dahomey.

certain) indications of an approaching Tornado. As the storm approaches, the horizon becomes darkened, and in a short time the Eastern hemisphere becomes entirely so: the lightning advances in vivid flashes, and in quick succession, attended by slow and apparently distant thunder. The scene now assumes, every moment, a more awful and terrific appearance, and a solemn silence appears to pervade the whole face of nature: although it is calm, yet the heavens exhibit a degree of commotion truly surprizing: the feathered tribe flee with the utmost solicitude to a place of shelter and security, and, notwithstanding this precaution, they are sometimes overtaken by the storm, and exposed to its rigour and violence.—A gentle air is first perceived, which increases almost instantaneously to violent gusts of wind, which are usually accompanied with rain, and which do not continue longer, in general, than half an hour, or fifty minutes: the more southerly the wind is, the longer is its continuance. When the violence of the wind is over, rain falls with great rapidity, and in a short time a very considerable quantity of water descends. The lightning and thunder which, it would appear, yielded to the violence of the wind, again commence; but it is only those who are acquainted with these storms, or similar ones in Tropical countries, that can have a perfect idea of the enlightened state of the heavens, and the tremendous

peals of thunder which roar in every direction. On the whole, words cannot adequately describe the awful sublimity of this scene. Rain continues to fall for two or more hours; after which, the hemisphere brightens, but the sun continues obscured for the remainder of the day. It is remarked on the Gold-coast, that the violence of Tornadoes is generally in proportion to the strength of the sea-breeze: that is, if the S. W. or W. S. W. wind blow for two or three successive days, more strongly than usual, and that a Tornado is expected, it will blow with more violence than ordinary. As Tornadoes blow only for a short space of time, and are attended with rain; we hence perceive the reason of their not injuring houses or plantations; and, in a comparative sense, they are mild winds, when we consider the violence of a West-India hurricane, and of those storms which prevail in the Eastern hemisphere, known by the name of Typhons. If Europeans be not long exposed to Tornadoes; if they use the precaution of heavy clothing; and if their wet clothing be changed as quickly as possible, and moderate friction used all over the body; no ill effects will probably follow, from the sudden change that is produced in the temperature of the air; (the thermometer suffering a depression of five or more degrees in a very little time.) Persons who have been some time in the country, feel more invigorated; the mind is re-

lieved from a degree of languor and imbecility, which a long residence in these climates and an excess of heat tend to create. These winds, and the periodical rains, are a manifest proof of the great care and attention directed by **PROVIDENCE** towards the inhabitants of these hot regions: for, as the Sun directs his course towards the North, in April, May, and June, they would be oppressed with such a degree of heat as would be insupportable; vegetation would be destroyed, and Tropical Africa would be a scorching desert, unfit for the habitation of man. But, on the contrary, the heavy rains which accompany and succeed a Tornado, refresh the earth, quicken vegetation, and cool the air to such a degree, that the natives endure the meridional heat of those months without inconvenience; and in July and August, when the natives of the Southern parts of Europe are exposed to an oppressive heat, the natives and residents here, enjoy a moderate and agreeable temperature of air, and vegetation proceeds with such rapidity, that the country, especially inland, exhibits a degree of fertility inconceivable to those who are strangers to Tropical countries.

*Appearance of the Country.*

The general appearance of this country from the sea, may be compared to an immense forest: high lands are seen in different directions, crowned with lofty trees and thick underwoods. On a

nearer prospect, and on a strict examination of the country, the valleys are in many places richly planted, and extensive plains are seen, beautifully studded, and decorated with clumps of trees and bush. As we advance into the country, where there is more moisture throughout the year, than on the coast, and where the fertility of the soil brings forth the most vigorous vegetation, the woods are so stopped up with its luxuriance, as to be almost impenetrable; and the surface of the ground is hid under a covering of shrubs, weeds, and various herbs. The rivers, which are not directed by the hand of art to run in a regular channel, are seen winding in different directions, and taking those courses which the nature of the country points out or admits of: in some places they overflow their banks in the wet season, and form stagnate ponds; whereas, in other places, they run in a rapid manner.

*Dispositions of the Natives.*

To speak generally of the dispositions of the natives of the Gold-coast, it is presumed, will be giving an outline of the dispositions of all the inhabitants of Tropical Africa. Allowance being made for the form of government they live under, and for their employments, I may venture to assert, that there is no part of the globe, where the influence of variety of government is more distinctly perceived than in this country. Those

who are governed by an arbitrary or despotic power, are reserved and cautious in their manner and proceedings; they are fearful of communicating their thoughts to each other; their passions seldom get to that state of maturity, as to oppose restraint; they are humble, submissive, and respectful: whereas those, whose government encourages more freedom, or where it is lodged in the hands of the community, are under little constraint, and every kind of licentiousness is daily practised; they are strangers to all moral obligations, and the ties of affection are very loosely united. In general, they have a great desire for gain, and will undergo many vicissitudes and hardships to obtain it; patient under misfortunes, and meeting affliction with tolerable fortitude. Frugality and temperance in eating prevail among them in a rigid manner. They have a great turn for oratory; and on occasions, where they are obliged to display their eloquence to the utmost extent, their expressions are accompanied with much feeling and energy. They are disposed to singing, dancing, and music; and appear to have a strong idea of the harmony of sound. The women are very industrious and remarkably prolific.

Thus far I have ventured to lay down the dispositions of the natives of the inland parts of Africa; which I do not consider as perfectly accurate, although it may be found nearly so: for it

is difficult to procure satisfactory information concerning the inhabitants of a country so little known as inland Africa. To form an opinion of them, agreeably to those who inhabit the sea-coast, and near it, will be perhaps establishing a judgment full of errors, and by no means conclusive. As to their character, it will naturally lead us to form the following general definitions.

*Their general and distinct Character.*

The passions of men are more violent in hot than in cold countries, but more easily subdued. An African is soon excited to an enterprise; but he is soon discouraged. He is quickly inflamed with revenge, but soon cooled. He is more suspicious, more deceitful, and employs more stratagem than a person under the influence of a cold climate; because the effect of a hot climate is relaxation, and consequently, the strength and elasticity of the fibres are impaired; which produces less confidence, less energy, less vigour, and less bravery, than is to be observed among the natives of cold climates, who are influenced by opposite qualities, and in course have a greater confidence in their natural powers. Notwithstanding some years' acquaintance with the natives of the Gold-coast, I find it no easy matter to lay down their true character: for they appear to us in a variety of forms, according to the nature of our intercourse with them, and to their employment.

Those persons who are indifferent to exceed a further intimacy with Europeans, than an interchange of commodities will admit of, are to be viewed in the true light of peddling traders. When there is a prospect of a good bargain to be obtained, every species of low cunning and mercenary artifice is practised to acquire it. They accommodate themselves with much ingenuity and facility, to our humours and fancies; every attitude, every expression, is carefully recommended by flexibility and supplication; yet they artfully avoid too great a desire of obtaining what would turn out profitable or advantageous to them: and when they know that their wishes are not to be gratified as easily as was expected, disappointment is carefully concealed, and a seeming indifference is preserved in their behaviour. In observing a native of the Gold-coast, throughout this scene, we see him place every confidence in his rational faculties: he contracts a bargain with keenness; he is not precipitate in making an exchange, without being pretty well assured of the advantages that will arise from it: he conducts himself with ease and address, and, on the whole, manages himself in a manner that betokens a perfect knowledge of what he is about. This will be found a pretty correct delineation of the character of those men, who exchange their articles with Europeans; and they may be justly pronounced, as possessing all the chicanery inse-

parable from their calling, and are not readily outwitted.

Those who gain a livelihood by fishing, are a laborious people; and our knowledge of them extends a little further than of the trader, because they are employed frequently by us, as canoe-men and labourers. Their employment is profitable; for fish is readily purchased by the people inland, and on the coast. Their nets, which are large and heavily armed with lead \*, are thrown by them with much dexterity and ease. When these men are employed by us, as canoe-men, they perform their duty with cheerfulness; and if encouraged, will go through a vast deal of labour: but they must be treated with exactness and punctuality. When they call for any customary allowance, or for payment, they do not like to be put off; they expect that their labour should meet with its instant reward. If they be not punctually attended to, they become neglectful and inattentive to the interest of their employer. They are much addicted to that vice (theft) which prevails in almost every part of the world, and, indeed, are very expert in the practice of it, parti-

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\* The nets used in their canoes are, a very large casting net, thrown by one man, but spread properly by the assistance of two others, in a very dextrous and peculiar manner: in rivers, and in the beach, they use a smaller casting net, similar to ours, and in the same way.

cularly as to small articles, which they can easily conceal.

Men who follow an agricultural life, and who chiefly inhabit the inland parts, will be found more uniform in their conduct than the traders or fishermen. To consider them in a general view, and by making allowances for the failings attached to the uncivilized part of mankind, they may be considered a well-meaning set of men. They are divested of that low cunning and deceitful artifice known and practised by those who gain a livelihood by a more intimate connection with Europeans. They possess no small share of honesty, sincerity, and benevolence; and are strangers to the corrupt and licentious conduct plainly to be seen among the inhabitants of the water-side, particularly among the Fantees, a people who bear the most unfavourable characters of any of the inhabitants of the Gold-coast. The natives of the sea-coast, from a more immediate connection with Europeans, we should suppose, are more inclined to industry than those inland; but it will be found that real industry prevails more uniformly inland, and vice is less encouraged. Every person on the coast appears very diligent in acquiring the profits of his occupation; but profligacy, drunkenness, and debauchery are practised to a pernicious extent. For the present, I will close this description of the disposition and character of the natives of the Gold-

coast:—when the different countries and states, which come within the limits of this enquiry, are laid down, they will undergo a more particular scrutiny.

#### *Animals.*

The animals of the Gold-coast are very numerous. Those in a wild state, consist of Buffaloes, Tiger-cats, Leopards, Hyenas, Jackalls, Porcupines, the Ant-Bear, a variety of Deer, Hares, Monkeys, Squirrels, the Musk-cat, Crocodiles or Alligators, Lizards, Land-crabs, Guanas, Chameleons, Scorpions, Centipedes, and a variety of Snakes. Of domestic animals we may number Sheep, Goats, Hogs, Dogs, Cats, Ducks, Turkeys, and common Fowls. There are some horned cattle in parts of the coast; and of the feathered tribe (in a wild state) there are great numbers, and apparently a boundless variety. The smaller sort are remarkable for the beauty of their plumage. As almost every town and village on the coast have their fishermen, there is abundance of excellent fish in the dry season; during the rainy season there is a scarcity: for the surf is, in general, so violent, that the fishermen cannot go abroad without danger: add to which, the sea is turbid and much agitated in that season. The lakes and rivers abound with Mullet and other delicate fish. Oysters and Prawns are like-

wise plentiful, in some places; and Turtle are often caught.

*Vegetable and general Productions.*

The vegetable productions of the coast consist of Maize, Millet, some Rice, Yams, Casada, Potatoes, Pulse, Plantains, Bananas, Guavas, Chillees of all kinds, and other Tropical fruits. A mucilaginous vegetable is plentiful in the country, and much used by the natives in their soups, &c. called by the Fantees, Encrumah; the same is known in the West Indies by the name of Ockra; and it is called by botanists *Heluscus Esculentus*. Another fruit of a mucilaginous nature, and likewise much used, is called Enteraba: there is a variety of it; some of the shape, and as large as the largest sized onion; it grows something like the Egg-plant. This fruit and the Encrumah are highly nutritious. European Cabbage and Eschallots are cultivated with much attention in some places. The Sugar-cane grows spontaneously, and to a tolerable size; and the Black-pepper has been discovered inland. The Indigo-plant is common to many parts of the coast, and the Cotton-shrub may be seen in a wild uncultivated state. The Silk-cotton is found in every part of the coast: the tree is the most remarkable in the country, and from it canoes are made. It grows to a majestic size; the branches project

some distance from the trunk, and they form with it, as it were, right angles.

The country yields a variety of excellent timber; some of it calculated for ship-building and other important purposes. The Palm-tree is very profitable to the natives; the trunk produces an agreeable and intoxicating liquid, called Palm-wine. The fruit yields an oil of great delicacy, which is generally used in all their dishes. Of the leaf they make rope and thread, which they convert to fishing-lines, nets, &c.; a finer thread is procured from the filaments of the leaf of the wild Aloë and Pine-apple.

Excepting Gold, we know nothing of the metallic and mineral productions of the country. That it abounds with other metals, we have no doubt: but the natives are unacquainted with the method of seeking for them. If they were to make any valuable discovery, they are deprived of the means, and ignorant of the method of making them useful. Gold being sought after, and bought with such avidity by Europeans, makes the natives inattentive to search for other mineral productions. Veins of Marble may be seen at Winnebah and other places.

#### *Government.*

The government along the coast partakes of various forms. At Apollonia it is monarchical and absolute. In the Ahanta country it is a

kind of aristocracy. In the Fantee country, and as far as Accra, it is composed of a strange number of forms; in some places it is vested in particular persons, and in other places lodged in the hands of the community. In the Fantee country they very often change their forms of government on certain occasions, and unite, for their general safety, under particular persons, to whom implicit obedience must be paid. When the cause of this union is annulled, they recede into their accustomed form of government.

#### *Laws.*

The laws of the Gold-coast are particularly strict. At Apollonia, where the whole authority is vested in the king, there are no subordinate tribunals: his power is absolute. In other states, the laws differ according to the nature of the government. During the slave-trade, they all agreed in their ultimate tendency, that of slavery: for a trifling offence a man lost his liberty, if he were incapable of paying a sum adequate to the injury\*.

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\* Among people greedy after gain, it is not surprizing, that when the slave-trade gave them the opportunity, they should commute all their former punishments into slavery, as they as effectually rid the country of the offenders, as if they put them to death.

The laws of Apollonia require, sometimes, a more severe atonement than that of slavery; for here every man, excepting the heir-apparent, is at the mercy and disposal of his sovereign. In other particular districts, the severity of the law is mitigated, in some cases: but this is confined to its own inhabitants. In the Fantee country, the laws in general are more rigorous than in any other part of the coast; inasmuch, as a very trifling and accidental act will be examined with as much severity, as if a matter of consequence, or done by design. Murder may be commuted for seven slaves, or their value, besides the customary rites of burial. But if the person murdered should have been of consequence, the *lex tallionis* is resorted to, which causes much effusion of blood before satisfaction is acknowledged. If a person be found in the act of committing the most trifling theft, he forfeits his freedom: if the article stolen were of value, the family becomes involved. If a man, by accident or design, kills a hen, goat, or hog, or any other animal, he loses his liberty, unless he plies the injured party with presents; which, if received, even the most trifling, take off the severity of the punishment.

The law against witchcraft is particularly severe, inasmuch as it generally extends to all under the same roof; as it is supposed they possessed some portion of the malign influence.

Since the abolition of the slave-trade, we have heard of no conviction of this sort; and we may suppose that the severity of the laws, as they regard trifling and imaginary offences, will be mitigated, if not absolutely altered, in consequence of that humane act.

## CHAPTER II.

CUSTOMS.-----POLYGAMY.-----RELIGION.-----  
 FETISH.---GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.---POR-  
 TUGUESE.-----SALUBRITY.-----NECESSARY  
 CAUTIONS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF  
 HEALTH.----FUMIGATIONS. ----FILTRATION  
 OF WATER.

### *Customs.*

THE customs of the Gold-coast are numerous; some of them abound with absurdity. The vile practice of *Panyaring*, a custom attended with the most pernicious consequences, but confined chiefly to the Fantee country, deserves particular notice. If a person became involved in debt, and was, either from the want of ability, or from whatever motive, dilatory in the discharge of it, the creditor was at liberty to seize and confine, or, according to their phrase, “panyar,” any person or persons belonging to the said family, or even to the same country, state, or town, with the debtor; and if opportunity offered, they were sold, without

✓ delay or ceremony. This destructive practice was carried to such an extent during the slave-trade, that many innocent persons were sold: For, besides, the customary mode of proceeding in such cases often offered a plausibility or pretext for imaginary debts being contracted, and offences committed. No man had a lawful right to question the justice of the seizure; and every needy person, for the promise of a reward, or a portion of the spoil, might seize and sell without restraint; and very frequently the person, at whose suit *panyaring* commenced, would retaliate; which never fails to extend it to a ruinous issue\*.

A practice is rigidly observed every year, and happens in August. It has some similitude to the custom followed up by the husbandmen, when the labour of getting in the harvest is at an end. It is a season of mirth and joyous festivity; it continues for six or eight days, and a cessation from labour is observed during that period.

Antecedent to this festival, when yams are fully grown, they celebrate the occasion by feasting and rejoicing.

In general, the natives are particularly, and in some places they are especially interdicted from eating yams, until they arrive at full maturity,

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\* *Panyaring* is rather a law than a custom; and though sometimes prostituted to bad purposes, is frequently the only way to recover a just debt: if done improperly, it would probably be the ruin of any one practising it.

which is a most prudent caution, for yams, before they are perfectly ripe, are unwholesome, and even dangerous to be eaten.

On the death of any person, it is an invariable custom to solemnize the event, by a conjunction of condoling and carousing. If the person be of consequence, this custom is observed very extravagantly. For, not only every branch of the family contribute, but the friends of the dead come forward with something emblematic of the regard they had for the deceased, or respect for the family. Cloth, spirits, and gunpowder, are generally lavished on these occasions; and until the body is deposited in the ground, it is a continual scene of dancing, singing (or rather shouting), firing volleys of guns, and, at intervals, lamentable exclamations, that do not betoken much *real* anguish or sorrow. It is necessary to remark, that all this is a customary action that must be followed, and the actors are principally persons employed for the occasion, who have no inward feelings of grief, excepting what sympathy will create. After the interment, and when calmness, we may say, is restored, we then behold real sorrow and affliction, and the habitation of the departed may be appropriately termed the house of mourning.

There is great attention shewn in this country to the dead, and in proportion to rank, family, or the situation the person was in. The body is exposed

to public view, decorated with the riches and ornaments of the country, for three or four days, and sometimes six; and when buried, gold, valuable pieces of cloth, and other articles, are put into the grave. In some places human sacrifices take place, and the victims are selected according to the rank and quality of the deceased:

In the year 1800, when a king of Apollonia died, one or two human beings were sacrificed every Saturday, until the grand ceremony of making custom took place; which did not happen till six months after his decease. On that occasion, upwards of fifty persons were sacrificed; and two of his youngest wives were put into the grave. The lid of the coffin was covered with human blood, and gold-dust sprinkled upon it, and much gold and rich cloths were deposited in the grave\*.

The practice of depositing riches with the bodies of persons of consequence, is of very ancient origin.

Josephus tells us, that "king David was buried at Jerusalem, with a solemnity of royal pomp and magnificence, that was glorious in the highest degree; and over and above the splendour of the ceremony, his son Solomon deposited in his monument an inestimable treasure †." And we

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\* Much cruelty is practised, both on human beings, and also on animals, that are killed on these occasions.

† Jewish Antiquities, lib. vii. chap. 12.

are told, that when Alexander the Great had Cyrus's tomb opened, there was found therein a bed of gold, a very rich table, drinking-cups, and many fine vestments. The Egyptians were accustomed to this practice; for in their mummies were frequently found very precious ornaments\*.

There is a rigid observance paid to certain days of the week, as it regards a cessation from labour. On Tuesdays the fishermen do not cast their nets; Friday is held sacred by some; and men in easy circumstances observe their birth-day.

#### *Polygamy.*

Polygamy exists on every part of the coast. A man is at liberty to have as many wives as he can maintain.

#### *Religion.*

When we take a view of religion in this part of Africa, we shall find it to consist of a mass of barbarous superstitions, which have been handed down among them from time immemorial; and which they continue to observe, merely on that account.

They have some idea of a Supreme Being; but it is so imperfect and confined, that nothing pleasing or satisfactory can be extracted from it. They appear to hold the Moon in greater vene-

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\* Stackhouse's History of the Bible.

ration than the Sun, for they welcome her appearance with rejoicing.

Superstition is so firmly planted in this country, and holds its sovereignty so triumphantly in some states, that all the calamities that befall them, are to be ascribed, in a great measure, to the implicit confidence and obedience paid to it. In some places, no act of any consequence will be attempted without first consulting the object of worship, through the medium of a set of cheats and impostors. Their object of worship, no matter what it is, goes by the indefinite term, *Fetish* \*, and those persons *Fetish* men or women; for women are considered as capable of concealing the mysteries of their superstition, and expounding the perfections of their *Fetish*, as the men. Where monarchy does not exist, and where the government is lodged in the people, those persons assume much consequence, and sometimes arrogate much authority, and employ certain means, which generally carry destruction with them, to secure and enforce their power. If any person offend the *Fetish*, by either disregard, or by destroying any thing appertaining to it, he is not safe, unless the injury be fully requited, or the anger of the *Fetish* appeased by presents or sa-

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\* *Fetish* is derived from the Portuguese word *fetischo*, witchcraft. Dalzel's History of Dahoney.

crifices, in proportion to the offence and the circumstances of the offender.

The votaries of the Fetish gain their livelihood by these sorts of exactions: and woe unto the person who disputes their power! \*

#### *General Observations.*

It was considered necessary to lay down this general view of the Gold-coast, before its different parts were examined; that the reader may be enabled to form some judgment of the country, before he is carried further; and whatever opinion he may have formed, he would be better pleased with the Gold-coast, if a more correct knowledge of the country inland could be obtained: as our knowledge of the sea-coast does not entitle us to form a solid opinion of the country at large, either as it regards the improvement of trade, or cultivation.

\* *Fetish* is a word of great licence, and applied in a great variety of ways: it frequently means any thing forbidden. One man refuses to eat a white fowl, another a black one; saying, "it is *fetish!*" There are places into which they do not wish a White man to enter; enquire, Why? They are *fetish!* To kill an alligator, or a leopard, is *fetish* in some places. If a person be poisoned, or unwell, in a way they cannot account for; it is *fetish!* In lieu of an oath to prove the truth of any assertion, they take *fetish*. *Fetish* is the *Obi* of the West Indies; *fetish* people the conjurers, the physicians, the lawyers, the priests of the country.

Every country we hear of in the interior produces gold; whereas, on the coast, there is but little to be obtained in comparison. All the ivory exported from this coast, is procured inland; and what an extensive and fertile country must it be, to afford liberty and pasture to such numerous herds of elephants, which doubtless might be trained for the same uses and purposes they are applied to in the East! We have yet reason to think that the domestic animals inland, are larger than on the coast; sheep particularly. The writer has seen and eaten part of a sheep, brought from the kingdom of Eyio, which weighed, upon the authority of a Dutch gentleman, one hundred and thirty-two pounds, cleared from the offal. He has likewise seen with the king of Ashantee's army, sheep of a large size: this proves, that the pasture inland is more rich than on the sea-coast.

If the king of Ashantee had not visited this country, we should have continued ignorant of the advantages that might arise from an inland trade. The men of consequence with him gave the most satisfactory accounts of the country; and the king himself exhibited proofs sufficient to assure us of the wealth of his kingdom.

The Portuguese have proved, that it is by no means impracticable to make advances into the inland countries. The whole of the kingdom of Congo is, as it were, in their possession, and they

have many factories on the coast of Angola. Their principal settlement is at Loango in Angola, and Cape Palmerino, where they have strong garrisons, and are capable of bringing into the field, for their defence against the natives, two or three thousand men, tolerably well armed. Since our knowledge of the coast of Guinea, we have not attempted to advance our trade into the heart of it; we have been contented with a trifling enjoyment of a coast-trade. It cannot be questioned but that we are as capable of advancing our trade into the inland parts of Africa, as the Portuguese: and how infinitely it would add to our manufactories, need not be mentioned. In the course of a few years, we should be able to bring thousands of the natives into the method of changing their dresses similar to Europeans\*.

The natives are in want of many articles we can give them, and can tender in exchange what is considered by us valuable. Excepting the coast of Guinea, we have shewn a disposition, in all

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\* Experience of the past, certainly does not warrant this conclusion. The natives of this coast have had intercourse with Europeans about three hundred years, and (with the exception of a very small number educated in Europe) have adopted none of their customs but smoking and drinking. Their clothing, tools, houses, canoes, nets, &c. &c. are all after their old fashion.

our foreign possessions and settlements, to improve them, and become acquainted with their productions: that this country, although so near home, and so capable of many important advantages, should remain so long neglected, must create much surprise in any person who has a knowledge of it.

The country is not distinguished with Eastern splendour; art is scarcely known in it; and we have only to view nature, but we see her in all her variety and elegance of dress.

Before I close these general observations, I conceive it expedient to examine the Gold-Coast as it regards health, and to lay down some rules and precautions necessary towards its preservation. And on this head I must observe, that as to salubrity, this country has its disadvantages, as in all other Tropical countries: but we should not condemn it as being so unfriendly to European constitutions, as it is generally considered.

The coast of Guinea was formerly, and is by many to this day, accounted the grave of Europeans, and very plausibly: for, as Doctor Lind remarks,—“ It was not uncommon, in many trading factories, to meet with a few Europeans, pent up in a small spot of low damp ground, so entirely surrounded with wood, that they could scarcely have the benefit of walking a few hun-

dred yards, and where there was not so much as an avenue cut through any part of the woods for the admission of wholesome and refreshing breezes."

It is a well-known fact, that many Europeans had either forgotten or neglected precautions necessary to their preservation, and frequently allowed themselves to fall into excesses which the strongest constitutions could with difficulty endure, and by such provoking practices brought upon the climate a degree of reprobation, which, with all its faults, it really does not deserve. Indeed, the coast of Guinea has found such a strong prepossession of opinion in some persons as to its insalubrity, that I will state one remarkable instance. In 1807, one of His Majesty's ships was ordered to the coast of Guinea; which caused such a depression of spirits in the captain, that he acquainted his particular friends he was bound to a part of the globe, whence he did not expect to return. He made his will, and in other respects arranged his affairs. After touching at Goree and Sierra Leone, the ship anchored at Cape-Coast. The captain visited the governor, dined and slept on shore: on the following day, he complained of being unwell, went on board, took to his bed, and resigned himself to that lowness of spirits which he had given way to on sailing from England;

and in a very few days after, was buried on shore.

Here is a melancholy instance of the force of prejudice, and the terror imbibed of a climate of which nothing of its destructive tendency was known, but by report, and the influence of dangerous apprehension. If this unfortunate, and, doubtless, brave gentleman had been surrounded by the fury of war, and in the midst of all its horrors, in all probability his mind would have supported itself to the last.

Doctor Lind, in his *Treatise on Diseases incident to Europeans in Hot Climates*, is of opinion, that if the land in this country was cleared, it would be as healthy as the island of Barbadoes, the most salubrious of the West-India Islands. The Doctor says: "I think it would not admit of a doubt, that if a tract of land in Guinea was as well improved as the island of Barbadoes, and as perfectly free from trees, underwood, marshes, &c. the air would be rendered equally healthful there, as in that pleasant West-India island."

We have proof sufficient here to support and confirm the Doctor's opinion. At Accra, where the country is open, and improvements attended to, Europeans do well. Many officers and gentlemen in the Danish service have resided years in and about that country, without expe-

riencing any ill effect from the climate: one gentleman particularly, who lives mostly inland on his plantation, has been thirty years in the country, and enjoys as good health as he could in Denmark. A gentleman high in the English service, has been twenty years in the country, and has undergone the difference of climate which subordinate offices and change of situation exposed him to, without any appearance of injury to his health. I do not however attempt to prove by these instances, that the climate of this country is friendly to Europeans: on the contrary, after the rains, the utmost care is required, to prevent the ill effects of impure air through the remainder of the year. In open, dry, and elevated situations, we breathe tolerably pure air; and the absence of health may be imputed a good deal to our own conduct. Perhaps many proofs could be added, tending to shew the superiority this climate bears to others in the same latitude; we will for instance repair to the coast of Guiana, which lies parallel to the coast of Guinea: here we shall perceive such a difference, as will establish the opinion of superior salubrity in Africa.

From the island of Maraca, which lies about two degrees north of the river Amazon, to the mouth of the Oronoko, we see a remarkably low country, which, divested of its improvements, would present nothing but rivers, swamps,

and impenetrable forests: the most enterprising man cannot enter this country, with all its advantages, without feeling apprehension of danger. At no time of the year can the European breathe pure air: for, when there is not rain to cause noxious exhalations, the various rivers, creeks, and marshes, will supply the surrounding atmosphere with abundance of gross and pestilential vapour.

Those who wish to visit the Gold-coast, either in the service or out of it, ought to be at least twenty years of age. If younger, there is so much juvenile gaiety usually retained, that attention to regulate the passions is too often neglected; at, and beyond the age of twenty, we might naturally expect, that adventurers would observe some precautions, which are here so highly necessary; the principal of which are, to practise moderation, regularity, and temperance; to curb hasty or violent emotions, to excite the body and mind to activity, and to encourage tranquillity and steadiness of mind. Here great attention is requisite for the regulation of the passions; and it is universally allowed, that nothing contributes more to the health in any country, but particularly Tropical climates, than a due regulation of the affections of the mind. The animating passions, such as joy, hope, &c. when kept within proper bounds, gently excite the nervous influence, promote an

agreeable circulation, and are highly conducive to health; while the distressing affections, such as fear, grief, and despair, produce the contrary effect, and lay the foundation of the most formidable diseases.

A person arriving in this country from England, undergoes a change of atmospheric heat, which, upon a medium, I will set down at 25 or 30 degrees. This difference of heat produces, no doubt, considerable change in his constitution: for although (I will suppose) the temperature of the blood does not undergo any alteration in the shade, yet, on the body being exposed to a vertical sun, it is liable to be heated. The lungs are almost immediately affected; they become more inflated than ordinary; the blood circulates with greater rapidity than usual, and respiration is quickened; which produces a degree of compression of the lungs, and a temporary obstruction of the arterial blood in the brain, which must affect that delicate organ very sensibly, and perhaps finally produce that change termed by the French *coup de soleil*, and by us a *stroke of the sun*.

Hence it behoves every person to avoid, as much as possible, the meridian sun; the stranger particularly, who should not be abroad after eight, or before three o'clock in the afternoon, until he becomes a little inured to the climate; but before and after these hours, he ought to use

as much exercise as prudence shall dictate. Where duty or business requires travelling, the night is most proper for it: but heavy clothing should be worn, to defend the body from the severe dews, which generally fall in this, as well as all Tropical climates. If travelling by day be preferred, an umbrella should be used, and a handkerchief or two placed between the head and the hat. By attending to this practice, the temperature of the blood is not very much increased, and perspiration is encouraged; and while that continues uninterrupted, no fatal consequence will ensue. "For the power of resisting heat arises from the evaporation, that is constantly going on from the surface of the skin, and which becomes extremely abundant when the temperature of the air is much raised." It should therefore be encouraged, but not to that degree as to produce weakening effects. In the event of getting wet, the body should be well rubbed with coarse cloths, and warm clothing put on, to restore the body to its usual temperature. It is not uncommon, on such occasions, to apply spirits to the body, which ought not to be done, particularly to the extremities. Spirits will produce a glowing warmth; but it is only momentary, for it is evaporated almost as soon as it is applied, and leaves a coldness behind it, which will cause very unpleasant consequences, particularly to men of an advanced age.

If a person have been much exposed to rain, bathing in salt water, or salt added to fresh water, and used in the same way, will have a good effect: cold-bathing should be used freely; and we are surprized that this precaution is so much neglected: the benefits arising from cold-bathing are of greater importance than is generally understood in this country. By long residence in hot climates, the body and mind suffer great changes; the former becomes much relaxed, and the latter is deprived of a good deal of its vigour: but by the use of the cold-bath, these misfortunes may be prevented in a great degree. I would recommend, by all means, early rising and early retirement; that is to say, up at five, and in bed at nine o'clock.

The practice of relish-eating should be exploded; we consider it a meal by no means necessary. The use of animal food once a day is quite sufficient in this climate. The practice of relishing, or having a meal at ten o'clock, arises more from habit than necessity: for if a person breakfast at seven, there cannot be any great desire for food at ten. But those who are in favour of it may say, that they have no relish for food until ten; but then it should partake more of the nature of a breakfast, than what is now in general use, viz. rich soups, stews, &c.: such highly seasoned dishes never fail of heating the stomach to that degree, which will cause uncom-

mon thirst, and a frequent desire for repressing this sensation, becomes, in course of time, habitual and unavoidable. We would advise walking abroad until half past seven or eight o'clock, when, we will presume, an appetite for breakfast will be created; and by dining at four o'clock, we think the stomach will be sufficiently prepared to have a relish for animal food.

By adopting this method, or one similar to it, the digestive organs will perform their office with better success, and bilious complaints will be lessened. In the wet season, apartments should be kept warm enough to counteract the damp air, and the body should be preserved in that state of temperature, by heavy clothing, as to produce perspiration on using a little exercise. During the foggy season, too much attention to this rule cannot be practised: the air during this season is strongly impregnated with unwholesome vapours, and every art should be employed to purify it: to effect this, fumigation should be frequently used in crowded and confined apartments: the most simple we will suppose to be vinegar, sulphur, gunpowder, and perhaps tobacco.

At Cape-Coast Castle, where there are many apartments, and some of them confined, we would recommend the practice of Doctor Smith's method of destroying contagions in crowded places. It should be used in crowded war-

houses, as well as rooms, every week, while this season of foul vapour continues: the process is simple, and is as follows; viz. Let one or more pipkins, or small earthen pots, containing hot sand, be procured; into each place a small tea-cup, containing half an ounce of sulphureous acid, or oil of vitriol: as soon as the acid is well heated, add an equal quantity of nitre in fine powder; and the mixture stirred with a glass rod, or the shank of a tobacco-pipe, much vapour ascends, which should be conveyed to every part of the apartment, the doors and windows of which should be closed before the process is begun. This fumigation not only abates the malignancy of fever and dysentery, but effectually stops the progress of infection. We strongly recommend the use of flannel next the skin: it is recommended by the Faculty, and by others of knowledge and experience, as a most important article of dress, especially in hot climates. We have, however, heard, that the constant use of flannel next the skin, in this country, promotes or encourages an eruption, attended with peculiarly uneasy sensation, called the *prickly heat*: but we are persuaded, this heat, or eruption, is not brought on by the use of flannel; nor is it encouraged by it. This cutaneous disease (if we may so term it) is generally known at one particular time of the year. In December and

January, when the air is very dry, and the body then affected by its parching qualities, and which require more than ordinarily the application of flannel, and the use of exercise—likewise, more regard to temperance in living than usual, with cooling laxative medicines.

On the subject of flannel, we will quote the authority of Count Rumford, who has made many experiments as to its importance.—“It is well known,” says he, “that woollen clothes, such as flannel, &c. worn next the skin, greatly promote insensible perspiration: may not this arise principally from the strong attraction which subsists between wool and the watery vapour which is continually issuing from the human body? That it does not depend entirely on the warmth of that covering, is clear; for the same degree of warmth produced by wearing more clothing of a different kind does not produce the same effect. The perspiration of the human body being absorbed by a covering of flannel, it is immediately distributed through the whole thickness of that substance, and by that means exposed by a very large surface to be carried off by the atmosphere: and the loss of this watery vapour, which the flannel sustains on the one side by evaporation, being immediately restored from the other, in consequence of the strong attraction between the flannel and this vapour,

the pores of the skin are disincumbered, and they are continually surrounded by a dry and salubrious atmosphere."

"It is a mistaken notion," says he, "that it is too warm a clothing for summer: I have worn it in the hottest climates, and at all seasons of the year; and never found the least inconvenience from it: it is the warm-bath of perspiration confined by a linen shirt, wet with sweat; which renders the summer-heat in Southern climates insupportable: but flannel promotes perspiration, and favours its evaporation; and evaporation, as is well known, produces positive cold."

We have already perhaps obtruded on the province of the physician in making unqualified remarks, and delivering opinions; but we trust the Faculty will excuse our intrusion, and impute it not to arrogance, but an anxious desire to render these observations as useful as we possibly can to the Service, and our countrymen in Africa. We will therefore take the liberty of laying down a very necessary caution. Persons just arrived in the country should be sparing in their diet; and they should refrain from salt meat as much as possible; their food should be such as is easy of digestion; and vegetables and acid fruits should be freely used: their drink, which should likewise be sparing, to consist of rum and water, wine and water, lemonade, &c. Spirits should be freely diluted with water, and

acidulated either with lime-juice, or a mineral acid.

The body should be kept gently open by cooling physic, such as salts, cream of tartar, or any other cooling purgative which the surgeon of the place may advise: a dose may be taken every week for a couple of months, until the constitution is a little seasoned to the climate. The cold-bath should be used every day, either in the fore or afternoon, and the heat of the sun should be avoided as much as possible. What we have said respecting relish-eating should be particularly attended to by new-comers.

The importance of having a supply of good water, is of the first consideration in this country. The tanks of the different forts should be cleansed and white-washed once a year; and some lime, or charcoal, thrown into small tanks, assist in preserving the water pure. Persons who are constrained to use pond or river water, would do well in having it boiled before it is put into the filtering-stone.

We will here say a word or two on filtering-stones, and propose an improvement that will be found, perhaps, entitled to some attention. It is well known, that the method employed in cleaning drip-stones in this country, wears them very much, and, in course of a few years, they become so porous, that water passes through them, deprived only in a small degree of its im-

purities—a method suggested itself to the writer, of repairing this inconvenience.—He procured a leaden pipe of about three feet and a half long, and one inch diameter in the bore, and gave it a curved form; one end of which was six or eight inches longer than the other, and the diameter of the bore a little increased: some coarse sand was put into the curved part of the tube, and a hole made at the extremity of the short end, through which a quill was put. A keg was procured, and filled with water, and a small cock affixed to it. The water was allowed to drip into the longer part of the tube; and, in passing through the sand, it was cleared of its impurities: it was received from the short part of the tube perfectly clear. And thus filtration is carried on in a very successful manner. The tube is generally cleaned once a week, and supplied with fresh sand. A wooden tube, if made tight, will answer the purpose; and an angular form will do as well as a curved one.

In whatever manner the foregoing rules and observations may be considered by the Faculty; by persons long resident in the country, and by those well acquainted with Tropical countries; it is presumed, that if they are carefully consulted by the young and unexperienced, for whose guidance they are chiefly intended, they will be found useful. The writer is actuated by motives of public

welfare; and if his wishes to render this country better adapted to the prosperity of his countrymen be confirmed, he will feel highly gratified.

We have here finished a general account of the Gold-coast, and shall commence an examination of those parts contiguous to the English and Dutch settlements; beginning at Apollonia.

### CHAPTER III.

APOLLONIA; LAKE, VILLAGE ERECTED IN IT; CUSTOMS, MANNERS, AND DISPOSITIONS OF THE APOLLONIANS: HISTORY.—AXIM.—ANCOBRA RIVER.—HOLLANDIA.—DIXCOVE.—BOUTRY.—TACCORARY.—SUCONDEE.—ASHANTA COUNTRY.—CHAMAH.—COMMENDA.—ELMINA.

#### *Apollonia.*

**T**HE first fort on the windward part of the Gold-coast is Apollonia. It is about three miles eastward of a cape of that name, and is situated on a spacious plain, at about one hundred yards from the sea. About three miles from the fort inland, there is a very fine lake of fresh water, that forms the boundary of the plain interiorly,

and may be computed at six miles in circumference. It is deep, for no bottom was found about the centre, with a line of thirty fathoms. There is a variety of fish here; the crocodile, or alligator, inhabits it; and a large species of snake has been discovered on its banks.

A small village is erected in this lake; the houses are formed on wooden piles; they are separated from each other, so that every house is insulated. The inhabitants form a communication by means of canoes, which are generally paddled by women. The original inhabitants of this village are said to have been composed of disaffected and ill-disposed persons, who emigrated from their native country Chamah, a small state some distance eastward of Apollonia, and where the Dutch have a fort. It is reported, the king at first refused them any indulgence, and desired them to depart from his kingdom: they however intreated him with much importunity, and informed him, they were willing to undergo the meanest office, if he would permit them to settle in any part of his country. At length, the king allotted to them a small spot of ground adjoining to the lake, but told them they must not build upon it, but endeavour to erect houses in the lake, so as to be secluded from his subjects. Necessity thus obliged them to exert all the ingenuity and art they were

masters of; and after much labour, they succeeded in forming comfortable and secure houses of wood, chiefly of the bamboo cane. The inhabitants of this village are careful in retaining their primitive language, and have no further intercourse with the Apollonians, than a trifling trade will admit of; which only consists of fish caught in the lake, and for which they get corn and rice in exchange. Whatever may have been their character and disposition, they appear to live peaceably and happy. Their situation is favourable to tranquillity, as no part of a family can move abroad without some difficulty; which affords no opportunity of using malpractices, and, fearful of incurring the displeasure of the king, they must be strict in their behaviour and conduct.

The country of Apollonia is for the most part flat, and abounds with wood and water, but no considerable river runs through it.

There are many small rivers, which form a communication in the wet season, and inundate a considerable part of the country: hence it is favourable for the production of rice, sugar-cane, or whatever requires a wet soil. The natives cultivate rice, Indian-corn, yams, &c.; and a bulbous root called *coco*, which is of a globular form, and about the size of a small potatoe, but much firmer. There is abundance of sugar-cane in the

country; and although the cultivation of it is not much attended to, it grows to a good size. The cocoa-nut tree is very plentiful near the sea; besides which, there are four kinds of palm-tree to be found in the country; the high and low palm, the date-tree, and the fan-leaved palm. The high palm tree grows to the height of sixty, eighty, and an hundred feet; and from it is procured an intoxicating liquid, that bears the name of palm-wine: it is got by simply making a hole at the top of the tree; in which hole they insert a reed, and in a short time the liquid flows through it, and is received into an earthen pot, secured for that purpose. The low palm yields a liquid likewise; but the tree is destroyed to obtain it. They remove the earth from the roots of the tree, and bring it to the ground; a fire is then made about the centre of the trunk, and when they conceive the heat has liquified the substance within it, they cut an oblong piece out of the top, to give it vent, and also bore a hole, and the liquor drops gradually through it. The wine obtained from this tree is more agreeable, and less intoxicating than the high-tree wine. It very seldom can be tasted in its natural state, unless at the tree; for as it is procured only in small quantities, the natives adulterate it pretty freely. If this liquid be tasted in its pure and original state, it will be found very agreeable, imparting a richness and delicacy of taste to the palate, scarcely to be excelled by

any artificial liquid whatever\*. To climb the high palm-trees, which have no branches but at their top, and the straight and slender stems of which cannot support a ladder, requires some agility. The natives use a sort of girth, which they pass round the tree, and on which they seat themselves; then, with the assistance of their feet, and holding a rope that is fastened to the girth in both hands, they force the girth suddenly upwards, so as to catch the rugged protuberances with which the stem is studded: by means of these successive springs, the people here reach the top of the palm and cocoa-nut tree; where, still sitting, they work at their ease either in procuring the palm-wine, or gathering the cocoanuts: they afterwards descend in the same manner. The wine is not the only produce of the palm-tree; by beating the leaves, filaments are obtained, from which they make ropes. They are fond of the fruit of the date-tree, which is smaller than the Egyptian date, and is in fact the wild date. It grows abundantly in low moist situations, and is generally found near stagnant pools. The fan-leaved palm is likewise found in moist situations: it bears a fruit that yields an

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\* Palm-wine will not keep more than a few hours: it is drunk in a state of effervescence. The sap of newly fallen trees will run without the application of fire: this is only applied to force out the last remaining liquor.

unctuous substance of a strong fragrant smell: it is not known whether they make use of the fruit; of the stem they make drums. This species of palm grows to the height of forty or fifty feet, and about five feet in circumference; the leaves which project from the summit, in shape something like a fan, give it a pretty appearance.

There is a variety of excellent timber in the country, capable of being converted to very useful purposes. The soil of Apollonia is generally good; the surface of the low land is chiefly light and sandy for about four or five inches, beneath which it is rich clay; excepting near the Cape, there is scarcely a stone to be seen in the whole country. Among the wild animals, the elephant is sometimes seen in this country. There are numbers of monkeys about the lake, and a great variety of birds. Of the domestic animals, the king has a few horned cattle and some good sheep; but the chief stock of the middling class is poultry.

The sea breaks with such violence along the coast of Apollonia, that it cannot be approached without the utmost danger. There are no creeks, nor harbours. The coast is flat and sandy. There are very few fishermen in this country, and not many who are acquainted with the management of canoes; the surf being so violent, it deprives them of the advantage of going out to sea to fish: but those who are acquainted with the

art of paddling canoes, perform their office with much dexterity. They will go off to vessels, and convey merchandize on shore with safety: when they wish to display a proof of their skill, they can conduct a canoe on shore with surprizing velocity. They watch the sea when on the point of breaking, and every man betakes himself to steering; which is performed by keeping the flat part of the paddle parallel to the canoe, and giving it a quick motion, making nearly right angles with the canoe: when they have got the canoe on the summit of the sea, and when it is ready to break, this quick motion of the paddle is discontinued, and it is kept firmly in a parallel position; when the canoe flies on shore with great rapidity. The canoe must be kept on a balance, and as straight a course as possible be observed; otherwise it will overset.

Europeans travel in two ways, either by sea in a *canoe*, or by land in a *hammock*.

*Canoes* are of different sizes, and paddled by from three to twenty-one canoe-men: the smaller-sized are used for fishing and other purposes by the Blacks; the Whites commonly use those worked by from seven to fifteen paddles. Some put a platform in the bottom, and erect an awning with curtains over the fore-part of the canoe, where the passengers sit, to protect them from the rain or dew at night, and from the heat of the sun by day: others content themselves with an

umbrella. These canoes are made out of silk-cotton trees, shaped and hollowed out with a very simple instrument of iron, like a large chisel, which answers either as axe or adze, according to the shape of the handle with which it is used. Some of these trees are large enough to make a canoe to paddle with twenty-one men, and carry four puncheons of liquor. The wood is soft and easily worked, especially when green, and almost as light as cork when dry.

A *hammock* is made of cotton, something like those used on-board ship, but larger and neater; generally brought from Brazil by the Portuguese. This is slung to a bamboo pole about nine feet long, and covered by a cloth, in such way that the person carried can either sit up or lie down in it, and borne by two men \* at a time, either on their

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\* These men are paid in goods or gold, to about the value of five shillings each man for their trip; beside which, they have subsistence and liquor. This appears but moderate pay for such laborious employment: but when it is considered, that a Black can be victualled sumptuously, agreeably to the custom of the country, for ten shillings per month, it is too much: and it is very probable, if Europeans, at a future time, should have occasion to hire free labourers for purposes of cultivation, they will regret that such high pay has been given to hammock-men and canoe-men; as it may be urged against them as a precedent for giving high wages. If a labourer in Europe earn as much in one day as will keep him two, he is well satisfied.

shoulders or head, rested on a cloth rolled round in the same way as our milk-maids carry their pails. To go a distance of twenty-five or thirty miles, it is usual to have six or eight bearers for each hammock; who relieve each other without stopping; and two or three more to carry any necessaries, particularly a case of liquor for the people to drink; without which nothing is done in this country. Well supplied with rum, they will travel at the rate of five miles an hour\*.

The extent of Apollonia, like that of other maritime states in this country, is inaccurately defined: there is no exact ulterior boundary, until we arrive at towns and villages, the inhabitants of which perhaps acknowledge a distinct authority. It

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\* Two or three Europeans travelling in this way, with the flag of their country carried before them, attended by a number of stout Black men, almost in a state of nature, singing and running, make a most whimsical procession. If such a one could be exhibited in England, it would draw the public attention from even a cavalcade of the Whip-club; and more especially if they could see such a party received in a ceremonious way at a Black-town, by the men in their war-dresses, capering about and firing their muskets, most heavily loaded with powder, almost in the faces of their visitors; for the nearer they fire to you, the greater the compliment: so that, in fact, a very honourable reception is attended with a proportionable degree of bodily risk, as it is no very uncommon event to have a musket or two burst upon the occasion. This parade must be requited by a present of liquor and gunpowder.

stretches about one hundred miles along the coast; how far inland, is not exactly known: it does not, however, exceed twenty miles.

The natives of this country are generally tall and well formed; thick lips and flat noses are not distinguishing features among them. They are courteous, kind, and hospitable, but for the most part reserved in their manners; which is occasioned more by the nature of their government, than a natural disposition. They have the character of being brave and warlike; indeed, on many occasions they have confirmed this. They are fond of music, and their instruments consist of drums, horns, and flutes: the drums are of various sizes and forms; the horns are made of the tusks of young elephants, which go by the name of screvelloes; the sound of their horn is like that of the bugle. The flutes are made of a large reed, open at both ends, with a triangular cut at the mouth-end, and scraped thin to divide the wind: they are about four feet long; the notes produced from these flutes are soft and plaintive. When the king walks publicly abroad, he is generally accompanied by a full band; and the alternate airs produced from the horns, flutes, and drums, are by no means unharmonious or inelegant.

The dress of the men consists of a piece of cloth of two or more fathoms, wrapt loosely about

the body; they likewise wear a folded cloth round the loins. The dress of the women is much the same as that of the men; they wear bracelets, and neck-ornaments; some of them wear on their feet brass rings, which are of an oval shape, and made to encircle the heel, and to extend to about the middle of the foot: on particular occasions, the women of consequence exchange the brass for gold rings. Their houses are made of bamboo, and plastered with a strong loamy clay. The floors are made of the same sort of clay, and are remarkably hard. Their towns and villages are in general surrounded by a strong fence of bamboo cane, which secures the inhabitants in a great measure against the encroachments of wild animals.

Of the religion of this country, nothing gratifying can be said: superstition does not appear to reign so triumphantly here as in other states; very few pretend to profess supernatural powers, if we exclude those who claim a knowledge of the healing-art, and who are encouraged by the king.

The harvest-festival is observed here with particular attention; and it is customary, on this occasion, for the governor of the fort to entertain the principal men with a dinner: during this festival, which continues for a week, mirth and good-humour are diffused among the people.

The government of this country is solely in

the hands of the king. He hears, tries, and passes judgment, without the opinion of any of his subjects, excepting when the accused is a great personage; but in this case, a man of consequence seldom appears as a criminal before the king. If he be guilty of a crime, or if he incur the king's displeasure, a message is sent to him, importing the necessity of proving his innocence; which is generally complied with, and he is tried agreeably to the ordeal of the country, which seldom fails of its intended purpose. This trial consists of administering the bark of a tree deemed poisonous, and other substances, mixed in water; which, if retained on the stomach, generally proves fatal; if it be rejected, it confirms the innocence of the person. The king himself sees this potion prepared, if he be resolved it shall have effect; and he sometimes sees it given. This is an efficacious method, at the same time satisfactory to the public, of disposing of a man no longer a favourite, or who may have had evil designs against the king: for the superstition of the country is such, that if the man die in consequence of this trial, he must have been guilty. The innocent cannot be injured by it.

The punishments inflicted on the commonalty are, beheading, burying alive, and placing the person in a deep pit, and leaving him there to perish. The kings of Apollonia support an arm-

ed force of about one thousand men; and every man of consequence is obliged to furnish a quota of men and money, when the king goes to war.

The history of this small kingdom is preserved only by tradition, and in course is involved in much obscurity and uncertainty. We know nothing of it anterior to the reign of king Amonihier: and when the Dutch were inclined to settle in the country, that king was not willing to favour their inclination; which caused a war.

The Dutch crossed Ancobra river, which forms the eastern boundary of Apollonia, with a considerable force, Europeans as well as natives, with a few artillery; and were soon opposed by the Apollonians, at the head of whom was the king. A battle was fought, which terminated with the defeat of the invaders, who were obliged to recross the river with precipitation, leaving behind them their field-pieces, which (it is reported) are carefully preserved by Amonihier's successors, as a trophy of this victory. Some time after this, the Dutch made preparations for another invasion, which induced the king to invite the English, as a more certain security against the encroachments of the Dutch. The invitation was accepted, and a small fort was, at a considerable expence, erected; since which period, we have commanded the trade of this country. There are many extraordinary accounts preserved of this

person; all of which give him the character of having been a man of great spirit and resolution, but addicted to tyranny. The following is particularly recorded of him, and will give a pretty clear sketch of his general disposition.

A leopard had committed many depredations in the neighbourhood of the king's residence; and although every vigilance was practised, and many methods employed to destroy him, yet by his extraordinary sagacity he eluded them all: at length the king, wearied with the caution of the animal, and enraged at the ravages he committed, summoned the principal men before him, and told them that he had come to the resolution of securing the animal, even at the risk of half of his subjects; and gave orders, that the thicket where the animal kept concealed should be surrounded, and that he should be brought to him alive! This extraordinary order was obeyed, and the animal secured, but not without the loss of life to some, and mortal wounds and severe laceration being inflicted upon others. The king, notwithstanding, was highly pleased in seeing the animal in his possession, and caused a post to be driven in a yard, to which the beast was secured. On particular days, and when surrounded by his chief subjects, he failed not to address the animal, in a manner demonstrative of his power and authority, and to extol his supremacy over every thing in his kingdom,

Upon the death of Amonihier, the government of the kingdom devolved on a man named Quashie, who inherited all the despotic disposition of his predecessor, without his bravery or martial spirit. In the early part of this king's reign, he was guilty of many cruelties, which rendered him odious to his subjects, and if it had not been, that an extraordinary circumstance happened of a domestic nature, which effectually changed his disposition, in all probability he would have fallen a victim to his tyrannical spirit. Among the children who were born to the king about this period, were three, deaf and dumb; which surprized him considerably; and every person who was considered to possess uncommon knowledge, was consulted respecting the cause of this singular event. After various vague and ambiguous opinions, some of the most cunning and politic among them approached the king and said, that if he would not be displeased at what they had to relate, they would unfold the cause of this misfortune. After an assurance that the king would not be offended with them, they said, 'That this misfortune was a punishment inflicted by the Fetish, for his cruelties and rigorous government; and that other calamities of a heavier nature would happen to him, if he did not act in a milder manner to his subjects.' This declaration had the wished-for effect on the king. He now became mild

and merciful; and on all occasions consulted his men of consequence, before he exerted his authority. He was afterwards as much beloved as he had before been abhorred; and died in June, 1801, regretted by his subjects.

It may not be deemed superfluous here to remark, that whenever this king appeared publicly abroad, he took care to confirm to his subjects the proofs of his reformation. On those occasions, his flutes, horns, and drums, preceded him, and his executioners with their emblems of office reversed. These men were usually habited in a grotesque manner: on their heads was a sort of helmet, to which was affixed a burning lamp. They were instructed, after extolling the virtues of the king, to conclude with a discourse on the uncertainty of future existence, and a recommendation to good actions, which ended with words similar to the following: "We are night and day on the watch, to behold a king as powerful as Quashie; in vain do we watch for him; there is no man so great or so merciful: yet he must die!" These last words were attended with an air peculiarly solemn. Whether this man was governed by superstition, policy, or tenderness of heart, we cannot decide: but we are informed by persons who were well acquainted with him, that he was humane and benevolent, and possessed a delicacy of manners rarely to be found

in a person neither acquainted with the duties of true religion, nor the rules of civilized society.

According to the right of succession in this country, (which devolves on the sister's son,) there was no lawful heir to the kingdom. The eldest son of Quashie was however considered the most fit person to succeed. But when the elders of the people and men of consequence assembled to appoint him, a division arose, at the head of which was his brother, who had the ambition to aspire to the chief authority by force of arms. The majority of the people became alarmed, and prepared to resist the ambitious views of this man, whose name was Annahoma. His confederates secretly withdrew, and the armed force he commanded, and which formed his father's body-guard, likewise forsook him. Thus impeded and disappointed, he became desperate, and, after destroying his wives and children, he shot himself; or, as some persons will have it, he compelled one of his sons to commit the act. The conduct and fate of Annahoma brought upon the remainder of Quashie's children the indignation of the people; and in a short time the whole were destroyed, excepting the two dumb children, (one of whom died previous to this circumstance,) who were considered incapable of destroying the tranquillity of the kingdom; the government of

which was now given to an old man; who being too feeble to discharge his duties, his brother was appointed regent. He is now king, and has the character of possessing a good share of political sagacity. He is fond of war, and has lately extended his kingdom.

The trade of Apollonia consists of gold, ivory, palm-oil, pepper, and some rice. The gold-trade is sometimes considerable: the articles given in exchange, are gun-powder, Brazil tobacco, lead, iron, guns, India and some British cotton-manufacture. The trader is perfectly secure in this country: he meets with no impositions, nor exactions; his property is in no danger, and his person is considered sacred. It is usual for every trader to give the king an annual gift, and, previous to his commencing trade, a regulated custom is paid; after which, he is at liberty to trade to any extent.

#### *Axim.*

After leaving Apollonia, the next settlement we come to is Dutch. It is situated in a country called Axim; which forms part of the rich, extensive, and fertile country of Ashantah. It is a compact fort, built by the Portuguese, and called Fort Anthony. It stands upon a promontory that forms the most western part of Cape Three Points. It is about ten leagues East from fort

Apollonia, and about two miles from the river Ancobra.

Fort Anthony is most agreeably situated on an eminence, and in a commanding position: the landing here is perfectly safe; boats may approach, and, during the dry season, may be beached without danger.

We now enter a country in many respects different from that we have left. It is more hilly, more woody; the soil is richer, but the country is not watered so well as Apollonia. The Dutch, who are remarkable for horticulture, have an excellent garden here, which produces an abundant supply of fruits and vegetables.

#### *Ancobra River.*

The entrance to Ancobra river is so obstructed by rocks, that even canoes cannot get into it, excepting when the sea is remarkably tranquil. It is not a river of any considerable magnitude; it is deep, but not broad, and is supposed to run through a good extent of country. From its name, it might be supposed, that it abounds with snakes: but, probably, the serpentine form of the river induced the Portuguese to call it Rio Ancober. The French built a fort on the right bank of this river, and at about fifty miles from its mouth, where they had a great gold-trade, that soon excited the jealousy of the Dutch, who expelled

them: the Dutch, however, did not long enjoy this acquisition; for, the chief got embroiled with the natives, and betook himself to the desperate remedy of blowing up the fort, with himself and garrison, and a numerous body of the natives, whom, it is reported, he had invited, under a pretence of settling the dispute.

### *Hollandia.*

About four leagues from Fort Anthony, we come to the ruins of a fort, formerly called Fort Royal Fredericksburg: it was built, with two smaller forts on this coast, by a company, called the Brandenburg Company, at the head of which was Frederick-William, Duke of Brandenburg; and were sold to the Dutch West-India Company for 30,000*l.* by the Duke's son, Frederick-William, the first king of Prussia. The natives of this place were unwilling to admit the Dutch, and the commander of Fort Royal approved of their designs; in consequence of which, the Dutch were obliged to lay siege to the fort: and, after a desperate resistance, they got possession of it; but were constrained to grant favourable terms to the commander and his garrison, who marched out with all the honours of war, taking with them their private property. When the Dutch became masters of this place, they called it *Hollandia*, and, conceiving the expence of repairing

the injuries it received during the siege too great, allowed it to decay.

*Dix Cove.*

Three leagues from *Hollandia*, is situated a small settlement, likewise belonging to the Dutch, called *Accoda*: and three leagues further on, we come to *Dix Cove*, where the British have a small but strong and compact fort.

It is advantageously situated at the entrance of a small cove, which will admit vessels of thirty or forty tons at high water. The channel is narrow, but safe, and capable of being so far improved, as to admit vessels of one hundred tons and upwards, at a trifling expence.

*Boutry.*

About three miles from *Dix Cove* we come to a place called *Boutry*, where the Dutch have a small fort, which, with *Accoda* and *Hollandia*, formerly belonged to the *Brandenburg Company*. This fort, as well as all the Dutch forts and settlements, stands on an eminence, and commands an agreeable prospect. Beneath the fort runs a small river, which could be made navigable for small craft, some distance inland.

*Taccorary.*

Three leagues eastward from this place is

another Dutch settlement called *Taccorary*; near to which is likewise a river. There is a dangerous reef of rocks, that stretches two or three miles from this place, which should be carefully avoided: part of the reef is dry at low water.

*Succondee.*

About four miles from *Taccorary*, we come to *Succondee*; where the Dutch have a respectable fort, and the British a settlement. We had formerly a fort here; but it was destroyed by the French in the American war. The Dutch is called *Orange Fort*: it is situated on a rock, sufficiently elevated above the sea. The landing here is safe; and there is a convenient bay for small craft to anchor in.

We have now attained the extremity of the *Ahanta* country; and it is undoubtedly, in every respect, the richest on the *Gold-coast*. Its coast has many convenient creeks and harbours; which is an advantage *Apollonia* is deprived of. It abounds with many kinds of excellent timber; one of which is not much inferior to mahogany, and, in the hands of good workmen, could be made equally useful, and perhaps as valuable.

In general, this country is well planted; the soil is adapted to every sort of *Tropical* produce, and the natives may be considered the most industrious in the country. Every man of conse-

quence in the different towns on the coast, has his country-residence and plantations. It has some gold-mines; but they are in general kept concealed, as *Fetish* is put upon them; which prohibits the lower order from getting intimately acquainted with that, which would deprive them of their agricultural employments, and introduce a life of idleness and debauchery among them. The Ahanta country stretches further inland than Apollonia, and is bounded by the Warsaw and Dinkara countries. The former is governed by two persons, who are in some measure independent of each other in their government; but in other respects they are united. The latter is a small kingdom, tributary to the king of Ashantee. Both these countries abound with gold: the Dinkara gold is the purest we meet with.

Although a king is acknowledged in the Ahanta country, yet his power is limited: indeed, the government is left to the regulation of the different head-men. The king is never consulted, unless in cases of great consequence. In general, the people are well disposed; they are not under such restrictions as the Apollonians, and are therefore more free in their manners and conversation; but are less courteous and polite, and not so hospitable. Many abominable practices encouraged in the Fantee and neighbouring countries, are not tolerated here: we seldom hear

of disputes amongst them, and Europeans are considered with respect, provided their behaviour merits it.

The vegetable productions of this country are in general to be had in great plenty; and in seasons of scarcity, the inhabitants can supply their neighbours with the fruits of their labour and industry. They never know what it is to be distressed for corn, yams, &c. so attentive are they to agriculture. The sugar-cane grows to a great size in this country, and is much used, particularly by the women, who are fond of masticating it: it affords an agreeable and refreshing juice, which is considered wholesome. The palm-tree is very abundant, and supplies the natives with plenty of wine and oil: the latter is procured by beating the fruit in a hollow wooden cylinder until it is freed from its external and unctuous parts; water is then added to liquify and separate the oil, which soon collects at the surface, and is carefully skimmed off. Palm-oil, when eaten fresh, (and it is very seldom used as an article of diet but when in a fresh state,) is delicate and wholesome, and is as different from the palm-oil imported into England, as rancid butter is from fresh. It is invariably used by the natives in all their dishes. The kernel contains a hard, pulpy substance, which is roasted and sometimes eaten by the women, who consider it favourable

to strength and corpulency. The women here, as well as in every part of the coast, are throughout the day in a continued state of employment; for even those who are above the drudgery of household affairs, find ample employment in regulating the concerns of the family, and in decorating their persons. The men of moderate circumstances lead a life of happiness and plenty. Their dress is the same as that of the Apollonians; and their manners and customs are similar. No part of the Gold-coast is more favourable for improvement than the Ahanta country. The natives are disposed to agriculture, and tranquillity. The planters would meet with encouragement, and would not be so exposed to plunder and insult, as in other states. The Dutch have the advantage of us, as to numbers and situation of their settlements in this country; and indeed we may add, that throughout the Gold-coast, the advantage of situation is clearly observable to be in favour of that nation. Their settlements are on elevated situations, and generally near rivers; which is of great importance in all Tropical countries. The only fort we have in the Ahanta country, is Dix-cove; a situation remarkably favourable towards cultivation and other improvements. About eight miles inland, we hear of a small river that is never dry, and the only one that may be said to belong to this place. There

is abundance of excellent timber, and lime-stone may be had in sufficient quantity for building. Indeed, this place might be vastly improved at less expence than any situation in the country.

The cove might be made accessible to vessels of small burthen, and sufficiently commodious for three or four vessels to float in, in safety. The face of the country appears invariably hills and dales: but when we advance a little inland, the country leaves this uniformity; we see a good deal of flat land, bounded by small hills crowned with lofty trees; which sufficiently proves the richness of the soil.

We will now take leave of the Ahanta country, and proceed towards states where the inhabitants are less disposed to agriculture, and more inclined to vice and idleness.

#### *Chamah.*

About three leagues from Succondee, we come to *Chamah*; where the Dutch have a small fort, called Sebastian: it is said, this fort was built by the French; but it is more probable that it was built by the Portuguese, as, being the first settlers, they no doubt availed themselves of this important situation, being contiguous to the largest river on the Gold-coast, and partaking of other advantages. The French very likely dislodged the Portuguese; and the Dutch perhaps dispossessed

the French: be this as it may, the French were in possession of it, but for what length of time is not accurately known. The French ships bound to Whidah and other parts of the Slave-coast, were supplied here with canoes and canoe-men \* ; likewise with water and provisions. The Portuguese found the advantage of this settlement for the like purposes; but how far the Dutch have benefited by this situation, is not well known: at present, they derive but little advantage from it. We cannot but evince a little surprise, that a nation who are remarkable for embracing every means of improvement whence profit could be derived, should be indifferent to, or not perceive, the benefits that would doubtless arise, by improving this situation.

The river is about a mile from the fort; but the entrance to it is choaked by rocks and sand-banks: what course it takes, is not known. The natives are indifferent and very inaccurate in their communications on that head. There is an island on it, at no great distance (we will suppose three or four miles from the sea), that has been an object of jealousy for many years between the

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\* Ships bound to the leeward coast formerly for slaves, were obliged to get canoes and men on the Gold-coast, as the natives of that coast in general do not use canoes, except on rivers.

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Chamahs and Warsaws: the latter are now in possession of it. The banks of the river are lined with an exuberance of timber; and as there are no considerable high lands observable at the rear of this country, the river doubtless runs through plains, which, from the moisture they receive, must be abundantly fertile. The importance of exploring this river will appear evident to every person acquainted with the country. Although the people here, live so contiguous to the inhabitants of the Ahanta country, they do not partake of their mild disposition and peaceable character.

The Chamahs are a turbulent ferocious people, addicted to quarrels and palavers. They constantly make it a practice to seize and maltreat Europeans without regard, or distinction, for injuries or real offences, supposed or actually committed by others of the natives towards them: and we lament to say, the British have been the greatest sufferers. From delicacy, and for the sake of the national character, we will refrain from entering into the particulars of abuses committed at this place against our countrymen.

#### *Commenda.*

About eight miles from Chamah we come to *Commenda*. Here the British and Dutch have settlements. The British fort was very respect-

able; but being built of bad materials, it is now almost in ruins. The Dutch fort was reduced in the American war: part of it is standing, and continues to be possessed by that nation. The Portuguese vessels from Brazils, bound to the leeward coast, generally call here for canoes and canoe-men, and are sure to be supplied. The people here gain their livelihood in this way, and meet with every encouragement. One of these canoes is usually paddled by seventeen, nineteen, or twenty-one men. They carry two supernumeraries, who are called boatswains, or pilots; and they are in some measure answerable for the conduct of the canoe-men. The success of a voyage much depends on the exertions of these people; they are therefore well paid, and treated with kindness and liberality: each person clears about ten pounds by his trip; but before he returns to his native town, he is in danger of losing the whole of it. The canoe is given them to return home, and they dispose of it for eight or more pounds.

The people of this town are so occupied in these employments, that agriculture is neglected by them; but the inhabitants of the adjacent villages inland, attend to cultivation. Yams are produced in this country in great quantities; which proves the richness of the soil: wood is procured in abundance, and of a good quality; and there is no scarcity of water. The character

of these people bears some resemblance to that of those last mentioned: they are fond of palavers, and are continually embroiled in disputes with the Chamahs; against whom there appears to be a never-ceasing enmity. Although the Commenda people undergo a vast deal of labour, fatigue, and danger, in acquiring a livelihood in the manner I have described; yet, the moment they get home after a voyage, they commence regaling themselves with the profits of their labour, and it is soon expended in every species of excess.

#### *Elmina.*

About nine miles from Commenda, is situated the Castle of St. George Del Mina, the headquarters of the Dutch settlements in this country, and the most respectable fortress on the Gold-coast. It is of a quadrangular form, surrounded with high walls, and, excepting some small saluting guns, mounted with brass ordnance.

*Elmina*, as it is commonly called, is seated on a peninsula, formed by a small river, which runs nearly parallel with the sea; over which is a bridge constructed of stone and wood. There are two passages leading into the castle; the principal one is from the town, where the castle is strengthened by a double ditch, over which are two draw-bridges; the other is adjoining the river, where is a small gate, at an elevation of

about twelve feet, to which an ascent is formed by means of a step-ladder. This passage opens to a large yard, where the surveyor and his deputy have apartments, and the different artificers their work-shops. As we proceed through another gate, and along a rampart, we arrive at the principal entrance, where, after passing over two draw-bridges, is a guard-room, wherein a sergeant's guard is continually in waiting. This opens to the interior of the building, in which is a spacious court, of the form of an oblong-square: here the warehouse-keeper has apartments and store-houses, and here too the soldiers parade. On ascending some steps on the left, two very long and light brass cannons may be observed on the right, which are used only on particular occasions. At the top of these steps is a portico, where two centinels do duty during the day. Passing through a narrow entrance, a flight of circular steps leads to a spacious hall, where complaints are examined and justice administered. Adjoining to this is another hall, where the governor and his officers usually dine. The private apartments allotted for the governor are commodious and airy, and in every respect suitable to his rank. The apartments of the officers are in general confined, and are deprived of a free admission of air, by the high walls which enclose them.

This castle was built by the Portuguese, who

settled here in 1481. They likewise built a town, the houses of which were of stone, and a church. The present town is large, and remarkably dirty; some of the houses are built of stone, and are connected in a confused manner. The river, although small, will admit vessels of one hundred tons burthen at high water; and they may load and unload under the walls of the castle; which is an important convenience, inasmuch as supplies may be thrown into the castle without much hazard on the event of an attack.

The Dutch made an easy conquest of this place in 1637; and, to strengthen themselves more securely, they built a fort on an eminence about musket-shot from the castle, and named it fort Conraadsburg, or St. Jago; which adds considerably to the strength of Elmina, and may be considered the key to it. Strangers, particularly British, are prohibited visiting this fort. During the command of a late governor, this prohibition was not rigidly attended to, and the English were at liberty to see it. How far this was agreeable to the policy of the Dutch, or how far it was prudent, we will not in this place attempt to decide: but it is obvious, that the vulnerable parts of this fort would have remained concealed, and the general opinion of the strength of it have remained uncontradicted. This gentleman considered it a strong place: but his predecessors had, doubtless, a different opinion of it; which

was one cause most likely, why strangers were not allowed to go into it. The fort is square, with double bastions and curtains, but they are by no means proportionate. The external walls are low; and the space between them, and what may be properly called the fort, and the covered way, is so narrow, that cannon cannot be used with much advantage; neither can musketry be employed without exposing the garrison to the assailants: besides this disadvantage, the cannon of the ramparts may be turned against the fort with great effect. Notwithstanding these defects, a respectable English force was repulsed here, in 1781. It is reported, that four or five hundred men, soldiers and sailors, went against it under the command of Captain Mackenzie; and the castle of Elmina was cannonaded at the same time by a fifty-gun ship, and a sloop of war, under the command of Commodore Shirley. It is said, there was no cordial co-operation among the commanders: however this might have been, it is clear the attack was not planned with judgment: but to compensate for the failure, the Dutch forts at Commenda and Accra were reduced.

The castle of Elmina, and places contiguous to it, if we exclude the town, have the appearance of neatness and regularity. The garden, which is extensive, and usually kept well planted, affords an agreeable retirement, and is produc-

tive of much amusement and recreation to the officers.

There is a school established here for the education of children of both sexes, and of every distinction, supported by subscription ; but of late years it has not been maintained on so extensive a scale as formerly. About half a mile from the castle, and on a line with the garden, there is a very decent burial-ground, in the centre of which is a neat and appropriate piece of architecture, designed as a repository for deceased officers of rank. Within the walls of the castle there is a chapel, in which divine worship is regularly performed.

When the Dutch West-India Company was in a prosperous state, their establishment in this country was very respectable: it consisted of a military and civil department. The governor-in-chief had the rank of general; and subordinate to him, in the military line, were a captain and lieutenant of artillery, two captains of infantry (one of whom was usually entrusted with the command of Fort Conraadsburg), and subaltern officers with a respectable body of men. In the civil department was a director-general, a fiscal, secretary, accomptant, warehouse-keeper, surveyor, &c. &c. The establishment now is much reduced; it is, however, more respectable than what might be expected from the general state of things. It supports nearly one hundred and fifty

soldiers, and about nine hundred slaves; some of them excellent artificers. With the establishment the Dutch formerly had, were combined much ostentation, avarice, and emulation for trade. They diligently studied, and fully succeeded in diffusing among the natives, an exalted character of themselves. The government was vested with an unlimited power, and in consequence of the practice of this power, and a partiality for pomp and ceremony (things which inspire an African with awe and veneration), the Dutch were considered with more respect, than any other European power in this country. They likewise diligently sought for a redress of grievances, and were punctual in causing their service to be respected, and preserving inviolate the persons and properties of those who were under its protection. They were likewise open to the complaints of the natives, and distributed justice with a rigorous hand. It was pleasing to observe the state and regularity with which their legal proceedings were conducted. The governor, director-general, and fiscal, were assembled on all trials of importance. It was likewise usual for the officers at the head of departments to wait upon the governor every morning at eight o'clock, to receive orders, and report whatever they had to communicate: in this there was some ceremony observed; the governor was generally in his full-dress, and received his officers with no small share of ex-

ternal form. The different traders paid their respects to him at this hour; as did the king and head-men of the town.

The mode of living practised by the Dutch, appears to us more congenial to the climate than that used by the British, at least so far as relates to early dining, a free use of vegetables and fruits, less wine, and more exercise after dinner. They are extravagant in the use of tobacco: with some the pipe is kept in almost a continual state of employment throughout the day; and among the less refined and respectable class of Dutch, it is accompanied with the national cordial, *geneva*.

Elmina and other Portuguese settlements on this coast were ceded to the Dutch West-India Company by the crown of Portugal in the year 1641. From that period, and in virtue of these possessions taken from, and yielded by the Portuguese, the Dutch West-India Company took upon themselves to claim the sale of, and right and property in and to, all the lands and countries in Africa, from Cape Palmas to Cape Lopez, comprehending the Ivory, Gold, and Slave Coasts; considering all vessels that were found trading here, as lawful prizes, although the English had built a fort at Carmantyne, and settled factories at sundry other places on the Gold-coast, before the Dutch had made the said conquests. Since the English forts were built on this coast, we have traded freely, without the least interruption or

molestation from the Dutch; but all Portuguese vessels that came hither, were constrained to pay a duty, and obliged to anchor at Elmina for that purpose. If one vessel neglected it, another was obliged to pay double duty.

To such an extent was this impost carried, that, in the year 1796, the governor of Elmina sent an officer with a party of soldiers to board a Portuguese vessel that anchored at Cape-Coast, and did not think it convenient to stop at Elmina to pay the duty. The party were compelled to come on shore, and were all made prisoners. A spirited remonstrance was made by the British governor, for this daring insult; and the Dutch governor was not only obliged to make a suitable apology, but constrained to take off the duty from all Portuguese vessels that did not wish to call at Elmina.

The country about Elmina is for the most part open and flat; the soil is generally of a light kind, though in some places it is a heavy clay: about ten miles inland from Elmina, the soil is more uniform, with plenty of timber and water.

The inhabitants of Elmina consist of traders, fishermen, and persons employed as trade-boys and servants: there are some wealthy men among them. There are likewise some respectable mulattoes here, who support a number of slaves, acquainted with the duties of a carpenter, a mason, and a blacksmith: indeed we may calculate that

about one-tenth of the male population of Elmina are artificers. The inhabitants are divided into parties for their mutual defence, called Companies; each company has its captain; and the whole is under the command of one man. The town is supposed to contain five thousand men, with double that number of women and children. The Elminas were considered, until lately, a civil and well-disposed people: but an unfortunate act that was committed here in August, 1808, has entailed upon them a character of barbarity, that will require some years to efface. This act amounts to no less enormity than the murder of the acting-governor: a man whom we cannot avoid representing, as having been of a turbulent spirit, untractable, violent, and imprudent in his conduct; which not only rendered him odious to the people, but to almost every person in the service. In giving this sketch of his character, let it be observed, that we do not intend it as any extenuation, or to wipe off in the least from a foul deed, replete with the most savage ferocity. To enter into a full exposition of this unfortunate affair, would be neither agreeable, we presume, nor profitable to our readers: and (strange to relate!) no inquiry has been instituted, nor any means whatsoever, we believe, adopted to convince the people of their lawless and inhumane proceeding; although a gentleman has lately arrived, delegated with full powers, by the government of Hol-

land, to command the Dutch forts and settlements in this country\*.

When the Ashantees visited the coast in 1807, for the purpose, probably, of reducing the Fantees to subjection, the people of Elmina, it is supposed, rendered them some assistance, by supplying them with provisions, and delivering into their power part of the Fantees who had fled for succour to Elmina. This statement stands on an uncertain basis: the Fantees, however, became enemies to the Elminas, and publicly declared war against them after the Ashantees had marched inland: and a numerous force was collected in 1809, composed of Warsaws and Fantees; and nothing less than the entire destruction of Elmina town and its inhabitants, was in contemplation! The Fantees and their confederates the Warsaws, were so elated with the imaginary success of this expedition, that they supposed the town of Elmina already laid in ashes, the castle, and Fort Conraadsburg in their possession, and Mr. Neizer in their power, (a respectable and wealthy trader, against whom they encouraged a rancorous enmity). This gentleman's head was already severed from the body, and displayed in

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\* This must be accounted for by the awkward situation of the Dutch affairs at home, and the war with England: it will not be forgotten, when they have a proper opportunity to revenge it.

imaginary triumph by his enemies! Such were the vain boastings and wicked designs of a people, who, only two years before, made a cowardly and precipitate flight from before a real and declared enemy.

After various actions, this combined force relinquished vigorous measures against Elmina; and although the town is advantageously situated against an assault, it is evident it would not have long resisted the force that was brought against it, if the two forts did not interfere. The governor has lately built a redoubt westward of the town, to make it more secure against future attempts.

216 The trade of Elmina, anterior to the late disturbances, was brisk, and consisted of the staple articles of the country, slaves and gold; ivory was likewise brought here from the Warsaw and Dinkara countries; with which a communication was generally established.

Before we take leave of Elmina, we will state a circumstance which has in it a combination of gallantry and generosity, highly illustrative of the British character, and which adds to the renowned heroism of our navy.

In December, 1810, His Majesty's frigate *Nemesis* arrived on this coast; and in proceeding towards Cape Coast, Captain Ferris observed a schooner under Spanish colours lying in Elmina roads. He ordered an officer to repair on-board,

and examine her papers: but as the boat was rowing towards the schooner, a smart fire was opened by the castle, and Fort St. Jago. In consequence of this, the boat put about, and were returning on-board the *Nemesis*; when the schooner discharged a volley of musketry at the boat, whereby one man was wounded.

Captain Ferris was not a little displeas'd at this conduct, and determin'd to perform by force, what seem'd impossible to be accomplish'd by mild measures. He therefore brought his ship to anchor within gun-shot of Elmina, and sent his first-lieutenant on shore, to demand of the governor a perusal of the vessel's papers, and the presence of the master of the schooner on-board the frigate, to answer for his conduct. The former was complied with, but Governor De Veer, in answer to the latter, said that the vessel was under the guns of his fort, and was in honour bound to protect her, and could not deliver the master of the schooner up. On this answer, the lieutenant repaired on-board. The master of the schooner went on-board his vessel, and put her nearer the shore, under the muzzles of the guns of Elmina, and made every preparation for resistance. In course of the night, two boats manned and armed were sent from the frigate; and in a few minutes carried the schooner, under a heavy discharge of grape-shot from the castle, and took her to Cape Coast, where Captain Ferris discharged the

master, and gave him his vessel, after an admonition to shew more respect in future to His Britannic Majesty's ships.

## CHAPTER IV.

CAPE COAST.---THE CASTLE.---THE TOWN.---  
 SLAVE-TRADE.---ABUSES.---FANTEE COUN-  
 TRY.---LAWS, CUSTOMS, &c.---IMPROVE-  
 MENTS.---GARRISON OF CAPE COAST.---  
 MOUREE.

### *Cape Coast.*

**ABOUT** eight or nine miles east from Elmina, we come to Cape-Coast Castle, the head-quarters of the British forts and settlements on the Gold-coast and Whidah. It was built by the Portuguese, and, with Elmina, ceded to the Dutch; from whom it was taken in 1665; since which period, we have remained in quiet possession of it. The Portuguese named this place Cabo Corso, and in course of time, to render it more familiar to an English ear, it was translated to the strange name of Cape Coast. In its primitive state, this castle was an insignificant place in point of strength: but the Royal African Company en-

larged and strengthened it considerably; and some additions have since been made to it: and although some errors may be seen in these additions and improvements, it is, notwithstanding, a respectable fortress, and, with an adequate garrison, is capable of beating off a considerable force by sea.

#### *The Castle.*

The Castle is built upon a rock, which forms an admirable breast-work towards the South and West, and mounts about ninety pieces of cannon, from three to thirty-six pounders, with mortars and howitzers. It is not this numerous artillery alone that makes it a place of strength on the sea-side; large ships cannot approach sufficiently near it, to effect much injury, and if they should venture in shallow water, the loss of a cable or a mast might cause inevitable destruction.

Although this castle presents a formidable appearance towards the sea, it is extremely vulnerable on the land-side. It is commanded by high lands; which renders it almost defenceless. Formerly, a tower was erected on one of these heights within the range of point-blank shot from the castle: it was called Phipps's Tower, and resembled our modern Martello towers, and had two small cannons on its summit. It was encircled by a dry ditch, which was pallisadoed. Inside of the tower were circular steps that led to

the summit, from which the prospect was extensive and agreeable. This fortification was too insignificant to add much to the strength of the castle, and was in consequence neglected, and permitted to decay.

### *The Town.*

The town of Cape Coast is situated immediately in the rear of the castle, and extends on each wing of it. Some of the houses overlook the walls; an inconvenience that was not well understood until the year 1803, when the townspeople thought proper to behave ill; which produced a rupture with the castle, the garrison of which was much annoyed with musketry from the tops of those houses. The town is irregular, and kept in a very dirty condition; the houses are built of clay, and mostly square. The population may be estimated at eight thousand, including all classes: but in cases of emergency, about six thousand men could be assembled by calling in the assistance of the adjacent villages. Formerly a very brisk trade was carried on here; at present, the trade, which consists of gold, fluctuates in consequence of the disturbed state of the country.

The country about Cape Coast is called Fetu, and was formerly governed by a person who exercised great authority, and went under the title of Dey. He belonged more to the order of

Fetish-men or priests, than that of kings ; and the family, or descendants of this race, are still considered with respect. The government of the town is under the controul of the elders and the principal men ; but in general, the people are obliged to submit to the Fantee laws, regulations, and customs ; and they may be considered as partaking of the manners and character of that people, among whom we will class them.

#### *Slave Trade.*

During the existence of the Slave-trade, the countries from Cape Coast to Accra inclusive, formed the grand emporium of that traffic on the Gold-coast ; ships resorted hither with confidence of disposing of their cargoes ; and a quick circulation of money existed throughout the country. The inhabitants of every town and village along the coast, were a sort of brokers ; persons employed as trade-boys, by the residents and captains of vessels, and fishermen : few indeed attended to the labours of the field. The town of Cape Coast was composed of three different classes, who acquired wealth with such celerity and ease, that one half of them were men of independence ! With this acquirement, they gained such a turn for every sort of vice, that they formed the worst characters in the state ; they were idle, insolent, and unruly, and notwithstanding the necessary vigilance and care to preserve order, and prevent

abuses, we frequently heard of the governor's authority being despised. There was not, nor is there, we believe, sufficient power vested in the British government in this country, to punish offences, and cause obedience to be paid to laws and regulations, tending to the security of persons and property under the protection of the British flag, and to the preservation of public tranquillity. And we will take the liberty of remarking, that, notwithstanding there was no official delegated authority vested in the governor and council exercising power over the British possessions in this country; too much forbearance was practised in many instances: and we will add, that, at this day, there is a degree of moderation manifested, which we think perfectly unnecessary, and whereby vast injury is done to property, and to the dignity of the British nation. For, with the utmost deference, we will suppose, that wherever there are British settlements established with the consent and authority of both the legislative and executive power, crimes and offences committed against the government of those settlements, or against lawful British subjects living under its protection, are as amenable to the same punishments and penalties, as if a court of judicature was formally established; provided, all proceedings are in unison, not repugnant, and in every respect conformable to the laws and customs of the mother-country. The only law prac-

tised in the country, is a type of the law in use among the natives; and we lament, that some code has not been drawn up, or some distinction formed in that respect, between a civilized and a barbarous people. Robberies were frequently committed by the natives within the walls of the castle; and not only masters of vessels, and resident traders, maltreated, and insulted in the town; but officers and others in the service. To such an extent did the licentious conduct of the people of this town arrive, that, in 1802, the captain of a ship out of the port of London, was so roughly and violently used by them, that sickness was the consequence, which proved fatal to him on the passage to the West Indies.

From this behaviour and other antecedent violent acts of outrage, it became highly necessary to use some means which would have a tendency to reduce the people to a peaceable line of conduct, and bring them under some authority. The governor accordingly acquainted the Pynnis, or magistrates of the town, that he was resolved to put a stop to the lawless and ungovernable conduct of the people; and that as a security for their good behaviour, they must enter into an agreement, that, in case of any outrage, or any act of a threatening, hostile, or predatory nature committed against captains of ships, or any white person, they should forfeit the sum of forty ounces of gold; that all complaints against Eu-

ropeans were to be laid before the governor, under the penalty of that sum. This was agreed to and publicly promulgated; but it did not long continue in force; for, in October, 1803, it was grossly violated; and this infringement was followed by two incidents, an effectual punishment for all their transgressions, and a change at the head of the service, which it much wanted.

It will be necessary to state one of these incidents, in which the temper and disposition of the people at that period will be clearly perceived, and wherein will be demonstrated this well-known fact, that the most salutary regulations, unless supported by power and inclination, will be frequently neglected, and will finally be disregarded.

A gentleman who resided in town as a trader, was applied to by his trade-boy, or gold-taker, for a piece of cloth, of the value of eight ackies, or two pounds currency. The cloth was delivered, and the gold received: but the gentleman observed to the gold-taker, that he would not mix the gold with what he was in the habit of receiving, until it was examined by another man, whom he likewise employed as gold-taker. For it is the regulation of the country, that when two gold-takers are employed, they conjointly examine gold, and if any base metal be taken by them, they are liable to replace it. When the other gold-taker came, and the gold was examined by

him, he remarked, there was some bad gold with it; and he separated about two-thirds of the base metal. While he was employed in this examination, the other man went away and concealed himself. Every enquiry was made after him to no effect. The person who purchased the cloth and who was evidently an accomplice, was secured and sent into the castle, as a security for the appearance of the gold-taker, and as a pledge for the deficiency of the gold. This man, who was an inhabitant, and of some consequence in town, was no sooner within the walls of the castle, than a tumult arose, and a large body of men assembled before the house of the merchant, which was situated opposite to the gate of the castle, and not more than fifty paces from it. He had considerable property in his house, and was resolved to defend it, at the hazard of his life: the people were collecting in considerable numbers, armed with guns, swords, &c. &c. and beset the house in every direction; they would not listen to any argument; they wanted the man who was confined in the castle, or they would be revenged on the person of the merchant. The governor sent to them to disperse; but they replied with much indignation, and made use of actions which were provoking and disgraceful in the utmost degree. They wounded a soldier (who was posted at the gate) in the leg by a stone, and defied the garrison to fight with them. Fortunately, the en-

trance to the merchant's house was by a gate that would not admit more than three persons abreast; and from this there were steps leading to a gallery: the people broke through the gate and were in the act of ascending, when they beheld an appearance of resistance, which suddenly struck them with terror, and notwithstanding that this advanced party were pressed forward by the people behind, yet they did not think it prudent to proceed. Things however were every moment assuming the appearance of danger: it was clear that the people wanted to take the merchant by surprise, and were observed making preparations to get in at the rear of the house: it was therefore deemed necessary by the governor to deliver the prisoner from confinement; which was considered a sort of victory gained, and with which the people triumphed in a great degree. Tranquillity was then restored, and the merchant was no longer in danger. Whether the governor considered the insulting threats of those people, and their atrocious behaviour, in as sensible a manner as his officers, we cannot judge: they were indignant and warm for revenge; they conceived there was an indifference in the governor's behaviour that indicated submission, and they were anxious to be assured of it. This was a point of much delicacy, and which required caution: but the degree of irritation they were excited to, and their zeal for the honour of the service, subdued

for the moment modesty and calm reflection. A paper, interlarded with expressions that would, at any other period, have been considered highly indecorous, was drawn up, and delivered to the governor. If the governor had previously been disposed to chastise the people, this paper quickened his resolution; and every preparation was ordered for that purpose.

The guns facing the town were accordingly loaded, and a peremptory message sent to the people, informing them that they had forfeited the penalty of their agreement, and that they must pay it. Although this message was answered by denial and defiance; yet it was necessary to delay coercive operations, until those persons who had property in town, had it secured in the castle. The towns-people were likewise employed in removing their effects, and sending the useless hands out of town. Thus on both sides appeared deliberate preparations for war. The towns-people were obstinately bent on resistance, and almost the whole of the garrison were anxious to prove their detestation at the outrage and violence manifested by the Blacks. At length the governor directed two guns to be fired over the town, preparatorily to his intentions, and at the same time expecting it would be the means of recalling the people to a state of submission. But this favourable proposition was not regarded; and in about half an hour after, orders were

given to fire into the town: the houses were soon on fire, and the whole town presented a scene of devastation, and it was expected the affair would end here: but no sooner was the conflagration over, than the natives re-commenced hostilities by firing into the castle, and at canoes going off, and returning from vessels. Some of their houses overlooked part of the castle, and, being formed of clay, they resisted the effects of cannon-shot, at least so much so, that the shot would go through, or lodge in the wall; but no further injury was done to it.

The natives were in this manner tolerably secure from the effect of large shot, and perfectly so from the effect of musketry. It was only when they appeared, (which was with the greatest caution,) that they had to dread the effect of a musket-ball. In consequence of this security and the weakness of the garrison, the people obstinately held out for nearly a month; when they demanded a truce. It would be tedious and unprofitable to relate the whole of the proceedings that now took place; suffice it to state, that the penalty was paid, at least a good pledge for it; and by the timely arrival of His Majesty's ship *Romney*, affairs were brought to a final adjustment\*.

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\* It may be necessary to remark, that we appear to claim no right of conquest in Africa, as far as it respects the natives:

Those persons whose employment conferred the title of trade-boys or gold-takers, diligently studied much knavery, cunning, and dissimulation; and practised them very often with success against persons who placed too much confidence in them. Masters of vessels, particularly those who were unacquainted with the true characters of these persons, were often imposed upon.

During the slave-trade, they were encouraged in proportion to their expertness and knowledge; and as they were rewarded in proportion to their success, they used much alertness in seeking for trade; and, in order to shew themselves attached to their employer's interest, and likewise as they gained a considerable profit, they were not backward in stimulating a disposition for quarrels and encouraging palavers, or lawsuits, which tended to the slavery of their countrymen. They acted as agents or brokers for the men inland, who brought

the Company pay ground-rent and water-custom at most of their settlements. The people are regulated by their own laws and customs, and will not submit to our's. When they agree to any laws between the Whites and themselves, they generally break them, if they operate against the interest of the Blacks. The forts have been maintained for the purposes of trade only, and to enforce laws is attended with much difficulty, expence, and risk; consequently, it is prudent to avoid hostilities, if they can any way decently be avoided; and indeed it must be so, while our force in that country is so small.

their trade to the sea-side ; and they took care to exact handsome sums for their trouble. It was likewise their practice, and very likely they still continue it, to select some of the purest pieces of gold brought by the traders, and replace it with impure gold, of which they took care to have a supply ; and by that means imposed on their masters. A large portion of this base metal was generally reserved for vessels on the point of leaving the coast, particularly Americans. And we will take the opportunity of mentioning here, that masters of vessels cannot be too cautious in the choice of their gold-takers ; they should be well recommended, and good security given for their conduct.

*Laws.*

In this country, where no figurative or hieroglyphic representations are known or practised, there is no method of recording actions, or preserving them, but by oral tradition ; and every person is careful to commit to memory, at an early age, the laws and various customs. The natives are very particular in that respect ; especially the pynins, or elders, who may be considered the oracles of the laws. This accounts in some measure for the strong memories of the people here : in proceedings of a complicated nature, they are seldom lost in confusion or error : they relate circumstances with perspicuity, and go

through their different dealings without embarrassment. In all their discussions, however, there may be observed much ambiguity and circumlocution; they do not come to the matter of fact, without a display of much oratory, in which they shew great natural talents. To behold a Fantee to advantage, he must be seen pleading his cause: his words are accompanied with action by no means ungraceful, nor unsuitable to the subject; and his attitudes and energy of expression are by no means contemptible, but on the contrary, we will venture to say, highly interesting.

*Customs, &c.*

The customs of this country are very numerous: we have already noticed some of the most particular, which are rigidly adhered to. They bury the dead in their houses; and will not move from the spot, if they can possibly help it. If a man die insolvent, the body does not receive the rites of burial until his debts are discharged. Plurality of wives is allowed throughout the country; and a man of easy circumstances generally has as many as he can maintain. His first wife has the sole management of the domestic affairs within-doors; while the husband has little to attend to, in addition to planting corn, yams, &c. &c. in the season. It would be an insult to that delicate passion and reciprocal affection known in temperate and civilized countries, to say that any thing

like it exists here. The men of wealth have a number of wives, because it is customary for a rich man to have more than one; and he adds to his stock, and neglects or admires in proportion to his sensual appetite. Wives are regularly contracted for; and the mother has an uncontrollable right of disposing of her daughter: she is therefore generally courted with presents, which seldom fail of inspiring the daughter with a favourable opinion of her intended husband. After a certain sum has been paid, which is regulated by custom, the young lady is dressed and decorated, according to her rank and circumstances, with rich cloths, gold, and valuable beads; and led by the female relatives to the house of her husband, where she is received by his relations and friends with some ceremony: on the following day she is visited by a numerous body of anxious enquirers. She must continue to wear her rich habiliments for a week, and publicly shew herself: by which custom she is known to have a husband. As soon as a woman is disposed of in that manner, she becomes the *property* of her husband; he has full authority over her, and no one can dispute it.

It was a common practice for men who had young and handsome wives, and who were rather actuated by avarice than necessity, to send them abroad to entrap the unwary. The incautious and innocent stranger was sold, if he could not

pay the accustomed penalty; and the woman had a share of the forfeiture allotted to her. Although the men of consequence do not confine their wives, they are, notwithstanding, watched with suspicious vigilance by the first wife; who is sure to be well rewarded for her diligence, if any discovery should be made: sometimes, however, the vigilance of that lady herself has been suspected, especially if she had not lost all her charms; in which case, infidelity is tried and proved by a kind of ordeal called "taking of doom."

This sort of trial, which is connected with much superstition, and which is resorted to on many occasions, is conducted as follows.—If the person undergo the trial in a public manner; he or she must be exposed in a state of nudity: but if doom be administered privately, that part of the ceremony is generally neglected. After an admonition to confess the crime, and a long harangue on the danger of concealing it, a certain quantity of the bark of a tree deemed poisonous is given to the person accused; who masticates and swallows it: after which, large draughts of water are taken; and if the whole be retained in the stomach, it is a sign of guilt; if rejected, a confirmation of innocence. After the innocence of the lady has been proved in this manner, she is at liberty to shew herself abroad, habited in white, and her body chalked, emblematic of her innocence.

It is customary for a woman, on being pregnant with her first child, to give oblations to the Fetish, and perform certain rites established by immemorial custom. On the first indication of the flow of the menses, a female is obliged to walk abroad, habited in a peculiar manner; thus publishing her attainment of womanhood. They suckle their children until they are able to walk about; and both sexes generally go naked until the age of puberty, excepting a girdle worn about the loins, to which a slip of cloth is affixed for the sake of decency. The change from adolescence to puberty, in this country, and which we will suppose is the same in every Tropical country, is very rapid; girls become women at the early age of ten years, and boys men at twelve. Their decline is equally quick; at that age when both sexes arrive to maturity, or to the height of accomplishment, in temperate climates; here they lose a great share, if not all, of their attractive qualities and perfections. One sex witnesses many years of sterility, and the other many years of imbecility. There are, however, exceptions to be found, not indeed in the towns on the sea-side, but inland sometimes, where a life of more temperance and regularity is followed, and where the passions are not so early excited.

The dress of both sexes is nearly alike. The men wear a piece of cloth, of about four yards long and two wide, wrapt loosely about them,

when they are unemployed; when engaged in any occupation, part of it is folded round the loins, the remainder hangs down and covers the lower part of the body. The men of wealth wear hats when they travel, and some of them sandals. In general the women appear with their breasts exposed: their garment is fastened round the waist by a girdle or zone, called a tombah, which is supported behind by folds of cloth, which form a protuberance, in proportion to the age and circumstances of the person; and to a European is a singular mark of consequence. In front the women of quality and fashion, have a number of silver keys suspended by a ring to the tombah, which by their sound announce the approach of the lady from some distance. They wear bracelets of either gold or beads, or both; and some strings of beads are worn about the neck. Both men and women take particular care in the decoration of their heads; they cut, or rather shave, the hair with taste and nicety. The old men shave the whole of the head, excepting a lock or two behind, to which they generally keep a piece of gold suspended. Some of the men allow the hair to grow on the chin; and whiskers and mustaches, are not uncommon among them:—we have given it the name of hair, but in fact it is a woolly substance, and which is considered as characteristic of the negro race. A Fantee may be known from others of the na-

tives, by small scarifications on the upper part of the cheek-bones, and on the back of the neck. Both men and women are particularly cleanly; they generally wash their bodies twice a day: the latter are fond of European perfumes, and also of those they procure in the country; and they are particular in the frequent use of a certain operation, that excludes the necessity of laxative medicines. In all their dishes, pepper is an universal and necessary ingredient: and, indeed, from the quantity of bread they consume, and which is of a strong and solid nature, something of a stimulating and digestive quality is requisite. Their principal dish is composed of fish, or poultry made into soup; to which are added palm-oil recently exprest, pepper, salt, and eschallots. This highly seasoned dish is accompanied with yams or plantains made into a pudding, or the bread of the country, which is unleavened; it is made of maize or Indian-corn, and called cankey. The men and women generally eat by themselves: four, six, or more, place themselves round a bowl of soup, in which they alternately dip some cankey, or pudding. They do not drink during their meals; but after the repast, they sometimes indulge freely in the use of palm-wine, or of spirits.

Although the Fantee country is not considered by the natives as commencing at Cape Coast, we will, notwithstanding, speak of it as

part of that country: it is subjected to the Fantees, and the people follow the same laws and customs as the Fantees do, and may in every respect be regarded as the same people. Much superstition is intermingled with the laws of the Fantee country, and they are particularly strict; their punishments are fines and slavery, which amount to nearly the same thing: for, if the guilty person cannot pay the fine, he is by law adjudged a slave. No corporeal punishments are inflicted. Causes are tried by the pynins, or elders of the people; in whom are combined the offices of judge and jurors. They generally assemble in the public market-place for the trial of offences: both parties are attentively heard, and witnesses examined; after which, sentence is pronounced. If the person who is found guilty, suspect the justice or partiality of the proceedings, an appeal lies to the governor of the fort, or to the elders of another town or district. The pynins are chosen by the public voice; they sometimes succeed by hereditary right; in which case, if a deficiency in their legal knowledge be publicly known, their authority is suspended, and others appointed by the public. They get a share of all fines and forfeitures; and when any cause of consequence is laid before them, it is usually accompanied by a present of rum. In cases where family-connections interfere, the trial very often happens by night, for the purpose of pre-

venting any impression which the countenance of the accused might create. Suicide is considered with abhorrence: and the bodies of such self-devoted criminals are burned, unless a considerable sum be paid to the pynins for permission to give them decent sepulture.

All proclamations are accompanied with the sound of an instrument usually called gong-gong; but the true name of it is dahwool: it is made of iron, and very often of a mixed metal; and is shaped something like a bell. A man holds it in one hand, (if it be large, it is fastened to a piece of wood, and carried on the shoulder,) and beats upon it with a stick. The sound of this instrument may be heard at some distance; but the tone it produces is not agreeable to the ear, and cannot be described.

In consequence of the strictness of the laws, crimes of any magnitude are seldom known; murder is scarcely heard of; and petty offences, particularly thefts, are not often committed. An article may be left in the public road without much danger of its being touched by any person belonging to the same neighbourhood. They are particularly cautious of making free with the property of their own class; but whatever belongs to a White man, is considered fair game; because they do not dread any severe punishment, notwithstanding the severity of the laws, and the

obedience that was paid to them : yet during the slave-trade, we heard of crimes being perpetrated almost every day, or at least men and women seized for offences either committed by themselves or others ; but false crimes and false witnesses were very common in those days.

The practice of *panyaring* was carried to such lengths in this country, as to occasion great annoyance to trade, and to preclude public security. The word is not Fantee, but the phrase is well understood.

Another odious practice, but productive of less evil consequences, was that of *brandeeing* : this is another word foreign to the Fantee language ; but its meaning was as well understood as that of *panyaring*. If a man had slandered another, or used any words tending to vilify his character, the injured person repaired to the market-place with an anker or two of spirits, or less ; and there invited his accuser to make good his assertions ; who must likewise produce a like quantity before he can obtain a hearing. If the parties were rich, they sometimes proceeded until they got to one hundred gallons, or more ; and if the man were found guilty, a pecuniary satisfaction was made, and the spirits went to the pynins, and the friends and relations of the person acquitted. These proceedings created much interest ; for if the parties were rich, the spoil was generally consider

able. There are certain days, on which panyaring is interdicted; Tuesdays in some districts, and Sundays in others.

Of the religion of the Fantee country, we are at a loss to convey a satisfactory and pleasing account. The chief object of adoration is placed in the capital of Fantee, called *Abrah*, and is designated, Woorah! Woorah! Agah Nannah! which signifies, Master! Master! Father of all! Every town, village, and district, have their favourite object of worship; as has likewise every family. On entering a house, something is perceived emblematic of their religion, which goes by the obscure (and we may say indefinite) term *Fetish*. Whatever is supposed to possess the power of good or evil, or any uncommon quality, goes by that title: and persons who profess any uncommon knowledge, and who particularly worship the *Fetish*, are called *fetish* men or women. The *fetish* men, or the ministers of their deity, are in general much respected, and have considerable power in some places. They industriously scatter abroad the seeds of superstition, and diligently disseminate their knowledge, to the end that they may be regarded with admiration, and referred to for counsel on every occasion of public or domestic calamity. These persons are never consulted without a gift, which is generally proportionate to the nature of the grievance. Seldom do the indigent

ask advice of Agah Nannah!; the rich only, as a body of persons, can approach him. This oracle being superior to all others in the country, and having a number of votaries, requires larger gifts and sacrifices; and whoever is most profuse in these, will continue to be held in favour.

The Fantees were originally an inland people, and governed by the kings of Ashantee: but when they formed a separate state, we have no satisfactory accounts to determine. They however rebelled against the Ashantee government, and fled towards the sea; where, it appears, they remained unmolested until very lately. When they considered themselves out of the Ashantee dominions, and in tolerable security, they appointed a person to govern them: but as they dreaded the vengeance of their old masters, and were fearful that on the promise of favour or reward this person would betray them, they had recourse to a singular expedient to prove his fidelity. They told him, that he must consent to lose his left-hand, as the only token they considered sufficient to prove his attachment to them. The man hesitated at this extraordinary method of putting his fidelity to the test; when a general murmur arose against him. Whereupon his cane-bearer stepped forward and exclaimed, that if his master were unwilling to lose a hand for the good of the people, he was not; and laying

his left arm upon the block, it was taken off. He was then constituted their Braffoe; which term signifies captain, or leader; and the person so appointed, was endued with many privileges: his family were to be provided for, and considered as a kind of nobility; and his power was almost absolute. In course of time, his family became numerous; they lived separated from the community, and formed as it were a distinct state, which hence acquired the name of the Braffoe country; which appellation it still retains. Some, by way of bestowing upon it still greater eminence, call it the Woorah Woorah country. Abrah is the capital of the Braffoe, as well as of the whole Fantee country; and it is principally inhabited by the Braffoe race or their slaves. Hence arose a distinction among the Fantees, which till lately exercised considerable authority. The Braffoe country was the source of all the laws and customs of the Fantee country. If a cause were laid before a Braffoe, he could decide upon it without allowing the interposition of the pynins, or any other branch of the government: and from his decision there was no appeal. When a Braffoe went abroad, he lived at the public expence, and was usually distinguished by an iron chain suspended round his neck; and this chain was longer or shorter according to lineal or collateral descent. The race of Braffoes gradually extended the power that was given them, until at

length they became obnoxious to the people, and were considered a burthen to the state. There are not many of the family now living, the Ashantees having nearly extirpated the whole race.

The country about Cape Coast, till lately, presented an uniform woody appearance: there was no cultivation of any kind near it, excepting the Company's garden: it has, however, undergone much improvement; and now (1811) exhibits a pleasing appearance. Some neat houses are erected without the town, wherein the proprietors enjoy an agreeable retirement from duty, or the bustle of employment, and where they receive the advantage of free air.

The present governor-in-chief appears to be indefatigable in promoting improvement and cultivation, and in diffusing them by example among the natives; he has a richly cultivated spot, about six miles distant from the castle, where European and indigenous plants are raised with success. This plantation, or rather garden, is contiguous to a small river, that overflows in the wet season; and it is very remarkable, that at this short distance from the sea, the earth is frequently refreshed with rain, when the country about the Cape is deprived of it. Hence we may conclude, there is more moisture inland than on the sea-coast. An improvement in the manners of the people, as well as in the country, may be perceived: but we are sorry to observe,

the former does not proceed as successfully as we could wish ; which, we will not hesitate to say, is owing to a want of authority to controul and keep them within certain limits. Industry, however, has found its way among them, and that stubborn spirit which they preserved and cultivated, appears to be much mitigated ; and there is very little doubt of their acquiring the qualifications necessary to form good characters, and becoming a useful people, if certain means were devised ; of which we have already given some hints.

The want of a river, or capacious pond, near this town, is a very great inconvenience, not only to the natives, but to the garrison, and to ships and vessels which resort hither. About a mile westward from the town is a small lake of salt water, from which the natives procure salt without any art, and with very little trouble, for evaporation proceeds with such rapidity, in the dry season, that the salt is formed without the process of boiling and crystallizing. It is amusing to observe the women of this town seeking for gold : they convey the earth, in which they suspect that metal to be lodged, to the sea-side ; where, with much ingenuity and perseverance, they examine it in the following manner. They put the earth into a wooden bowl, where it undergoes frequent ablutions by a circular motion until the lighter parts are washed

away; the heavier parts of the earth that remains, are put into another bowl: this process is repeated several times until there is nearly a bowlful collected; it then undergoes a careful examination and frequent washings, and the gold at length is perceived at the bottom of the bowl, where it is allowed to remain, until the whole of the earth is washed away; when they take it out, and dry it either by the sun, or by fire. During this process there is much dexterity and ingenuity to be seen, which are only acquired by much practice.

The first settlers at Cape Coast had not an attentive eye to their preservation, by allowing the natives to live so near the castle. If it were not for this great inconvenience, Cape Coast would be a salubrious situation: when the town was destroyed in 1803, it should have been the first care and object of the governor to have compelled the natives to build further from the walls of the castle\*, we will

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\* The principal part of the African gold is procured in the interior, by washing in the beds of rivers and water-courses after the rain-water has run off, especially at the bottoms of mountains and hills, in the way above described: but there are also mines of gold, particularly about thirty miles inland of Dixcove, at a place called Amemfi. They dig as if forming a well, until they come to a hard dark-coloured stone, which is interspersed with particles of gold: sometimes this ore is very rich. By a present the writer procured a

say at least two hundred yards from them : if this salutary measure were attended to, the advantage that would arise from it, would be important, particularly as to health : for, in the wet and foggy seasons, or when the breeze is not powerful enough to purify the air, and very probably during the continuance of the land-wind, many noxious effluvia float into the castle : the vapours arising from putrid fish, collections of rubbish, filthy water, &c. &c. must impregnate the air of the castle with particles by no means conducive to health.

#### *Improvements.*

We have stated, that, with an adequate garrison, Cape Coast could defend itself against a strong force by sea : but one-thousand men would be requisite to answer that purpose effectually ;—a number which could not be supported without a considerable sum. We will, however, venture to assert, that not only the present garr-

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piece weighing about four or five ounces, which, when ground to powder and washed, produced about four penny-weights of dust-gold. The Blacks not being acquainted with the art of mining, nor possessing proper tools, employ much labour to procure this ore, and are, not uncommonly, lost by the earth falling in upon them. They speak of working in the mines as an uncertain speculation, sometimes paying them well, at others not.

son of Cape Coast, but the garrisons of every British fort in the country, could be considerably augmented at a very moderate expence; and we will venture to predict, that no improvement of any importance, either as it regards trade or cultivation, can be made, nor can we get at the resources of the country, unless our establishments here are on a more respectable footing in a military way; and the present state of the country urges the necessity of an increased military establishment, on which we will take the liberty of offering some remarks as we proceed.

Although Cape Coast is deprived of many conveniences and advantages that would make it as respectable as Elmina; it is, however, capable of great improvement, without much expence. The first and most important we shall notice, is that of making the castle more strong on the land-side; which cannot be done effectually without erecting fortifications on those heights which command it; and we would recommend towers as not only the strongest, but least expensive: one to be built on the site of Phipps-Tower; another on a height immediately at the rear of the town, and which goes by the name of "The Small-Pox Hill." Phipps-Hill lies to the westward of the castle; and from the summit of a tower erected on it, every movement of the ships of an enemy could be observed at Elmina, Commenda, and Chamah. A tower

on the other hill would not only command the town, but overlook a good tract of country at the rear of it. Here a question arises, that brings with it some difficulty: How are they to be built, without calling for pecuniary aid, or increasing the public expence? We will suppose, that every merchant or trader residing at Cape Coast would so far perceive the utility of those towers, that they would doubtless contribute towards their erection: and we will likewise suppose, that the governor would use so much authority over those persons who receive gratuities from the Company, as to make them assist in collecting the materials. But admitting that no effectual aid should be obtained in this manner, every person who is acquainted with the service, can form some idea, with what facility the materials could be procured, and with what economy the buildings could be raised. But the greatest difficulty remains, that of giving them strength without materially weakening the castle: this difficulty may be overcome in a manner, which we will endeavour to point out.

Two eighteen or twelve-pounders can be very well afforded from the castle, likewise two howitzers; and four men at each tower would be fully sufficient, excepting when an enemy was on the coast, or when the castle or town was threatened: in that case, twelve or fourteen men at each would be necessary, and this number the

present garrison of the castle could not afford. We should however expect, that if that number were drawn from the castle, it\* would be replaced by the Mulattoes of the town, and their slaves or servants; who would, no doubt, cheerfully come forward on such emergency. The heavy guns in course would be mounted on the tops of the towers, and upon circular traversing carriages; the howitzers on light field-carriages that would render them moveable with facility on sudden occasions. It would be necessary to surround each tower with a ditch, or chiveaux-de-frieze, and a howitzer placed at the gate or entrance. To guard against any fortuitous occurrence, no ammunition should be kept at those places, but when wanted. It is not necessary to say much as to the advantages which would ensue in case of our speculations being realized; suffice it to state, that cultivation and other improvements would go on with greater success: a person would plant with confidence; he would be certain that the produce of his labour and industry would be respected, and within the range of the guns; he might practise whatever he should conceive profitable or beneficial, without interruption or insult.

Notwithstanding the deficiency of a river at Cape Coast, water sufficient could be procured without much difficulty, by making reservoirs

at proper places. The towns-people, we may suppose, would willingly contribute to this great improvement: for although they seldom step beyond the bounds of any necessary exertion, and common practice, they would soon be convinced that their labour would be amply requited by the convenience of a constant supply of water near home. The advantage of having reservoirs of water at Cape Coast will fully appear, when we consider that the garrison might at all times have an inexhaustible supply; and ships, particularly those of His Majesty, would be certain of having their wants relieved in that respect.

As we have said so much concerning improvements, we will take the liberty of proposing another very important one, which, we will not hesitate to say, would add to the health of the garrison and prosperity of the service: this is an hospital\*. A building calculated for the reception and recovery of the sick is of such great importance to the service, that we might expect every difficulty would be removed to effect it: for it does not require any knowledge in the science of medicine to foresee the many disadvantages which await the sick, when lodged

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\* An order has lately come out, to have an Hospital erected.

in a small and confined apartment. Let the disease be a fever or dysentery; it is obvious, that the greatest diligence and care imaginable, added to professional skill, will be too often defeated. If a physician were called in to see a person under the effects of one of these complaints, and found him in a chamber of twelve or fourteen feet square, in a climate within five degrees of the Equator, and deprived of a free admission of air; we will venture to say, his first care would be to have the patient removed to a more spacious and airy apartment; and if that could not be effected, he would entertain indifferent hopes of his recovery.

Of late years, much attention has been paid to improvements about Cape Coast. Roads have been made, pieces of ground tastefully laid out and planted, and some snug and neat cottages erected. These give the country an appearance very pleasing to any person who is zealous for the introduction of arts and civilization.

But in the midst of all this desire for improvement, one or two things have been passed over, which we think are of great consequence, and through the neglect of which our religious character is held by strangers and by the natives in derision: The British is the only European nation in this country, that is deprived of a place exclusively devoted to religious worship: the public hall is however substituted for that solemn

purpose: But we trust, that the propriety of having a place set apart for that occasion will be clearly perceived. And we hope likewise, that a decent place will be formed for a burial-ground. Officers of consequence are buried within the walls of the castle: a practice, or custom, full of danger; the fatal tendency of which we should be sorry to anticipate. The natives, whom we call a barbarous savage people, possess delicate ideas respecting attention to the dead: they are careful in preserving the body against the attacks of ferocious animals, by burying it in their houses. And although we do not wish that a similar practice should be adopted by us; we think, however, that an inclosed place (no matter how rude, or how inelegant) would preserve the repositories of the dead from violation.

#### *Garrison of Cape Coast.*

The garrison of Cape Coast does not amount to more than forty effective soldiers; at least, we hear that this is the complement allowed; but by the addition of the artificers, that number may be increased to eighty, or perhaps a hundred: a number, however, only capable of working eight or ten of the heavy guns with effect; and, in case of a determined and resolute attack, it cannot be expected that this small number could make a very vigorous defence.

In 1799, when Cape-coast Castle was threatened by a French squadron, consisting of three stout frigates and smaller vessels, the different garrisons of the out-forts were drawn away, to augment that of the castle, which left them at the mercy of the enemy. And if a threat of the like nature were apprehended now, we may suppose the like expedient would be adopted: a circumstance that requires some consideration. We would therefore strongly recommend the military force of the castle to be increased to two-hundred men, under the immediate command of officers acquainted with the theory and practice of gunnery: who should have their men trained to the exercise of great guns and mortars. That number could be formed in the country, and, under good officers, would doubtless prove themselves good soldiers. With this small but respectable force, a vast change would be made about this castle: the natives would soon become more civilized and more industrious; many perhaps in England would be tempted to try the capability of the African soil: speculations would be attempted with greater prospects of success: trade would be increased; agriculture would spread to a pleasing extent; and we should hope (and indeed reasonably expect, in consequence of an extended cultivation) that the air would be so improved, as to render it as congenial to the constitutions of our coun-

trymen, as any other part of the globe between the Tropics.

*Mouree.*

About four miles from Cape Coast, we come to a Dutch fort called Nassau: it is situated at a place named Mouree: the fort is on an eminence, and in a commanding situation. It was taken during the American war, by the armament that went against Elmina; but it was abandoned without much injury being done to the fort.—We have but little to remark at this place. The country is more woody than about the Cape, and the soil appears more moist.

CHAPTER V.

ANNAMABOE.-----ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF  
THE ASHANTEE WAR.-----FANTEES.-----  
AKIMS.

*Annamaboe.*

**TWO** leagues from fort Nassau, is situated the British fort Annamaboe; which is undoubtedly the most compact, and the most regularly built fort in this country. It is a fortified square;

built with judgment, and with good materials; and is capable of making a good defence. There are about thirty pieces of heavy cannon mounted here; but, unfortunately, the fort is on a low situation, and is commanded by a height in the rear. The country about Annamaboe is hilly, with some lofty trees and thick underwood: the soil is in general good, but particularly in the valleys. The coast is rocky and dangerous to approach at times, especially during the rains. Formerly this place, and Cormantine (which is only three miles from it), were the greatest markets for slaves on the Gold-coast: it was not uncommon to see from twenty to thirty sail of shipping, of different nations, trading here together. The town was the largest and the most populous on the coast: in its flourishing state, it was supposed to contain ten-thousand men, some of them very opulent; and these acquired their wealth without labour, but with ease and certainty. Like the Cape-Coast people, they were remarkably indolent and unruly, and frequently committed acts of outrage, without distinction, or regard to consequences. Some years ago, they commenced open hostilities against the commander of the fort; which brought upon them the indignation of the service: and the commander was directed to destroy the town unless a satisfactory atonement was made: but they were obstinate, and would not reconcile

matters with the chief; who obeyed his orders very punctually; burned the town, and routed the inhabitants from it; but he unfortunately exceeded his orders, or rather, we suppose, the governor-in-chief became displeased with him; for he complained to his superiors, and they dismissed him from their service. This was no small triumph on the part of the Annamaboos; for they conceived the chief's dismissal was in consequence of his having destroyed their town: and, influenced by this supposition, instead of relinquishing their ill practices, they gave the reins to their licentiousness, to the frequent interruption of trade; and committed acts of violence to the prejudice both of the Service and the publick.

The late changes which have taken place; the destruction of their town, with the greater part of its inhabitants; and the abolition of the Slave-trade; may probably be considered as too great a punishment for all their transgressions and offences. The first circumstance (which will form a remarkable epoch in the records of the Fantees) has in it such a combination of extraordinary and memorable occurrences, that we have no doubt but the relation of them will be gratifying to the reader: but in order to do this with as much clearness as possible, it is necessary we should recur to the events that actually effected it, or were instrumental in bringing it about.

*Origin and History of the Ashantee War.*

The Assin country lies at the rear of the Fantee, and borders on the Ashantee country. It was divided into two states: the one governed by king Cheboo and Quacoe Apoutay; and the other by king Amoo. Apoutay, although not elevated to the dignity of king, held equal sway with Cheboo; but they were each subordinate to the king of Ashantee. A man of opulence died in Amoo's town; and, as is customary on such occasions, gold and other valuable articles were deposited with the body in the grave. On this occasion, one of Cheboo's people was present, and seeing what was done, watched an opportunity to rob the grave; which he effected, and escaped with the treasure. Amoo his neighbour sought redress of Cheboo and Apoutay; but without success: he then laid the affair before the king of Ashantee; who summoned all the parties before him, gave them an impartial hearing, and awarded in favour of Amoo. Quacoe Apoutay was detained as a hostage until restitution should be made; but he, in a short time, contrived to make his escape, and, when at liberty, refused to accede to the award made by the king of Ashantee. On this, Amoo attacked the town in which Cheboo and Apoutay resided, and routed his opponents: after this, at the instigation of the king of Ashantee, the parties met to settle the dispute; but Quacoe Apoutay,

acting treacherously on the occasion, sent privately to Cheboo for an armed force to support him: and a battle was the consequence, which ended in the death of the man who had committed the theft, and the total defeat of Apoutay and his forces. At this crisis, the king of Ashantee, willing to bring about a peace again, interfered. He sent two gold manillas, the one to Amoo, the other to his adversary, directing them to cease all hostilities; to which both parties agreed, and took the manillas. Amoo obeyed the king; but Quacoe Apoutay attacked Amoo, and drove him in his turn from his town. Amoo, indignant at the repeated deceptions of Apoutay, obtained succours, and overthrew his treacherous opponent. The king of Ashantee, still anxious to reconcile his neighbours, and unwilling to draw his sword, presented two gold swords and an axe to Amoo, and recommended him to conciliate Quacoe Apoutay, and terminate their quarrels. Amoo consented to obey the king, but in the mean time was again attacked by his implacable foe, and totally defeated, and lost in the contest the golden sword and hatchet. His opponent committed ravages where-ever he came, killing messengers, and every man who fell into his hands, not sparing even the king of Ashantee's messengers! A war with the king of Ashantee followed hereupon: Quacoe Apoutay and Cheboo, dreading his vengeance, fled to

the Fantee country : in consequence of which, the king sent a message to Acoom, the cabbocier or mayor of Assecoomah ( a small state tributary to the king of Ashantee), accompanied by a present of twenty ounces of gold ; stating the necessity of his pursuing his enemies to the Fantee country ; but giving assurance of the king's pacific disposition towards the Fantees, and that his only object was to get into his possession Cheboo and Apoutay : the Fantees would not interfere, nor allow the Ashantee forces to come into their country. Upon this answer, Appey Dougah, the king of Ashantee's general, collected, by command of his master, a large force ; and gave the enemy battle at Buinka, in Fantee : he displayed great gallantry, and defeated the two kings, in conjunction with the Fantee forces that had joined them. Next day, Cheboo and Apoutay having rallied their forces, and formed a junction with a fresh Fantee force, gave Appey Dougah battle ; but were totally defeated, with the loss of many killed, and made prisoners : among the latter was Atia, the cabbocier of Abrah, the principal town of Fantee. A large sum was offered for his ransom, but refused ; and he was committed to the care of Acoom the cabbocier of Assecoomah, in whom the king had great confidence : but this person betrayed his trust, and liberated the enemy. Quacoe Apoutay, baffled at all points, sent to

being under some apprehension for the safety of the British settlements, was inclined to send a flag of truce with a message to the king of Ashantee, who was now (May, 1806) at Abrah, and only fifteen or twenty miles from the coast. The Annamaboos (who were consulted on the measure) objected to it; and the design was consequently suspended. The governor was anxious to know upon what terms the king would consider the British, and wished to become a mediator; but the Annamaboos, who placed a vain dependence on their name and strength, fully expected that the king and his army would be conquered; and that if not the whole, the greater part of the army, would fall into their hands; and hence were not disposed to pacific measures, nor would they permit the governor's messenger to proceed inland. Shortly after this, a division of the Ashantee army made its appearance at Corman-tine, and routing the inhabitants from the town, completely destroyed it. The captain of this division contrived to get into the Dutch fort, and having pillaged it of a number of articles, took up his residence there. It was now time to become acquainted with the king's intentions; and for that purpose, the governor of Annamaboe fort sent a messenger with a flag of truce to the commander of this division, intimating a wish to be acquainted with the king's motives for marching an army to the coast, and proposing himself

as a mediator. This message, we may suppose, was conveyed to the king: and on the following day, three men were observed coming from Cormantine with a white flag displayed; and (Mr. White) the governor, expected they were the bearers of some agreeable and satisfactory intelligence: in this, however, he was much disappointed; for the commander of that division of the Ashantee army, being in possession of Fort Amsterdam, was elated with his success, particularly in getting to the sea-side; (a circumstance which inspired him with such joy, that he went to the beach, and dipped his sword three times in the sea, some of which he had conveyed to the king as a proof of his success:)—whether those circumstances stimulated him to try the disposition of the English chief, we know not; but the message he sent, imported a degree of haughtiness by no means agreeable to Mr. White, and was to this effect: That when the governor would send him twenty barrels of gunpowder, and one hundred muskets, he would be told what the king's designs were. To comply with this demand would be acknowledging too much submission, and would doubtless give the king a very indifferent opinion of the British character. Mr. White behaved politely to the people, gave them some refreshment, and told them, that he regretted that the king, or their master, did not appear inclined to come to an explanation, or to concili-

ate matters: that if the king would point out in what manner the Annamaboes had offended, he would use his authority to have satisfaction given: that until he was assured of their having transgressed, or having injured his majesty, they were entitled to the protection of the fort, if they sought for it: and that, finally, if the king's army should come with any hostile intentions near the fort, it would be fired upon.

After this, two or three of the heavy guns were fired with shot for the purpose of giving them an idea of the destructive power of artillery; and they were preparing to depart; when private information was received, that the flag of truce would be violated in its return, and the men murdered. Whereupon Mr. White and Mr. Wilson (a gentleman not in the service,) escorted them, and left them in safety within a short distance from their quarters. The governor now anxiously looked for a definitive reply from the king, and every assiduity was used to place things in a defensive position; and the towns-people having heretofore placed a firm reliance on their strength, became alarmed, and were solicitous to be assured of the governor's protection. Mr. White informed them, that if the king of Ashantee intended to attack the town, he would give them all the assistance and protection in his power; at the same time advised them of the most prudent measures to be employed for their

safety and defence. He instructed them, in the first instance, to have strong parties on the look-out, and to guard every avenue leading into the town; and, on the first alarm, or approach of the enemy, to send the old men, women, and children, to the fort, where they would be received; and as many as the fort would not accommodate, to come close to the walls, where they would be under the protection of the guns.

At this crisis, Mr. White and the inhabitants of the town were ignorant as to the strength of the Ashantee forces, and had but an imperfect idea of the bravery and intrepidity of the men who composed the king's army. It was supposed that the Ashantees partook of the dispositions of the natives on the coast, who in general cannot stand against a regular and determined fire, and often creep into some concealed hole, when cannon or musket shot are heard to whiz among them; or, if the Ashantees were superior, it was little imagined that their courage, or ardour for conquest, would carry them to the very muzzles of the guns, and consequently expose them to inevitable destruction.

About a week had elapsed, and no news from the king; which was no favourable indication of pacific measures. The commander of the division at Cormantine, and who proved to be the king of Dinkara, sent forward a party to ascertain the strength of the town of Annamaboe, and

succeeded in gaining possession of a village called Agah, situated upon a point of land about one mile eastward from Annamaboe; whence every movement of the Annamaboes on that side could be observed. This was considered an annoyance; and on the 14th of June, a strong body (indeed almost the whole of the towns-people) marched out for the purpose of dislodging the Ashantees. The action was clearly seen from the fort. The Annamaboes were received in the most gallant and spirited manner by nearly a third of their force; and for some time the contest was doubtful. The Ashantees fired with more regularity than could have been expected, and their muskets were well directed: whereas, the Fantees kept up a confused fire, without taking aim: they however succeeded; and the Ashantees retreated in excellent order, keeping possession of part of the village which lay concealed in a valley, and where the Annamaboes did not think proper to proceed. The Annamaboes were either too confident of their strong position, or thought too insignificantly of their opponents, to attend to the advice given them by Mr. White: for while they were amused by this small party, the king, with the main body, was vigilant in securing the different passes leading to the town, and was at this time only three miles to the rear of it.

Early on the 15th, those who were on the lookout, observed the Ashantee army in motion: the

alarm was given; and every man who was able to carry a musket, repaired to meet the enemy. As the town was situated at the rear of the fort, and extended some distance inland, no prospect of the contending parties could be obtained: smoke was seen to arise from different parts of the surrounding country, and heavy discharges of musketry were distinctly heard. Alarm and confusion now prevailed throughout the town, and the women, children, and old men, made the best of their way to the fort, the area of which they soon filled; after which, the gates were closed. The volleys of musketry were advancing very fast, and the Fantees were retreating in great disorder: one or two great guns were fired over the town with a view to impel terror on the assailants; but they were too much elated with hopes of conquest, and too resolute to be affrighted: about eleven o'clock, the musket-balls were heard to whistle in every part of the fort, and the Ashantees entered the town in every direction, pursuing the vanquished to the beach, where the slaughter was great.

The Annamaboes conceived, that, with the aid of their canoes and their knowledge of swimming, they should be able to escape; but they were pursued too closely by the Ashantees, whose fury appeared to be insatiable; men, women, and children were followed by indiscriminate destruction. During this work of carnage, the governor

was very active with his small garrison to repel the assailants: a twenty-four-pounder, that pointed along the beach to the westward, several times discharged grape-shot among them, whereby vast numbers must have fallen: a three-pounder likewise, which flanked the gate on the East side, was frequently fired with grape, notwithstanding fresh parties came on much quicker than they could be repelled: and at length they came under the walls, for the purpose of carrying away the women who could not be received into the fort. About this period, the governor was wounded in two places; one ball struck his mouth, and carried away four of his teeth; another ball passed through the left arm: and nearly at the same time, an officer and two men were wounded, and one man killed.

Things assumed now a more serious and dangerous aspect than was apprehended, and gave the garrison a strong assurance of the disposition of the enemy, who, it was evident, intended to bend his utmost efforts against the fort. The Ashantees were confident, that, by gaining possession of it, a large booty would be obtained. However, the small number which composed the garrison of Annamaboe at this period, consisting of governor White, Messieurs Meredith, Swanzy, Smith, and Baines; also four free mulattoes and twenty men, including soldiers, artificers, and servants; were confident of the severity of their

situation. The walls being high, and accurately flanked, and the gates sound and well barricaded; the governor, from the nature of his wounds, from great debility in consequence of much effusion of blood, being constrained to retire, and the command of the fort having devolved on the senior officer, who perceiving that the cannon in one quarter could not be used with effect, for the enemy fired with such precision as to cut off every man who was exposed at an embrasure, depended solely on the musket; and another man having been killed about noon, and two more wounded:—The garrison was now reduced to the small number of eight, including officers, who could be depended upon, and the Ashantees were using every effort to force the western gate; but were twice repulsed with no small loss. A third time they attempted it, and endeavoured to apply fire to the gate; but the man who brought the materials for that purpose, extinguished the fire by falling a corpse upon it. In all their attempts they were defeated with musketry alone, and notwithstanding that their efforts to gain an entrance into the fort proved ineffectual, the contest was continued till six o'clock. After this cessation, and before total darkness came on, the garrison used all possible energy in repairing injuries, and preparing for the defensive, in case of hostilities being renewed in the night.

On the following day, a scene replete with the

horrors of war exhibited itself:—heaps of dead and wounded around the walls, and for a mile along the eastern shore, tossed about by a violent surf:—houses unroofed, and others on fire:—the sorrowful countenances of the old men, who sought refuge in the fort; the mournful lamentations of the women, and the pitiable cries of the children, presented a picture of exquisite feeling, and of the greatest distress! Of the number the town contained, and which we will calculate to have been at least fifteen thousand souls, we may suppose that two-thirds of that number perished. The fort afforded refuge to about two thousand of every description, and about two hundred escaped to a rock surrounded by the sea, and at pistol-shot from the beach, where they remained unmolested, and notwithstanding the vigilance of the Ashantees, we may suppose that two or three thousand effected their escape. Without going into further enquiry, we may venture to state that eight thousand Fantees were destroyed; and although they were attacked by at least three times their number, yet if they were actuated by one-third of the bravery of their opponents, they would have committed some execution, and doubtless would have checked that intrepidity and ardour, which were so pre-eminently conspicuous in their enemy. Their resistance was very feeble; terror seized them at the commencement of the attack, and it impress-

ed them so forcibly, that the sea formed but an indifferent barrier to their precipitate flight.

When the fury of the Ashantees against the Fantees was a little diminished, they turned part of their force against the fort with great coolness and resolution, advancing with shouts expressive of their loyalty and courage, to the very muzzles of the guns. At the East side of the fort, two three-pounders, which were well served, destroyed numbers of them with every discharge of grape: but at the West side, the cannon which flanked the gate, could not be rendered useful, in consequence of advantages the enemy possessed, and which were not to be found on the opposite quarter, where the musket alone was to be depended upon: and we have the authority of the gentleman who commanded (after Mr. White was wounded) of stating, that he and another officer (Mr. Swanzy) fired nearly three hundred rounds of ball-cartridge in keeping the gate clear, and protecting those who were under the walls. Mr. Swanzy was so injured with the recoil of his musket, that he could not use his right arm for some days without much pain, and the other officer (Mr. Meredith) was nearly in the same state.

What loss the Ashantees sustained, cannot be precisely laid down: the king, prior to his departure from Annamaboe, said, he lost three thousand men: but in that number he probably in-

cluded those who were carried off by disease. His men however suffered very severely; for their approach was made with such large bodies, that twenty, thirty, or perhaps more, fell with every discharge of grape-shot; and the musket not only killed but very often wounded at the same time, so close were the enemy.

At this period (the 16th of June,) the fort was in an awkward state,—completely blockaded on the land-side, and a very imperfect communication by sea, and only a few weeks provisions for the number it contained: add to which, the effluvia from the dead bodies, which were approaching fast to a putrid state, excited very uneasy apprehensions. These circumstances demanded some extraordinary effort, which the garrison, from its weakness, could not attempt. Every person, from great exertion, and constant exposure to a vertical sun on the 15th, and from solicitude and want of rest, was much fatigued. Nevertheless, things wore a more promising appearance; whenever plunder was attempted, which now and then was the case, it met with resistance. There was not, however, any desire manifested by the Ashantees to renew hostilities, and every motion indicated a wish for peace. The garrison too was very desirous of such an event, but did not wish to be the first to yield, or to offer any terms without orders from the chief-governor. The king, from his late successes, had

a high opinion of his power and the bravery of his army. On the other hand, the small garrison, notwithstanding its reduced state, had no mean opinion of itself, and wished to confirm in his majesty an idea of the superior skill of Europeans.

The governor at Cape Coast was apprised of the state of affairs at Annamaboe, and lost no time in sending assistance. Two ships were provided for the purpose, which sailed from the Cape on the morning of the 16th : but, from unavoidable circumstances, the re-inforcement the ships brought, could not be landed before four o'clock in the afternoon. This re-inforcement consisted of twelve men and four officers; and their arrival in the fort afforded much satisfaction. This party was landed under cover of the smoke of some heavy guns, and was not fired at; but the canoe, on returning, was fired upon, and one man wounded. It was the governor's order, that a flag of truce should be sent to the king, to endeavour to bring about an amicable understanding. A white flag was accordingly lowered over the wall, accompanied with the national colours; and when the emblem of peace was observed, it is impossible to express sufficiently the joy that diffused itself among the people: the multitude which crowded around the flags, was inconceivably great, and it was with difficulty that the king's officers who were known by golden swords and axes, could clear the way leading to his

quarters: the air resounded with acclamations in praise of their king, and expressive of their satisfaction at the prospects of peace.

And here we cannot forbear remarking, that although the Ashantees are so remote from polished or civilized nations, they seem not to be unacquainted with the customs of a civilized people, as they are connected with the rules of war: for they paid every respect to the flag of truce: a few indeed of them were making towards the rock on which were a number of Fantees; but they well understood the signal of recall, when a musket or two were fired over their heads. The flag of truce returned about seven o'clock, with three messengers from the king; and they, in order to justify the king for his proceedings against the Fantees, entered into a long detail of the origin of the war, which we have been attempting to describe. The king was pleased that the flag of truce was sent, and expressed his satisfaction by giving the two soldiers who were the bearers of it a fat sheep. After a conference that continued beyond two hours, the messengers departed.

A communication was thus established with the king and his army; but it was considered prudent to keep the gates closed until a perfect understanding was effected. It appeared, however, that this could not be done, without a meeting between the chief governor and the king. To accomplish this, Mr. Meredith tried to persuade the

king to go to Cape Coast ; but in this he was disappointed : he however gained his majesty's consent to send some of his confidential and chief men, to wait upon the governor, and to hear his sentiments.

It will, we doubt not, be gratifying to the reader, if we here subjoin the correspondence between Mr. Meredith and Mr. Torrane, the governor-in-chief, on this occasion.

*Annamaboe Fort, June 17, 1807.*

SIR ;

Mr. White directs me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to the governor of Elmina. The state Mr. White is in, being much weakened with loss of blood and other causes, prevented him paying that attention to your letters which they demanded ; and my duty was such, that I could not spare a moment to write you fully. I had a conference with three of the king's messengers last night ; and at this instant there are two men with his majesty : when they return, you shall be acquainted with the result. I have already mentioned to the king, that Cbeboo would be given up ; and if it was agreeable for him to send his cane, and one or two of his gold-headed swords, I would engage their security by going to Cape Coast with them. The message received from the king was of a favourable tendency ; and I trust he will perceive the expedien-

cy of putting an end to this sanguinary war. Be assured, we are all so employed on various duties, it debars me more particularly of giving you a further detail of our proceedings. But I trust, by a messenger this evening, to relate fully every circumstance attending this very severe contest. The party were landed in safety, viz. twelve privates, one corporal, with Messrs. Bold, Galloway, and Woolbert. Both ships will remain here until to-morrow. I am well pleased with the attention and assistance afforded us by Captain Coley.

I am, &c.

HENRY MEREDITH.

*Colonel Torrane,*

*Governor-in-chief,*

*&c. &c. &c.*

*Cape-Coast Castle.*

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*Annamaboe Fort, June 17, 1807.*

SIR;

I wrote you this morning, acknowledging the receipt of your letters, and, agreeably to my intentions then, I take the liberty of stating more particularly the occurrences in this garrison on the 15th and subsequent to it. I beg leave to remind you, that we were prepared for any attack that might be made upon us, by any body of men unaccustomed to the shock of artillery; and I believe Mr. White assured you of the confidence

he placed in the officers and men under his command, and every soul was animated with a desire to do his duty.

[Here follows a description of the battle as before related.]

The re-inforcement you <sup>were</sup> was pleased to send, got on shore without any opposition about four o'clock P. M.; and I assure you, we were very glad to receive them, as, from the severe duty we had undergone the preceding day, we were much cut up by fatigue. About six P. M. the flag of truce, with a corporal and private from the detachment you sent, were conveyed to the king: and as they proceeded, they were warmly greeted by the Ashantees. The message the king returned, was modest: he said, it was not his intention to commence hostilities with the fort, nor to distress any of the Whites; his enemies were the Assins and Fantees; and he now conceived his anger against them pretty well assuaged. This morning (17th), according to agreement, his messengers came, and said, that the king wished to see the same person that conveyed the flag of truce, that they might hear from his own lips, what he had to deliver. Accordingly, I sent them with Dutton, a man of quick understanding, to hear more particularly the sentiments of his majesty. After remaining some time hearing the opinion of his counsellors, they returned;

and after some preliminary discourse, they informed me that the king had deputed six of his principal men, with six deputed by the men of power in his train, to repair to Cape Coast to hear what you have to say, and to negotiate. In course of their communication, the king deplored the number of lives that were lost in consequence of the fire from the fort.

As the messengers mean to repair to Cape Coast, I will forbear relating every particular. The king seemed to say that he must have those who sought protection in the fort: this he only hinted at, and probably the same may be hinted to you; but in giving them up, we ought to be assured of their being used kindly. I send a canoe with this, and have agreed with the messengers, that you will send canoes, and a guard for their protection. Mr. White's travelling canoe is in good order; therefore be pleased to send eleven canoe-men for her. This canoe, with three more from the Cape, will, in my opinion, be fully sufficient to convey the whole twelve messengers with their guard. The number of persons here are reducing our provisions very fast; and if not removed soon, some of them will be most likely starved, or will be the cause of some serious malady: the sooner we are rid of them the better. But if you can gain their protection, it will be a humane act. Mr. White,

who, I am happy to say, is in a fair way, desires his respects.

I am, &c.

(Signed) HENRY MEREDITH.

*Colonel Torrane,  
Governor-in-chief,  
&c. &c. &c.*

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SIR;

Both your letters of yesterday's date I have received: the latter has given me particular satisfaction, not only as it affords every prospect that this war will be terminated, but also as it removes great anxiety from my mind respecting the state of Mr. White's wounds. The assurances you now give me, that he is in a fair way of recovery, are highly gratifying. I dispatch eleven canoe-men for Mr. White's canoe; and I also send three other canoes. I trust, the king will appoint persons of sufficient consequence to negotiate with me: I have an earnest wish to see the king: make this desire known to him; tell him I think it may essentially lead to the arrangement of affairs of much importance; that I have greatly to deplore with him this war; that although these events cannot always be guarded against, they may even ultimately bring future good consequences: and herein I think much depends on our meeting. Assure the king, that notwithstanding the steps I have taken to give

protection to the Fantees, I have ever held him in the highest respect, from the many reports I have heard of him; and that, had I seen any messenger from him antecedent to his attack on Annamaboe, I am of opinion we should have avoided the blow in that quarter. The king I understand to be a man of strong mind: it will naturally suggest itself to him, that a meeting between us may be of vast importance to the country. Assuré him, I have too high a consideration for my own character, as well as his consequence, to suffer the smallest indignity to be offered to him: that if he will come to the castle, I shall be proud to shew him every honour; and that I will give every possible security for his personal safety. I have apartments ready for him, and officers shall be sent to attend him here. On receipt of this, send your accustomed messenger to the king, saying, that you have a letter from me, and that an officer will wait personally on him to explain the contents. This officer with this letter in his hand, you will send (say Mr. F. L. Swanzy) as early as you shall receive the king's reply. I know not whether you have a good flag for the occasion; I therefore send one. Mr. F. L. Swanzy will have two flag-bearers; one with a white flag, the other carrying the union; and he will be very particular in explaining every part of this letter, and do his utmost to persuade the king to visit the Cape. He may

also add, that a ship can be procured, if he (the king) prefers coming that way; and that an officer of distinction shall be sent to accompany him. In a few words, Mr. F. L. Swanzy will do his utmost to persuade the king to visit the castle. An officer should come here, with the guard you send to protect the messengers. You must let me know, of what consequence the messengers are, that I may treat them accordingly; and this it will be advisable to acquaint me of before their arrival.

I am, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE TORRANE.

*To Henry Meredith, Esq.*

Although these men proceeded to the Cape, it was found that nothing important could be transacted without an interview with the king; and for this purpose Colonel Torrane was obliged to go to Annamaboe, and a day was fixed for a conference. To give as favourable and as respectable an opinion as possible of the British, a number of articles as presents were sent to the king; and as many officers and soldiers as the service could afford, were assembled to attend the governor on the day appointed: but previous to those preparations, and a few days after the flag of truce was received by the king, Cheboo (one of the men who was the cause of the war) was secured by the governor at Cape Coast, and sent to Anna-

maboe, to be delivered up to the king, in expectation that any further effusion of blood would be prevented, and that it would be the means of saving the Fantees from entire destruction. These benevolent purposes were not realized: the king had proceeded so far in the war, that he could not recede without displeasing those auxiliaries he had with him, and who expected a vast deal of plunder; and besides, Apoutay and Acoom were again in arms, and collecting all the Fantees they could to oppose the king's progress. On the day appointed for the interview, the governor and his party were put in motion; and although the procession was not very numerous, it was arranged with taste, and made no despicable appearance. About twenty of the Company's artificers, habited in a neat manner, marched in front; a guard of forty men, and a band of music followed them; next walked the governor, followed by ten officers, two and two; and some gentlemen-traders (who were enticed from the Cape by curiosity), brought up the rear. When the procession had got a short distance, it was met by a principal man, who was sent by the king to conduct the governor, and to keep off the multitude, which was assembling in great numbers; some of whom had never seen a White man. Notwithstanding the authority of this person, and the exertions of his attendants, the curiosity of the people was so great, that every avenue was

crowded; which, by preventing the circulation of air, augmented the natural heat of the day; and this inconvenience was farther increased by the putrid smell from the dead bodies, and the vast swarm of flies. The governor was obliged to visit each man of rank, before he could be received by the king; a ceremony that could not be prudently denied, and which occupied some time: for those men had their several courts, and collectively had formed an extensive circle. Every one of them was seated under a huge umbrella, surrounded by attendants and guards, with young persons employed in fanning the air, and dispersing the flies which were numerous and troublesome. One of those men and his attendants excited some curiosity and attention: his dress and appearance were so different from those of the others, that it evidently proved, he must have come from countries situated a considerable distance inland. He was a tall, athletic, and rather corpulent man, of a complexion resembling an Arab, or an Egyptian. His dress was heavy, and by no means adapted to the climate. He wore a cap that came down below his ears; and, being made of yellow cloth, it did not contribute to diminish his tawny complexion. He was a follower of the Mohammedan religion, possessed much gravity; but was communicative, condescending, and agreeable. He had about him a great number of sentences from the Alkoran,

which were carefully incased in gold and silver, and upon which he set a high value. He was a native of Kassina, a country that appears to be situated to the South of East from Tombuctou.

He said, he had been at Tunis, and at Mecca; had seen many White men and ships; and described the method of travelling over the great desert. This person commanded a body of men, who fought with arrows, as well as muskets: four of the arrows were found in the fort; they were short and pointed with barbed iron. He had many persons in his train, who were of the same colour, but varied a little as to dress: they were all habited in the Turkish manner, but did not wear turbans. After the ceremony of visiting those persons was over, the governor was conducted towards the king, who was surrounded by a number of attendants, whose appearance bore evident signs of riches and authority: chains, stools, axes, swords, flutes, message-canes, &c. were either of solid gold, or richly adorned with that metal: those dazzling appearances, added to damask, taffety, and other rich dresses, gave a splendour to the scene, highly interesting. When the governor approached the king, and when an interchange of compliments had passed, the air resounded with the noise of musical instruments, such as drums, horns, and flutes. After some conversation, during which much politeness was observed in the behaviour of the king, the gover-

nor wished this ceremonial visit to be returned; which was agreed to, and a convenient place was found to receive the king and his train. The governor, his officers, and attendants, were formed in a half-circle, and seated under the shade of some trees; and a passage of sufficient breadth was formed by the soldiers for the king and his attendants to pass through. It was full two hours before his majesty was announced, so numerous was his train. Each man of rank, as he advanced, paid the necessary compliments agreeably to the custom of his country, and then filed off. It was previously directed, that the king should be received with arms presented and the grenadiers march when passing the soldiers. This mark of distinction and respect appeared to give him much satisfaction: he halted to observe the orderly behaviour and uniform appearance of the soldiers; and the martial air that was playing, seemed to produce the most agreeable sensations on his mind. The writer had an opportunity of seeing this man. He was of the middle size, well formed, and perfectly black, with regular features and an open and pleasing countenance. His manner indicated understanding and was adorned with gracefulness; and in all respects he exceeded the expectations of every person. His dress was plain: it consisted of a piece of silk wrapt loosely about him; a wreath of green silk ornamented his head: his sandals were neatly made, and curiously studded

with gold. He was not distinguished by any gold ornaments, as his attendants were. One man who was dressed in a grotesque manner, and who appeared to act the buffoon, was, literally, loaded with gold.

As this was a visit of ceremony, no business of consequence was transacted. The king politely enquired after Mr. White, and expressed a hope that he would soon be well of his wounds. He said he would move from Annamaboe soon, as his army felt ill effects from the water, and from the dead bodies. After this visit, every confidence was placed in the king and his army; and as the gates were now opened, a free admittance was allowed: various conferences of a favourable nature were carried on between both parties; but peace with the Fantees was considered impracticable. Apoutay had escaped the king's vigilance; and Acoom was at the head of a strong party, and marching towards Annamaboe to give the king battle. The king assured the governor, that after he had subdued his enemies to leeward, he would return to Annamaboe for the purpose of making arrangements relative to the future welfare of the country, and the regulations of trade.

It was agreed, that those residing under British forts, provided they observed a neutrality, should not be molested; and that every respect should be paid to the British flag. The governor likewise procured the release of those who sought refuge

in the fort, although the king contested his right to them; for this reason, that as he destroyed the town, he had a claim to every person, and to every thing belonging to it. On report of Acoom being in arms and making preparations to attack the Ashantees, the king ordered his army to collect and march to meet him. Two days subsequent to the king's departure (3d July), Acoom's party and the advanced guard of the Ashantee's met; a battle was the consequence, which ended in the defeat of Acoom, who with his party would have been cut off, if a river that was in their rear had not favoured their flight; the fordable parts of which were known to them, but not to the Ashantees. After this defeat, the king's enemies dared not shew themselves in the field in any force: they however supported a kind of predatory warfare, and were sometimes successful in cutting off small foraging parties. As the Ashantees proceeded to leeward, desolation accompanied them; almost every town and village were laid in ruins; but disease, which got among them at Annamaboe, and which spread rapidly, carried off vast numbers. This unexpected calamity altered the king's intentions: he could not return to Annamaboe without risking the loss of his whole army; prudence therefore directed him to face towards his kingdom, leaving at Accra a sufficient force to dispose of prisoners, and to convey them in safety to Ashantee.

Cheboo and Apoutay, who appeared inseparable friends at the commencement of this war, and throughout it, fled to Cape Coast with about five hundred followers, as soon as they perceived the Ashantees approaching towards Annamaboe, on the 15th of June. The Cape Coast people were willing to afford them protection and assistance: but when the governor heard how things were at Annamaboe, he warned them of the danger, and advised them to be neutral. When an account arrived at Cape Coast of the desperate attack made on Annamaboe fort, the governor came to the resolution of securing, if possible, both these men, and delivering them up to the king, as the most probable means of not only putting an end to the war, but of securing the king's friendship. A party was accordingly selected for that purpose; but Apoutay, after a warm contest, wherein some were killed on both sides, effected his escape. Cheboo was not so fortunate; he was secured and sent to the king, as we have already mentioned: his followers too made a precipitate flight, leaving behind them some bulky articles, among which were the whole of Cheboo's regalia, which were carefully lodged for the king: and it had the effect on his disposition that was intended; it gave a favourable opinion of the British, and assured him of the governor's friendship; and at the same time it abated the desire he encouraged, to be revenged for the loss his army

had sustained on the 15th. For he concerted a design to attempt the fort by storm, and Wednesday the 17th was the day appointed for this enterprise. The plan was not badly arranged, and was to be conducted in the following manner. Six thousand men were to be selected; half of them destined not only to mount the walls, but to apply a quantity of gunpowder under them; the explosion from which was expected to shake the fort very much, and likewise to create such a confusion within as to cause the garrison to be off its guard: the other half were to keep up a continued firing. The plan was averted by the prudent policy of the chief governor, not only by his securing Cheboo, but by his alacrity in demanding a truce, whereby the king's resentment was cooled, and his inclinations diverted towards pacific measures.

No sooner had the king and his forces faced homewards, than Acoom and his party again took the field, and were joined by others, which in the course of a short time increased to a formidable body. He was successful in cutting off straggling parties of the Ashantees, who, being allured by plunder, delayed to join the main army. After this, Acoom was considered a commander of no small merit. It was industriously spread abroad, that he compelled the Ashantees to retreat, and that even the king was in danger of being taken by him.

When the Fantees considered themselves no longer in danger, and when they had recovered a little from the effects of the war, they formed plans of revenge on those who were neutral, or who in the least assisted the Ashantees against them. Being now reduced to a state of poverty, they were willing to embrace any means, whereby their condition would be amended, or a plausible pretext for plunder would be encouraged; and war offered them the most favourable means of carrying on their designs. War was accordingly declared against the inhabitants of Elmina and Accra.

From motives of policy, the Fantees did not think it prudent to declare openly against the Cape Coast people, who were perfectly acquainted with their intentions, and voluntarily came forward with a sum of money, and offered their assistance in the intended expedition against the Elminas. In this state were affairs in 1809.

Although the inhabitants of Elmina and Accra were collectively accused of giving away Fantees who sought for succour among them, yet the Fantees were particularly enraged against two individuals of those towns; one of whom (Mr. Neizer, a mulattoe) was accused of encouraging the Ashantees to come to the water-side, and supplying them with arms and ammunition; the other (Mr. Sackey, a respectable Black man at Accra) was accused of making free with gold

1809  
1809

lodged in his care, and disposing of some Fantees who were under his protection. Respecting the guilt or innocence of these persons, we shall forbear entering into any enquiry: we may, however, remark, that the people of Elmina, Accra, and even of Cape Coast, very probably participated in that kind of spoliation, to which a vanquished people are exposed or liable, by greedy and avaricious observers: but the Fantees considered it impolitic (as is above related) to come to an open rupture with the inhabitants of Cape Coast; and they expected that those two men would readily come forward with large sums to prevent their respective towns and families being involved in war. Neizer would not listen to any proposition of that nature; but Sackey very imprudently advanced, at different payments, no less a sum than three hundred and twenty ounces twelve ackies, equal to one thousand two hundred and eighty three pounds of the currency of this country, with which he expected the Accra people would purchase a peace: but larger sums were demanded; and Sackey at length saw his error, and withheld his liberality.

The Fantee forces were now divided into two bodies; one of them was joined by a strong party of Warsaws, and proceeded against Elmina; the other against Accra. Elmina was blockaded for nearly six months; and after many ineffectual attempts to take the town, the Fantees and War-

saws raised the blockade, and retired to their respective homes, in May, 1810.

The party which was destined to go against Accra, advanced towards that town in March, 1810; but meeting with a vigorous resistance, they retreated with precipitation, after losing about one hundred men. The Fantees having thus failed against both those places, did not deem it prudent to renew the attack immediately; and an unexpected change, unfavourable to the Fantees, soon followed, which will give us occasion again to introduce the Ashantees. X

The king of Ashantee, hearing [by a message sent to him by the governor of Elmina,] how troublesome the Fantees were to their neighbours; and knowing that the preservation of Accra was of importance to him, being the only maritime state his subjects could trade to without interruption; was determined to give them assistance. He accordingly levied two armies for this purpose; one of them to proceed to the Fantee country, the other to Accra. The army that proceeded against the Fantees, and which consisted of only about four thousand men, routed them in every engagement. This body of Ashantees made their appearance on the coast on the 1st of March, 1811; but they did not long remain here; for, having supplied themselves with the different articles they were in want of, they returned with their prisoners and booty. The

f. de Verno  
May 1810  
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army which was marching towards Accra, met with an unexpected and severe check from the king of Aquapim; through whose country it had to pass in order to get to Accra. This man, it appears, was with the king of Ashantee in his first expedition; and not being rewarded, perhaps, in proportion to his wishes or expectations, took advantage of this occasion to be revenged. He watched an opportunity when the Ashantees were dispersed in small bodies, and surprized and destroyed numbers of them, before they could escape or collect for their defence.

This man, thus shaking off his allegiance, and becoming a formidable enemy, obliged the king of Ashantee to levy a strong force: twenty-five thousand were soon in arms under the command of Apakoo, the king's captain-general; and proceeded to be revenged upon Quaw, the king of Aquapim; who, like all others of the king's enemies, fled when he heard of this formidable force coming against him. He directed his route towards Crobo, a country eastward from Aquapim; but was soon followed by Apakoo at the head of twenty thousand men; having left five thousand to watch Quaw in case he should return to his country. When the Ashantee general got to the Crobo country, he heard that Quaw had fled to Addah: and he hastened in pursuit of him. But when he got to Addah, he was much disappointed in not finding his enemy. Quaw, by secret

intelligence, diligently watched the movements of the Ashantees; and before they got to Addah, he was on his return by a private route inland.

Apakoo, in consequence of this unsuccessful and long march, was much enraged, and committed depredations against the inhabitants of Addah and Crobo, who, he suspected, had favoured the flight of his enemy: and when he turned his back, the king of Crobo declared himself against the Ashantees. Apakoo being in this manner diverted from his designs against the Fantees, got Mr. Flindt, the governor of the Danish fort at Addah, into his possession, and had him conveyed inland.

While these transactions were passing in this quarter, the Fantees were again suddenly awakened by an unexpected event in their favour:—the king of Akim, who was in alliance with, or tributary to the king of Ashantee, suddenly withdrew his fealty; but not in so treacherous a manner as the king of Aquapim; and marched along the coast to the Fantee country, giving out, that he came to drive the Ashantees from the Fantee country, and exhorting every person capable of bearing arms, to repair to his quarters. He was joined by the inhabitants of Agoona, and other small districts, and soon found himself at the head of about three thousand men; with this force he wished to impress the Fantees with a great idea of his power, and succeeded so far, as to cause his name (Attah) to be dreaded and

respected. This man, in conjunction with Tando, governed the Akim country, and was tributary to the king of Ashantee. He refused obedience to the king's orders, by not going against the Fantees: which produced a dispute between himself and Tando, who drove him out of Akim; and, being joined by a number of persons hostile to the Ashantee government, he became a respectable, an unsettled, and desperate warrior.

The garrison of Annamaboe consists of the governor, who is vice-president of the council; two officers, a serjeant, corporal, and eighteen men; a force by no means adequate to the strength and importance of the place. The fort can accommodate fifty soldiers with ease; and that number would be able to defend it against a powerful army of natives.

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to 1816]*

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## CHAPTER VI.

CORMANTINE.---TANTUMQUERRY.---APAM.---  
WINNEBAH.----BERRACOE.----ACCRA.----  
PRAM PRAM.----NINGO.----RIO VOLTA.----  
ADDAH.----QUITA.----CONCLUSION.

**A**BOUT three miles from Annamaboe is situated the town of *Cormantine*, where the Dutch

have a fort, called Amsterdam. It was built by the English, and was the first fort erected by us on the Gold-coast. It is situated on an eminence that overlooks the sea, which renders it particularly airy. It was taken in 1662, or 1663, by the Dutch admiral De Ruyter; since which period it has continued to be possessed by that nation. We have dilated so much on Fantee affairs that little is left for us to remark concerning this place. It has been observed, that the Ashantees, in 1807, found their way into this fort, and plundered it of what provisions it contained; since which, the place has been neglected. The Fantees residing in Annamaboe, taking advantage of this neglect, demanded of the Dutch government the sum of forty ounces, under a threat of destroying the fort, if this sum should be denied them. The Dutch government would not comply with their demand; in consequence of which, the Annamaboes marched out, headed by their king; and as the fort was incapable of making resistance, it was pillaged; the guns rendered useless, part of the walls levelled, and the artificers attached to it made prisoners. From Cormantine, the coast is rather flat and sandy, until we get to Tantum, where it is bold and rocky.

*Tantumquerry* is about six leagues from Cormantine. The fort is on an eminence about musket-shot from the beach: it is small and confined,

and only capable of defending itself against the natives. The landing here is difficult and dangerous; the only passage is between two rocks, which will only admit one canoe. The Fantee country was considered formerly to terminate here; but the changes which have happened of late years, give no exact boundary to that country, until we get nearly to Accra. The inhabitants of Tantom partake of the character and disposition of the Fantees, already mentioned.

About eight or nine miles from Tantom, is situated the district of *Apam*, or *Apang*; where the Dutch have a small fort, near to which is a small river. The country hereabout is more open than about Tantom; and the landing is less dangerous. The town of Apam with a number of its inhabitants were destroyed by the Ashantees on the 1st of March, 1811; and in about a week following, when the Ashantees left the place, Attah, the late king of Akim, marched towards it, in the expectation of cutting off part of the Ashantee army. He entered the fort, pillaged every article that could be carried off with ease, destroyed the gun-carriages, reduced part of the walls, and nearly laid the whole fort in ruins: a serjeant who was on command, and the Company's slaves, escaped to Berracoe. The reason assigned for this violence was, that the serjeant did not inform the Akims of the direct route the

Ashantees took; whereby, they said, they were prevented from coming up with them; and that, consequently, they had effected a safe retreat.

About eight miles from Apam is situated the town of *Winnebah*, or *Simpah*; where the British have a small fort. The fort is seated rather on an eminence, and overlooks the town, which is situated directly under its walls; a very great inconvenience. The landing here is generally safe; and at times, boats may beach without danger. Although the fort overlooks the town, yet it cannot secure the landing-place in consequence of the houses, which are situated between the beach and the fort. Indeed it would appear to strangers a most unaccountable neglect, not only here, but at other places, in permitting the natives to stop up the avenues leading to the landing-place, and to live so near the fort. If the security of the fort, and the preservation of property landed on the beach, had not been thought of; health should have been an object of some consideration.

About four miles westward from *Winnebah* is a remarkably high land, that goes by the name of the *Devil's-hill*; near to which is a salt-pond. There is a river about two miles eastward from *Winnebah*, which is capable of supplying ships with good water, for which a small duty is paid to the pynins of the town. The natives swim

the water off to the ships' boats, at a moderate expence.

Winnebah, as well as other states westward of it, was formerly called the Afætu country: but it became connected with the king of Agoona's territory, and in course of time became a separate state, under a mixed government of the elders and the community. It is still considered as forming a part of the Agoona country. The kings of Agoona are now extinct, and the Agoona country is merely a nominal appellation, under the government of one person. Strictly speaking, Winnebah may be considered as under the controul and power of the Fantees, particularly at the present period. They however retain their primitive language Afætu, and some part of their customs.

The country about Winnebah is not so confined with wood, as other parts of the coast; it is in some places clear and open, forming on the whole a pleasing variety of woods and plains elegantly decorated with clumps of trees. The country immediately at the rear of Winnebah cannot be exceeded for beauty and variety. An extensive domain, laid out with all imaginable art, and stocked with deer, hares, partridges, guinea-fowls, &c. &c. will convey a strong idea of the country at the rear of Winnebah.

The fort of Winnebah is somewhat larger than

that of Tatum, but it is not so regularly constructed. The bastions are not in proportion to the curtains, and a sort of horn-work or ravelin, that projects from the face of the fort, is very awkwardly constructed. The fort was neither built with judgment, nor with good materials; but it is capable of improvement at a moderate expence. The garrison of this fort amounts to no more than seven soldiers; a number not capable of defending it against the natives: it should have at least a complement of thirty men, a number which would render the fort respectable, and prevent impositions and insults to those who from time to time might be under its protection. The natives of this place, from time immemorial we may say, have been notorious for every species of licentiousness; they possessed a degree of ferocity beyond any others with whom we are acquainted: they lived entirely by plunder; during the Slave-trade, they supplied their exigencies in a very quick and summary method, by seizing, very often, the innocent, indulging the victim with the form of a trial, having him sold, and the amount divided among the parties concerned. They could not move without the boundaries of their district, through fear of the law of retaliation: and by these horrid practices, this town was continually involved in every kind of excess. The fort was continually embroiled in disputes

with them; and candour obliges us to state, that two instances have come to our knowledge, of two governors having been literally flogged! by the people of this town; one captain of a ship, nearly flogged to death; and another, almost murdered: besides other cruelties and indignities too painful to relate.

The natives, not only here, but at Cape Coast, Annamaboe, and other places, are too well acquainted with our weak condition; and although they are convinced they could not stand against an open attack, yet they know we are only formidable when surrounded by walls and guns. It was a most fortunate circumstance for the British character in this country, that the Ashantees made a trial of their courage and strength against Annamaboe: if they had attacked any other fort under similar circumstances, they most probably would have succeeded; and although that affair is generally known throughout the country, yet the spirit for warfare, which is spread in every part of it, has gradually lessened that fear and respect, which that event was calculated to create. At present, the British is the only European power that appears to support itself with tolerable respect. We hear of contributions being imposed on our neighbours; forts pillaged; governors threatened with torture, or beheading; others actually murdered; and one gentleman,

Mr. Flindt \*, surprized, and now a prisoner with the Ashantee army. However, in the midst of these alarming circumstances, the British have not been permitted to enjoy perfect tranquillity. The governor of this fort was seriously threatened twice by Attah, the late king of Akim; of whom we have already made mention. He sent a peremptory message in March last, demanding a quantity of powder, lead, and a number of guns; accompanied with threatening language, calculated to excite terror, and a strong idea of his power. This demand was not complied with; but a present was sent to him as a token of friendship, with an assurance of the desire the British had of supporting a strict neutrality: he was likewise acquainted, that polite language would be more becoming his dignity, and that his threats were expended to no favourable purpose. In July, 1811, he sent another message, endeavouring to levy a contribution, but attended with less threatening language than the first. In this he was likewise disappointed; and we believe he would wish to be revenged, if he thought his revenge could be satisfied with little danger or loss. In consequence of this, the governor is obliged to keep within certain limits; prudence restrains

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\* This gentleman was lately set at liberty, after having been five months and three days with the Ashantee army.

him from walking any distance from the fort through fear of being surprized.

The town of Winnebah was formerly the most popalous in the Agoona country: it contained about four-thousand souls. War and other casualties have reduced that number considerably; and the population may now be estimated at two thousand.

For the purpose of making this description of the Gold-coast as complete as we possibly can, the following account of the Agoona country is added. It is taken, with trifling additions, from the fourth Report of the African Institution.

The Agoona country, of which Winnebah forms a part, extends about twenty miles in length from East to West, and about fifteen miles in breadth; being situated between 5° and 5° 30' of North latitude, and from 10° to 30° of West longitude. The sea forms its boundary on the South and East; on the West, North, and North-east, it is bounded by the countries Accron, Adjumacoon, Assin, Akim, and Accra; the three first of which are connected with the Fantee country. The aspect of the country varies considerably; in some places it is flat, and rather marshy; in others, it rises into hills; in some, it runs into open plains of considerable extent; while, in others, it is richly covered with wood. The climate is esteemed

comparatively healthy: it certainly is more temperate than that of many other places on the same line of coast. The height of the thermometer is usually from 75° to 80°; in the rainy season it has been observed as low as 73°.

The seasons may be divided into the tornado, the rainy, and the dry. The tornado season commences in March, and continues about two months; the rainy season begins about the end of May, and ends in August; the dry season follows, and continues, with trifling variations, throughout the remainder of the year; that is to say, from August till March. About the end of December, or beginning of January, in every year, and sometimes in February, the Harmattan wind blows, and continues for four, six, or eight days, and sometimes for a fortnight.

Near the sea, the soil is in many places light and sandy, and therefore unfavourable for the cultivation of most articles of Tropical produce; and where it is of a different description, many plants are found not to thrive, partly, as is supposed, in consequence of the coldness and humidity of the sea-breeze or South-west winds, which meet with nothing on the shore to mitigate their severity; and partly, because the air is thus impregnated with saline particles thrown up by a constant and generally violent surf. About two or three miles from the sea, the soil is found to

be much more productive, and it gradually improves as it recedes, till, at the distance of six or eight miles from the shore, it is so fertile as to be well adapted for the growth of almost every article of Tropical culture. The climate at this distance is also improved, and so temperate as to favour the cultivation of European plants and seeds.

The only mineral production which has hitherto been discovered in this country, is gold: their method of procuring which the natives endeavour to conceal from Europeans: and they are obviously very ignorant of the proper means of searching for mineral bodies, or of working them when discovered.

The domestic animals are sheep, goats, hogs, dogs, cats, common fowls, ducks, &c.: those in a wild state are leopards, hyenas, buffaloes, hogs, deer, hares, ant-bears, musk-cats, squirrels, alligators, monkeys, snakes, &c. &c.

There is but little timber in this country applicable to ship-building; but there are several kinds well adapted for house-building and cabinet-work, and other useful and ornamental purposes; though not in any great abundance.

The chief vegetable productions here are maize (of which there are two crops in the year), millet, yams, cassada, sweet potatoes, plantains, bananas, sugar-cane, various kinds of pulse, pepper, cabbages, oakras, eschallots, besides pine-apples,

and other Tropical fruits. Cotton grows wild in some places ; and the indigo-plant is to be seen in various parts. The Indian pepper grows inland ; and that fruit justly called the miraculous berry, which, on chewing, imparts an agreeably sweet taste to acids, is sometimes brought to the coast ; the natives name it *assahbah*, and they call cotton *assaba* ; names very similar, although so wide a difference in their signification.

Their present system of agriculture is indeed very rude and defective ; but it might be greatly improved, by introducing among them horses and horned cattle ; and proper implements of husbandry ; as well as useful seeds and plants, if they had at the same time the benefit of the enlightened example and instruction of intelligent Europeans, who might be induced to engage in agricultural pursuits ; and provided also, that their industry were excited and encouraged by suitable rewards.

At present, all the land in the country forms a common stock, and no part of it can be appropriated by any individual, except during the time he actually cultivates it. There are extensive tracts of unoccupied land, not above a tenth part of the whole being in cultivation. Any native of *Agoona* who chooses to clear and cultivate any part of the unoccupied land, becomes the exclusive possessor of it for the time ;

but if he should afterwards allow it to be waste, he ceases to have any peculiar claim to it; it may be occupied by any other individual. Among the natives, no such thing is practised as the lease or sale of land, except in the case of Europeans, who sometimes for five or six pounds may obtain the appropriation of a considerable tract of land. Their title to lands so obtained is not likely to be disturbed; but in the present state of society, unless they had the means of protecting themselves, if necessary, by force, the produce which they might raise could not be considered as altogether secure. Their best means of protection would be to have a considerable number of hired cultivators in constant pay, who would serve the double purpose of cultivating the soil, and protecting the fruits of their labour from pillage. Labourers may easily be had at the rate of from ten shillings to twelve shillings and six-pence *per month* \*.

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\* The fact is, that all over the country, land is so plentiful in proportion to the population, that every man cuts down the wood upon a piece of ground where he pleases: this is burned upon the spot; and when the rain commences, he sows his maize in the ashes, and procures a plentiful crop without the trouble of breaking up the ground at all. Next season he manages a fresh piece in the same manner. For yams, plantains, &c. they clear more permanent plantations.

Agoona contains no navigable river; but it is tolerably supplied with fresh water, by means of rivulets, which flow through it, and branch off in a variety of directions. The chief towns are: Winnebah (or, as the natives call it, Sunpah), Agoona, Berracoe, and Fettah. Their present extent and population fall very short of what they were before the late desolating expedition to the coast, made by the Ashantees. Indeed the whole population of the state cannot now be estimated at more than ten-thousand souls; of which number, seven-thousand may be considered as women and children. The country, however, has begun to recover from the effects of that disastrous war, and its population appears to be on the increase.

Immediately on the sea-coast, the people derive their subsistence chiefly from fishing; in the other parts of the country, from hunting and agriculture: few, and only few, gain their livelihood by trade. This trade consists in purchasing from Europeans, in exchange for gold, cowries, and a few other articles, East-India cotton goods, iron, lead, spirits, tobacco, tobacco-pipes, guns, gun-powder, vessels of brass, and woollen and cotton goods of British manufacture. The India cotton manufacture is most esteemed, not only here, but on every part of the coast. They afterwards barter or retail these

articles with their countrymen, and persons from the interior, for gold, provisions, palm-wine, palm-oil, &c. &c.

Cowries and gold form the current medium of exchange; the former are universally esteemed on the sea-coast, from the facility of their being reduced to a very small sum: forty cowries make a string, and fifty strings a head: thus two thousand cowries are equal to one ackey of gold; and sixteen ackies of gold go to the ounce, valued at four pounds sterling. A labouring man, in the plentiful season, that is, from September to April, or May, may subsist abundantly on two strings of cowries, or two pence farthing, a day; and even for five, ten, or twenty cowries, the cravings of the stomach may be relieved. Gold cannot be reduced in its native state to such a low exchange; which gives cowries the preference. When the men inland, or, as we call them, the bush people, exchange gold for cowries, they only get forty strings for the ackey.

The means of increasing the trade of this country, and of every other country on the coast, obviously consists in opening a free intercourse with the interior, in introducing an improved system of agriculture, and the arts of civilized life; in enlarging their knowledge, and exciting their industry; and, above all, in establishing such a government and police, as will secure them in

the enjoyment of what they may acquire by exertion.

The government, political institutions, and laws of Agoona, resemble in a great degree those of the Fantees. In some cases, the cabociers, or chiefs of petty districts, are hereditary; in others, they are elected by the people. These chiefs occasionally assume a despotic power; but in general they do not retain it long; the people frequently revolting in such cases, and expelling, or otherwise punishing, the usurper. The chiefs are assisted in the administration of the laws by a kind of judicial senate; the members of which, called pynins, are chosen by the people from among the elders of the district: and it is their office to hear and decide causes, and pronounce the sentence of the law. They must be considered as having an interest in condemning persons who are accused, as they have a share of all fines and forfeitures. The pynins are the only depositaries of the law; and in order to preserve and transmit the memory of them, they hold frequent meetings, at which the laws are promulged, or rather rehearsed.

The moral standard of the people is extremely low; they appear to have no idea of restraint, beyond what their own interest, or the dread of punishment, imposes; and besides that, their laws are both too loosely framed, and too partially ex-

ecuted, to have a powerful effect in curbing men's passions. They are without any education, or discipline of a moral kind; and from their earliest infancy are habituated to examples of inhumanity, fraud, and licentiousness; in short, the moral principle is not cultivated among them, so that there is hardly any act which will attach disgrace or infamy to the individual, or even bring reproach upon him, if he do but pay the penalty of the law!

Their religious system has no tendency whatever to improve their morality. It consists almost entirely in a superstitious dread of suffering from some malign influence, and in the faith they repose in the fetishes, or charms which are furnished by the Fetishmen, or priests, for the purpose of warding off the dreaded evil. The people in general do not appear to engage in any kind of worship; and although, on certain days, they abstain from their ordinary employments, yet they assign no reason for this, except that it has been the custom to do so. The Fetishmen however, who may be considered as an order of priests, engage in certain forms of worship and religious ceremonies; and they are supposed to hold communion with the demon, or Fetish, and to obtain from him the knowledge which is required for the exercise of their profession; which is, to solve the doubts and perplexities of their followers, and to

furnish them with the means of averting the evil, either actual or possible. Their profits arise from the presents made to the Fetish by the votaries: these they appropriate to their own use, and they are often of considerable value. The Fetishmen usually connect themselves with the persons in power, and are often serviceable in strengthening the government, and enforcing obedience to the law, as they have great influence among the people, and continue to be respected by them, even when the government has fallen into disrepute.

At Winnebah there is an annual sacrifice of a deer made to the Fetish. Human sacrifices take place only when a man of eminence dies. The victims are selected from among the slaves of the deceased, and are generally old and infirm persons. Such sacrifices, however, very seldom occur in Agoona. With respect to intellectual capacity, these people do not discover any natural inferiority to Europeans, yet, at the same time, their attainments are as low as can be imagined; their minds not being improved by any kind of culture, they are wholly ignorant of letters; and the prevailing language, which is the Fantee, has never been reduced to writing. The language itself is soft and harmonious: the following short specimen of it gives the proper names of men and women, according to the day of the week on which they were born.

<i>Days of the Week.</i>	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Women.</i>
Sunday	Quashie	Aquishewah
Monday	Cudjoe	Adjuah
Tuesday	Quabino	Abinabah
Wednesday	Quacoe	Eccoah
Thursday	Quow	Abbah
Friday	Couffee	Effuah
Saturday	Quamina	Ambah

<i>Numerals.</i>		<i>Numerals.</i>	
1	Akur	7	Ashun
2	Abien	8	Aoutchie
3	Abiasah	9	A'coon
4	Anun	10	Adue
5	Enumb	100	Ohah
6	Acien	1000	Apim*.

Arts and manufactures are in a low state among them. They make canoes, fishing-nets, hooks and lines, hoes, bills, baskets, mats, and various other articles of the same kind; and some of them can work as masons and carpenters.

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\* The Fantee language is *understood* on all parts of the coast, from Apollonia to Accra, and to a considerable distance inland: it is understood in Ashantee, where the language differs very little from Fantee. This is probably the effect of the Fantees being great traders, and travelling over so many parts of the country.

The amusements of the young consist chiefly in dancing and singing: those more advanced in years amuse themselves by relating the exploits performed in their youth. The women of this country, as in all countries where polygamy is practised, are in a degraded state; they are literally slaves to the men, and perform almost all the laborious offices, as grinding corn, procuring firewood, and water; they do every thing, in short, but fish, and plant corn. The women also generally act both as physicians and surgeons. The prevailing complaints are venereal, fevers, fluxes, rheumatism, and leprosy; for the cure of which they use for the most part certain herbs which are natives of the country. They sometimes have recourse to bleeding, by means of scarification and cupping; and these operations are performed with much dexterity by the women.

About three leagues from Winnebah, is situated the Dutch fort of *Berracoe*, likewise a town of that name, but called by the natives *Senniah*, or *Seniah* which signifies a bason. The country hereabouts is more woody than about Winnebah, and is equally fertile. The fort is on an eminence, but in a defenceless state. Attah of Akim laid a contribution on this fort in March, 1811: after being disappointed in this respect at Winnebah, he was resolved to satiate his malignity on the

person who was in command of this fort; and who, being a mulattoe and a native, was more exposed to his rancour. This man had not property sufficient about him, to satisfy the demands of Attah, and to save himself and the persons belonging to him from the danger that was impending: he was therefore placed in an awkward position; but after some entreaty, he was permitted to go to Winnebah for the purpose of soliciting the assistance of the commander of that fort, to extricate him from his difficulties. He was only allowed a limited time, at the expiration of which, if the sum demanded was not paid, vengeance was denounced against him.—The gentleman who commanded Winnebah, did not hesitate to lend the sum required; which probably saved this man's life, and the lives of those belonging to him. Some months after this circumstance, this unfortunate man was put to death by the natives of Accra; as will be related hereafter.

About nine leagues from Berracoe we come to *Accra*, where the English, Dutch, and Danes, have settlements. *Accra* is an independent state: it was formerly governed by the kings of Aquamboe; which country and that of Aquapim lie at the rear of it. The town of *Accra* lies in about  $5^{\circ} 31'$  N. lat. and about  $10'$  W. long.; and its

appearance is very picturesque, particularly from the sea; white buildings and houses present themselves anteriorly, and at the rear is an extensive plain, studded in a fanciful manner, with clumps of wood, inhabited by deer, hares, and other wild animals; and the prospect is terminated by high land, rising gradually; forming on the whole a most pleasing appearance. Being thus surrounded by an open country, Accra is rendered the most healthy spot on the Gold-coast; it is likewise more cool than other situations: the soil, however, is of a light and sandy kind; which forbids the inhabitants to follow the cultivation of corn, yams, plantains, sugar-cane, and other productions, which require a moist and rich soil. It is favourable for cotton, cassada, ground-nuts, and pulse. The natives too attend to the breeding of poultry, hogs, sheep, &c.; which produces a livelihood to many.

✓ Accra is the only country on the Gold-coast, that has a free trade with the interior; and it is in general very much resorted to by the Ashantees. This free intercourse with that nation not only diffuses money among every class, but improves their manners, and renders them more civilized than their neighbours: for the Ashantees are evidently better acquainted with the rules of decency and morality, than any people we know of in this country; and from their long inter-

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course with the inhabitants of Accra, they have acquired habits of meekness and sobriety, which are more visible in them than in any of the natives on the sea-coast, especially the Fantees; who are, in comparison, an indolent, faithless, and ferocious people, and their caboceers, or petty chiefs, in general drunken, deceitful, and avaricious, ever seeking an opportunity to gratify their passions.—Some respectable natives who reside here, and who have had the advantage of education in England, likewise contribute, by salutary examples, to improve the manners of the people. We are sorry, however, to add, that this fair picture is not without its blemishes: some palpable exceptions have lately manifested themselves among the people of Accra: but we are confident, that those who are well acquainted with these people, will agree with us in opinion, that those deviations from their usual behaviour arise more from the impulse of momentary frenzy and the irritation of a desperate situation (to which they have been lately exposed) than the effects of natural malignity and vicious disposition.

In conformity to our original design of entering into a true, impartial, and candid examination of the country, we will relate two events which have happened here, and which probably reduce the character of this people to a standard beneath the most profligate and abandoned characters on the Coast.

A merchant, in the commencement of April last, was on the point of sailing from the country and stopped here to arrange some of his trading-concerns. He brought with him some Fantee canoe-men, who were always in the habit of attending upon him, and whom he directed to remain on-board the vessel, as the Fantees and Accras were at war. He knew it would give rise to some quarrel, if the canoe-men came on shore. Some Accra canoe-men who were employed in conveying water off to the vessel, made use of insulting language to those Fantee people, which produced replies equally indignant, and inflamed the Accra canoe-men not a little: but as they could not indulge their rage on the canoe-men, they were resolved to be revenged on their master: and no sooner were they landed, than they spread evil reports, which soon brought together a considerable mob of the lower order of people, who surrounded the house the merchant happened to be in, and threatened vengeance against him. Some wanted his head, others were satisfied with securing his person, as a pledge for the surrender of the canoe-men. At length, after some intercession, doubtless on the part of the fort, the merchant was permitted to be at liberty, but not without paying merchandize to the amount of forty-two pounds sterling.

The second event, which is of a tragical nature, happened as follows.—The person who com-

manded Berracoe Fort, and who, although a native, was considered from his behaviour on an equal footing with a White, went to Accra, in July, 1811, for the purpose of arranging some matters belonging to his service. He lodged in the Dutch fort, and in course conceived himself in perfect safety. He had not been long here, when one of the Accra Fetishmen conceived a design of proceeding to a river about six or eight miles westward from Accra, in quest of fish. He was surprized and seized by a party of Fantees, who were in the neighbourhood, and conveyed to Berracoe; where he was beheaded. When the people of Accra missed their Fetishman, they immediately suspected what had happened; and, in the night, went in a strong body to the Dutch fort (or rather the remains of a fort), where they soon made an entrance, seized the person of Mr. Vanderpuy the Berracoe chief, and murdered him in a cruel manner; they likewise destroyed six of the Dutch Company's slaves whom he had taken with him from Berracoe.

The government of Accra is of a mixed nature. An aristocratic form is very often blended with a large portion of democracy. When the different caboceers are permitted to exercise a full authority, their proceedings resemble those of the kings of Africa in general; but this arbitrary power is confined chiefly to their slaves; a free

man has a right of trial before the pynins. Impeachments and trials are not nearly so common here, as in the Fantee country. Disputes are settled with more readiness and moderation. Avarice is not so predominant as among the Fantees; a moderate fine generally suffices: whereas slavery is the ruling punishment for almost all crimes in the Fantee country.

Superstition is cherished here with much care. The Fetishmen are usually habited in white, a colour held here, as well as all over the country, in great veneration. It is considered as emblematic of innocence and perfection, and on all occasions where Fetish obtrudes, or when it is consulted, a white vestment is displayed by the Fetishmen, or priests. The customs of this country bear such a similarity with those already related, that a description of them might be deemed superfluous\*.

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\* Two of the most remarkable of these customs we must not, however, omit to mention: they are such as may occasion much speculation, from what source the inhabitants of the small district of Accra derived them, when the surrounding people, as far as we are acquainted, do not practise the same. One is *circumcision*, which is performed on boys about ten or twelve years old: the other, *inoculation for the small-pox*, which they effect by inserting the variolous matter into a small puncture upon the wrist.

The language of the Accras seems to be peculiar to themselves. It bears no connexion whatsoever with the Ashantee or Fantee language: it resembles very much the Afætu language, and is supposed to be understood as far as the Rio Volta; which favours an opinion of their originating from those parts. It is very probable they came from Popo; for Mr. Dalzel, in his history of Dahomy, mentions that the greater part of the Accras fled to Popo in the year 1680, when the king of Aquamboe threatened them: and we can hardly suppose they would have sought an asylum among the Popos, if there had been no family-connexion.

The English fort at Accra is called Fort James; and would be respectable, if it had its complement of men: it mounts some heavy cannon towards the sea, and towards the Danish and Dutch forts. Like all our forts, the garrison of this place is too feeble; it should have a complement of at least fifty men, which would render it a respectable situation. This fort possesses an advantage which all the other British forts want: the town is not close to it; and being kept more clean than towns in general in this country, the fort enjoys the benefit of pure and refreshing air, and also commands the landing-place in an effectual manner. The landing here is often attended with danger; the place is rocky, and the passage intricate, particularly at high water.

The English and Dutch towns almost join each other; and in every other respect the inhabitants are united.

The Dutch fort, called *Crevecœur*, was nearly demolished in the American war, by the same force that failed against *Elmina*. An attempt was made to re-build it not many years ago; a curtain and two bastions were raised, facing *Fort James*, and mounted with cannon: but this work has very much gone to decay, and the fort altogether may be considered in a dilapidated state. Both places are within the range of point-blank shot.

The English and Dutch towns have been threatened by the *Fantees* since 1809; and a strong body went against them in March, 1810, which met with a severe repulse; since which period, the *Fantees* are contented to keep up a blockade: and the king of *Ashantee* has promised the people of *Accra* every assistance, and levied a large army for that purpose; but the treacherous conduct of *Quow*, the king of *Aquapim*, and the rebellious behaviour of *Attah*, the joint king of *Akim*, have averted the designs of the *Ashantee* general, and reduced the people of *Accra* to great distress. It is now reported (September, 1811,) that the *Ashantee* army is on its march to *Accra*; which doubtless will be the cause of great changes in this part of the country.

At the distance of two and a half or three miles from Fort James, is situated Christiansborg castle \*, the head-quarters of his Danish Majesty's

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\* Christiansborg was built by the Portuguese; in what year, cannot be accurately laid down. It was but a small fortification, and resembled a block-house more than a fort. The Swedes expelled the Portuguese; and in the year 1657, his Danish majesty Frederick III. sent an expedition to the coast of Africa under the direction and command of Sir Henry Carlof; who conquered the Swedish forts Carolusborg (now Cape Coast), Taccarary, Annamaboe, and Ursu Lodge (now Christiansborg). At this period, the Danes had erected a fort near Cape Coast, and named it *Friederichsberg*; (which was afterwards purchased by the Royal African Company, and destroyed). The governor of this fort enlarged Ursu Lodge, and gave it the name of *Christiansborg*. The Danes remained uninterrupted masters of this place until the year 1679; when it was treacherously sold to the Portuguese by a man named Peter Bolt. In 1683, it was restored by order of the king of Portugal; and in ten years following, the Aquamboes, who then lived a short distance from Accra, took possession of it, at the instigation of the Ursu Caboceer, in the following manner. They brought down a number of slaves, and a large quantity of gold and ivory, in exchange for which they would take nothing but guns and powder. This was agreed to by the governor; who also consented, that the guns and powder should be proved before they were taken out of the fort. Having now charged a number of their muskets, they loaded them with bullets which they had concealed, and in a moment seized the unguarded garrison, as also every White person in the fort; there was but little resistance made; no lives were lost; and the fort was plundered, but not injured. The

forts and settlements on the Coast. It is built something after the manner of Elmina, but not so large. There are likewise three other forts belonging to the Crown of Denmark; two of them on the left bank of the Rio Volta, and one about forty miles East of Christiansborg. Through the political changes in Europe, the government of Denmark is prevented from sending supplies for the support of its establishments here. Not only the Danes, but the Dutch also, are supported by a trading intercourse formed on the most friendly terms with the English; the good or bad policy of which we will not undertake to investigate. The Danes were the first to abolish the Slave-trade, and consequently were before all Europeans in the introduction of planting and agriculture. Not only the governor-in-chief, but other gentlemen in the service and out of it,

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Ursu Caboccer was proclaimed governor, and compelled both English and Dutch Whites, who had occasion to pass the fort, to pay their obeisance to him; after which, he generally treated them civilly, and frequently honoured them with a salute from the great guns. He often indulged himself with a salute, sometimes at midnight. The next year it was delivered up, through the intercession of the Dutch nation, and on a large sum being paid by the Danish government.

Christiansborg has, since that period, been in the possession of the Danes, and almost every governor has made some addition to it; until it has at length become a large and irregular pile of buildings, as it now appears.

have their respective plantations. The governor of Christiansborg (Mr. Schionning) has an extensive plantation about fifteen miles inland, where coffee, cotton, and other productions have till lately promised an abundant increase, and clearly exemplified the capabilities of the country, if once exerted by enterprise joined with persevering industry. The flattering prospects this gentleman's industry exhibited, were suddenly blasted by the disturbances in this country. By some means or other he became odious to the king of Ashantee's general; and when his army commenced their march, Mr. Schionning considered it no longer safe to remain at his plantation. When the Ashantees got to the place, they destroyed the house and out-buildings allotted for himself and people, and committed every sort of depredation. The hatred of the king's general against Mr. Schionning did not end here: he accused him with favouring the flight of Quow and Attah, and positively required the Blacks of English, Dutch, and Danish Accra, to deliver him into his hands, to undergo the punishment he conceived due to his behaviour. Mr. Schionning, in consequence of this, was constrained to keep within the walls of his castle.

There is a neat chapel erected here, and when the service was in a prosperous state, a school was established for the education of children of

both sexes. The chaplain was at the head of the school; and it was an agreeable sight to behold youth of both sexes, decently clothed, proceeding on Sundays to hear Divine service. Indeed, both Danes and Dutch have shewn a greater desire to instruct and improve the minds of the natives than the English; although, we believe, some years ago, the gentlemen at Cape Coast associated for the purpose of forming a school for the education of children of every description; and the institution commenced and proceeded with favourable hopes of success: but it was at length suffered to fall into neglect, and finally to be disregarded.

About forty miles from Christiansborg castle is situated the Danish fort of *Ningo*; but before we arrive at it, there is a small British fort, an appendage to Accra, situated at a place called *Pram Pram*, and at the distance of eight miles from *Ningo*. The head Fetish of this part of the coast is placed at *Pram Pram*; and it is surprizing with what ready compliance, and with what deference, obedience is paid to it: one instance of the dread and respect paid to this demon of superstition, may not be unacceptable, and we trust will suffice.

An English gentleman, who was governor of Fort James at Accra, had a son by a slave of his. On his departure from the Coast, he bestowed

upon her, with her freedom, sufficient to render her respectable and independent; and she afterwards became the wife of the caboceer, or chief of Aquapim; a country which (as we have already stated) lies at the rear of Accra. The child, when arrived at a proper age, was sent to England, and after having been educated, returned to this country, and resided in a respectable manner at Cape Coast. When the king of Ashantee revisited the coast, he had in his train this caboceer of Aquapim, who brought his wife with him, with a view, probably, of giving her an opportunity of seeing her son. She made a journey to Cape Coast for that purpose, and was received by her son with kindness: but, as it afterwards fell out, she did not experience that attention and kindness from his wench, or wife, that was expected; and after a visit of a few days she departed, but carefully concealed her resentment till a fit opportunity offered for displaying it in its effects. Not many months after this, the son died, leaving some property to his wench, but none to his mother; which when the latter heard of, she conceived the design of being revenged on her daughter-in-law for her former inhospitable treatment. She laid her case (accompanied with a gift) before the Fetishman at Pram Pram; who gave her claim the sanction of his support. After which, she dispatched a message to Cape Coast, demanding half of the property left to her daugh-

ter-in-law, under the penalty of delivering her over to the power of the Fetish. This demand and threat acted so forcibly, that the poor widow instantly caught that infection, which a dread of incurring the displeasure of the Fetish will create, and became inconsolable: in vain did she assure the mother-in-law, that no property was left her by her husband but a trifling sum, and, in support of this, produced the assertion of the deceased's executors. She at length came to the resolution of going to Pram Pram, to endeavour, by her appearance before the Fetish, to mitigate the prejudice formed against her. She commenced her journey, and arrived at Pram Pram, whither her accuser also repaired, who, the better to support her cause, was attended with an armed force of upwards of fifty men. The Fetish-man soon pronounced the opinion of the Fetish; and sentenced the widow to pay a fine little short of two-hundred pounds, which, with presents given the Fetish, and expences attending the journey, amounted to so large a sum, that the woman was reduced to absolute penury.

Pram Pram and Ningo lie in the confines of a champaign and luxuriant country. There is abundance of game here: hares, deer, partridges, guinea-fowls, may be seen in great numbers: there are some large-sized horn-cattle, which are almost in a wild state.

At the back of Ningo is situated a country

called Crobo ; the caboceer or king of which is pretty powerful. There is in this country a remarkable mountain, which can be seen from the sea at a distance of twenty or thirty miles. If it be seen in clear weather it appears as if topped with snow.

The Danish fort *Quita*, is situated at the mouth of the *Rio Volta* ; and another called *Adda* is on the left bank of that river. Both these forts were purchased from Portugal by the crown of Denmark. The *Volta* is a river of some magnitude, but inaccessible at its entrance to vessels of burthen, by reason of rocks and sand-banks. We learn that this river is about a mile in breadth ; and, from the rapidity of its stream, it doubtless has its origin a considerable distance inland. In the wet season, it is dangerous for small craft to venture near it, from the impetuosity of the tide. The hippopotamus is frequently seen in this river and on its banks.

We have now reached the extremity of the Gold-coast ; and in the course of our peregrination, and description of it, we have avoided as far as possible all extraneous matter, having adhered strictly to correctness as far as local knowledge, diligent enquiry, and good information would allow us ; and we trust, from what is stat-

ed in the foregoing sheets, that the capabilities of this part of Africa are not to be depreciated.

If the disturbed state of this country had commenced subsequently to the abolition of the Slave-trade, we might reasonably have supposed that it was in consequence of that measure. All those commotions commenced from the Ashantee invasion; an event that took place some months before the fate of the Slave-trade was known in this country. This invasion of the Ashantees has produced discords, commotions, and war, between the Fantees and their neighbours, and has caused the Ashantees again to invade the Fantee country. This state of warfare has prevented the agreeable changes which were expected to have followed the annihilation of the Slave-trade by the English; add to which a renewal of it in some degree by the Americans, and Spaniards. When the country will be tranquillized, is a period that may be sought for with much uncertainty: though we believe the Fantees, particularly those who live inland, would be glad to come to terms with the Ashantees, or allow them a free communication with Europeans, on their coast; which is all the Ashantees require. But they are a vain and obstinate people, and will not yield without the interposition of another power; and that power is the English.

The reader is already in possession of the Fan-

tee character, which will inform him, that these people are litigious, turbulent, and ungovernable; in constant hostility with the weak and innocent; prone to idleness, deceit, and avarice. Men of such dispositions cannot be reclaimed by mild measures; it is the hand of terror alone that will make them tractable. If the Fantees were not kept in some awe by the Ashantees, they would be as troublesome perhaps to the British interest, as they have been to the Dutch: for although we well know, they would not come to open hostility, or, rather, they would not attempt an open rupture, by attacking any of our forts; yet they could cause great annoyance, by stopping communication, and supporting a strict blockade. Had they succeeded against Elmina and Accra, success and ambition might carry them to extraordinary lengths. We think it would be an effectual step towards checking the spirit for warfare in this country, if the exportation of gun-powder to it were prohibited. But there is one great objection to this: the service would be exposed to danger: the natives would coalesce perhaps, and reduce it to great difficulties: and until it is on a more respectable footing, we think the importation of gun-powder into this country could not be prudently prohibited\*.

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\* Other nations would gladly supply them.

The commissioners who have been lately appointed by government, to examine the state of this country, and the British settlements in it, will doubtless satisfy the public mind as to the condition of the country, and the advantages which are likely to ensue, in consequence of more attention being paid to it. The public also will be enabled to judge clearly, when a correct state of the country is laid before them, and to form solid opinions, as to the importance of it: and among the numerous opinions which may be expressed, none in course is more deserving of attention, than that of the gentlemen who were particularly appointed, and expressly sent out, to make observations, and enquiries: especially as two of these gentlemen were not strangers to Tropical Africa. We trust however, that, in introducing our observations and opinions on the subject, they will not be considered as the effects of presumption, but as arising from a desire of improving the country, and making it of more advantage to the nation, and which we hope the foregoing lines have sufficiently indicated.

We will take the liberty of laying down our opinions under the heads of Trade, Cultivation, and Civilization.

**TRADE.**—Gold and ivory being the staple articles of the country, they are produced principally from the inland parts. The latter is entirely, and the greater part of the former, brought from

the interior; and every other article worthy of our notice, or of use to us, is produced in greater abundance inland, than on the Coast. To increase our trade, therefore, the necessity of a free intercourse with inland countries will appear obvious. The parliamentary grant annually allowed for the support of the British settlements on this Coast, is inadequate to an extension of our influence in this country; and until an addition is made to that sum, any effort to become connected with inland states, we should suppose, would prove abortive. If our attention be directed to the creation of new exportable produce, and which we will suppose can be effected by confining our speculations to the Sea-coast; the usual grant will, even in that case, be found insufficient to support necessary authority, to protect property, and to preserve the fruits of labour and industry from plunder. By increasing the sum annually granted, to forty or fifty thousand pounds, trade could be vastly improved. If it were desired to extend our trade inland, alliances should be formed with men of power, and residents or agents should be placed at the principal towns; for the purpose, in addition to other objects, of encouraging a confidence in our friendship, of getting at the resources of the country, and of extending our manufactures among the natives, particularly those articles adapted for wearing-

apparel: many such articles would be brought into demand, coarse linens, for instance, woollens, checks, hard-ware, &c. which at present are in no esteem. Every nation inland would eagerly seek for our articles of trade, and, in the course of time, caravans, or travelling companies, would be established by the natives bordering upon this coast; which would be the means of introducing our manufactures into the most remote parts of this extensive, and, we may add, unknown continent. Every person who possesses a knowledge of this country, will clearly perceive the importance of becoming acquainted with inland states, and of introducing our several manufactures into the heart of the country. We should be no longer contented with the enjoyment of a coast-trade, for the natives are in want of our coarse articles of manufacture, and they would daily get acquainted with almost every article we could furnish them with.

The foregoing arrangement is, however, liable to impediments and objections: but it is well known, how readily impediments may be removed, if judgment and perseverance be combined.

A great objection which presents itself, is, that the undertaking would be attended with more expence than the present state of the nation can well afford.—In answer to this, I will observe,

that objects of less importance should be either relinquished, or the expence attending them reduced: for many of our artisans, and manufacturers, would be called into action, who are now languishing for employment, and exposed to the miseries of indigence.

Another objection may be started. The Gold-coast is not naturally favourable for promoting the objects stated; inasmuch as it is deprived of navigable rivers, by which an easy access could be formed with inland states:—and it is inhabited by different tribes, who would prevent, or at least endeavour to frustrate, our designs; which would draw the Service into disputes, ultimately subversive of the object in view:—and besides, the different settlements, particularly some of them, are so far apart, that they are ill calculated to assist each other in case of a sudden emergency.—The Gold-coast certainly presents an unfavourable appearance as it regards an open communication by means of rivers; and, in some places, the landing is very often dangerous. But very few indeed of the great rivers of Africa are easy of access, so that the Gold-coast is not the only part of this continent which is deprived of that advantage: and we shall find the landing along the Gold-coast, particularly from Cape Three-Points to Accra, is less dangerous than any other part of the whole line of coast, from Cape Verd to, per-

haps, the Cape of Good Hope. If this part of Africa have not the advantage of open rivers it is capable of forming an extensive inland navigation: there are many rivers which might be readily united; and it would probably be found, that these rivers, (which undoubtedly rise from one or more larger rivers, or have their source among high mountains,) would form such connexions as would lead to important discoveries. The rivers on the windward coast, or to the westward of Cape Palmas, run invariably, we believe, from the eastward; whereas those on the Gold-coast run from the northward, forming nearly right angles with each other. Those courses admit of favourable suppositions towards the facility of inland navigation.

The Fantees, we believe, are the only people that would manifest a disposition adverse to inland intercourse: and if they would not submit to reasonable and mild propositions, we are convinced that they would not only soon see the necessity of coming into our plans, but would expedite them by every means in their power. For let us suppose, that with the pecuniary means already stated the military strength of the Service would be considerably augmented, which, for the purpose of securing success, should be one thousand men, made up of Europeans and natives in the proportion of one to two. Apollonia is the only fort

on the Gold-coast, we think, that is too widely detached; it requires at least two days to travel from Dixcove to Apollonia; the distance being about sixty miles, which, in a climate like this, is too fatiguing for a journey of two successive days. The possession of Fort Anthony at Axim, would remedy this inconvenience, and in other respects would be a place of some consequence. The Dutch, perhaps, would exchange it for Whidah; a settlement of no importance to us, when we consider that it is only remarkable for Slave-trade, and that it is under as much controul, and more under the dominion of the king of Dahomy, than the British nation.

**CULTIVATION.**—We will consider this subject in two points of view; plantations attempted by Europeans, and those which may be undertaken by the natives. The great obstacle against an undertaking of this kind by Europeans, is the present insecurity for property: let this impediment be removed, and cultivation may be carried on to any extent, and, no doubt, with success and advantage. The writer had no opportunity of seeing the plantation conducted by the Danish governor (Mr. Schionning); but he has conversed with gentlemen who had been there, and who were capable of making observations with judgment. They agreed in all their reports as to the

fertility of the soil, and the vigorous condition of its productions.

Cotton is the most profitable and most certain article that will grow on the sea-coast. Coffee, sugar-cane, rice, corn, indigo, fruits of various kinds, and European productions, will be produced with greater success inland, that is to say, at the distance of from fifteen to twenty miles: the soil is generally better at this distance, and there is more moisture throughout the year. Cabbages, peas, turnips, carrots, cucumbers, melons, different salads, and other esculents for the table, can be produced in any quantity inland; which would be highly beneficial to the garrisons on the coast, and to His Majesty's ships resorting hither. Labourers can be procured with facility, and in considerable numbers. The usual pay to labourers is from two to three ackies a month, that is, ten or fifteen shillings currency. But the most certain method of securing labourers, rendering them more useful, and more attached to the interest of the planter, would be to take a number of pawns. They are procured by advancing a sum upon security, usually from one to two ounces, and allowing them one ackey a month for subsistence, or otherwise satisfying their wants in that respect. They in general labour willingly, if treated kindly, and punctually paid. In the course of time, they become attached to their

employer, and would assist in guarding him against encroachments of any kind.

The natives will not attend to the cultivation of new and exportable articles of produce, unless an example be set before them. The natives inland diligently attend to the sort of cultivation that they have been early accustomed to, and which is necessary for their support: namely, of maize, yams, cassada, sweet potatoes, various kinds of pulse, plantains, bananas, &c. &c. Maize, or Indian corn, is the staple commodity of the country, and in some places much attention is paid to the cultivation of it. Millet is cultivated in a small way; and many articles are produced without much attention, such as pepper, pine-apples, sugar-cane, &c.

**CIVILIZATION.**—If cultivation were introduced on a large scale, we may suppose that civilization would introduce itself with it, at least we think it would facilitate the introduction of that agreeable and salutary object. When planting is generally followed, and in course industry spread throughout the country, civilization will gradually find its way among every class: we mean that branch of it which would unite the inhabitants more firmly with each other; that would lessen irregularities and discords, would tranquillize their passions, and, in short, would diffuse morality among every order. We are

well acquainted with the effects of industry, and idleness, on minds unpolished, or uneducated; and their influence on the natives here is remarkably evident. A person would suppose, and indeed very reasonably, that the natives who have been many years accustomed to the manners of Europeans, should far excel the men inland in good qualities: but this is not the case; vice is more prevalent on the Coast, than at some distance from it; and the cause of this difference is too obvious to require an exposition.

The first step towards civilization should be to annihilate the Slave-trade *in toto*: whilst there is any opportunity of selling slaves, or of acquiring wealth by means of plunder, civilization and industry will not be formed on a solid basis in this country. By industry we mean, such industry as would entice the natives to the culture of new articles calculated for exportation. The next step should be, to establish schools, which, in addition to reading, writing, and accounts, should be capable of affording instruction in various mechanical branches. It is evident, that without schools, civilization will not proceed with success; and it is also manifest, that a strict government is highly necessary to be established in the country. We do not mean a government bordering on despotism, or entirely a military power, but such a government as would gradually abolish evil prac-

tices and absurd customs; a government that would have the power of introducing wholesome laws and regulations, and the means of enforcing obedience to them: and until such a system is carried into execution, in addition to other propositions which we have taken the liberty of stating, we anticipate no change in this country, of much benefit to it, or of considerably increased importance to **Great Britain**.

ADDITIONAL PAPERS  
RELATIVE TO THE  
G O L D - C O A S T.

*(Transmitted to the Publishers after the preceding Sheets  
had been committed to the Press.)*

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**T**HAT part of the coast of Guinea, which is known by the name of *The Gold-coast*, is generally considered as commencing at Assinee, and terminating at the Rio Volta. It lies between 4 deg. 50 min. and 5 deg. 40 min. of North lat. and lies East and West of the meridian of Greenwich, at the distance of about 1 deg. 45 min. East, and about 3 deg. 15 min. of West longitude. The whole extent of it may be computed at about three hundred and fifty miles.

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I. FARTHER PARTICULARS  
RESPECTING ACCRA.

ACCRA was antiently a great and populous nation. The chief town or metropolis was situated about sixteen miles from the sea, and was of

some extent. The government of the country was monarchical, and perhaps despotic: the succession is said to have been hereditary. From frequent wars with their neighbours, particularly with the Aquamboes, an inland people, the Accras were so reduced and divided, that they were ultimately subdued by that nation: great slaughter and desolation were committed; and the vanquished fled with the utmost precipitation for succour and for refuge, to different places. The royal family with their attendants escaped to Papo; some fled to the Crepee and Fantee countries; others secreted themselves in woods and remote places along the coast: and when the fury of pursuit and the heat of revenge were abated in their enemies, they settled under the Portuguese (now a Dutch) fort; where they remained unmolested.

The present extent of Accra is from the river Saccomo, about eight miles westward from Fort James, to Temma, a village situated on the seashore: the whole extent of it is about twenty-six miles in length, and from twelve to twenty in breadth. The English and Dutch towns of Accra, although separately built, are connected in every other respect, and may be considered one large town, united by family-affinity, by laws, customs, and government; and which can muster about three thousand armed men.

Prior to the present war, and to the abolition of

the Slave-trade, a vast trade was carried on at Accra by many nations. Here might be seen a conflux of Ashantees, Akims, Aquapims, Fantees, Aquamboes, Crepees, and even a remote inland people who went under the appellation of *Duncoes*; a name given by the Fantees to men, whose country is not known, or who come a long way from the interior: this term *Duncoe*, in its literal meaning, signifies an ignorant fellow, or, as the Fantees express it, a bush-man.

Eastward from Accra town, lies the Danish castle *Christiansborg*. It is a strong but irregular fortification, situated about three miles from Fort James; contiguous to which is a town called *Ussu*. *Christiansborg* was originally built by the Portuguese, but the Danes enlarged and strengthened it, and built a redoubt westward from the castle, to protect the town, and likewise as a check upon it, on the event of a disposition to revolt. *Christiansborg* was once possessed by the Swedes, by the English, and even by the natives!! It forms the head-quarters of the Danish settlements in this country. They are all immediately under the direction of the crown, and before the late changes took place in Europe, they were in a very respectable condition. Among the officers who composed the heads of the Service from time to time, were found, gentlemen possessed with a spirit for discovery and improvement, not so clearly observable among

the English or Dutch. This distinction arose, probably, from a confidence in being rewarded for their industry, or perhaps from some allure-ment exhibited by their government for such enter-prises\*. The Dutch are remarkable for hor-ticulture, with which the Danes have conjoined a desire for culture in general.

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\* In 1798, a gentleman, P. Thonning, was sent out by the Danish government to inspect the capabilities of the country, and make botanical researches: he was followed by another gentleman, H. Schmidt, for the like purpose. These two gentlemen were fully competent to the task assigned them, and doubtless made some useful and valuable disco-veries, both in botany and other subjects connected with na-tural history. The latter indeed did not live to complete his purpose; but the former, on leaving the country, had disco-vered forty-two new genera, and two hundred and four spe-cies of plants. He likewise made a survey of the country from Accra to the Volta.

We have already noticed, that Mr. Schlonning has a con-siderable plantation inland. Here follows a description of it in that gentleman's own words:—"In October, 1808, I put  
 " some coffee-berries in the ground; and in the following  
 " June, I transplanted about sixteen thousand young trees:  
 " I have every year added to this stock; and in November  
 " last (1810), I had growing thirty-six thousand five hundred  
 " healthy coffee-trees of different ages. Last year I had a  
 " nice crop; and I am sure, that I should have had from  
 " sixteen thousand to twenty thousand pounds weight of  
 " coffee this year, had not the Ashantee war put a stop to  
 " my exertions. I calculate upon a pound and a half an-  
 " nually when the trees are four years old. To keep my

Three miles from Ussu is a village called *Labadee*; which, with Ussu, can turn out about one thousand armed men.

Six miles from Labadee lies *Tassy*, where the Danes have a redoubt, built in 1787, which mounts sixteen guns.

Two miles further on is a small village called *Ningo*. Labadee and Ningo were formerly very populous, and appear to have been independent states. Both towns were situated rather inland, and contained upwards of forty thousand men. There appears to have been a never-ceasing enmity between them, which finally effected their ruin: the Accras interfered, and terminated their quarrels by reducing them to great distress, banishing them from the country, and destroying their towns.

From Ningo lies *Temma*, where the Accra country terminates; it is a small town, and where the Dutch had formerly a fort.

From Temma lies *Pony*, another small town. The Dutch had likewise a small fortification here.

“plantation in good order, one person is necessary to one thousand trees. On high land the coffee-tree thrives much better than on level or marshy ground. High-land coffee is far superior in flavour, but not so advantageous as the low-land coffee, which being much larger, is in course much heavier.”

Close to Pony was antiently a very large town, called *Sigga*. War destroyed it; and there is no vestige of it remaining.

Eastward from Pony, lies *Pram Pram*; where the English had a small fort, called Vernon's Fort. It went to decay some years ago, and a redoubt was erected in the same situation in 1806: but having been built with bad materials, and run up with much haste and less judgment, it is now falling fast to decay.

About six miles from *Pram Pram* is the town of *Ningo*; where the Danes have a compact fort, built in 1734, called *Fredericksborg*. It lies about thirty-five miles East from *Christiansborg Castle* \*.

\* About twelve or sixteen miles North from *Ningo* are two remarkable hills, called *Crabbo* and *Sheye*.

*Crabbo* hill, as it is commonly called, stands unconnected, and is almost perpendicular: it is a solid rock, covered with mould and some large timber; it is very fertile, and abounds with plenty of sweet water, even at its summit. The inhabitants, who (as Mr. Schionning remarks) are deceitful, cruel, and revengeful, subsist mostly by tilling the ground and cultivating the palm-tree. They are governed by a chief, and can muster about two thousand five hundred fighting men: their hill is their fortress, to which they retire on the approach of an enemy, and consider themselves invincible. The Ashantees were twice defeated by them, in August last (1811).

The hill of *Sheye* is not so high, nor so fertile as *Crabbo*: it is situated about twelve miles North of *Pony*, and has

From Ningo until we get to *Adda*, a distance of thirty-six miles, there is no town, not even shelter for a traveller. *Adda* is situated on the left bank of the Rio Volta, and at about six miles from its mouth. The town is not an island, as is generally supposed, and as it is erroneously laid down in some charts. Here is a Danish fort, built in 1783, called *Kongensteen*: it is a regular square with four bastions, and mounting twenty-four guns. The town of *Adda* contains about one thousand men.

The *Adampe* country, which commences at *Pony*, ends here: it differs in some degree from *Accra*, both in language and religious customs. This country is rather barren than fertile: corn is only produced once a year, and affords but a scanty supply to the inhabitants; who likewise

plenty of spring-water. The inhabitants are supported by agriculture, and the manufacture of earthen-ware, which consists chiefly of pots of different sizes and forms; and to which purpose the nature of the clay is peculiarly adapted.

It is necessary to notice another remarkable hill, which lies between *Crabbo* and *Aquambœe*, and at the distance of about twenty-six miles N. N. E. from *Ningo*. It is called *Naio*, and is the highest land in this part of Africa. In clear weather it may be seen a considerable distance from the sea: it is not inhabited, nor is it covered with snow. It is erroneously called *Crabbo-hill*; and in the *African Pilot*, and in charts, it is called *Great Ningo*. The *Volta* flows at its base, and renders it abundantly fertile.

cultivate ground-beans, cassada, and eschallots, and attend to the breeding of sheep and poultry. Neither is much useful timber produced here; some fit for furniture may be procured, but even of that the supply is scanty. This country, like Accra, is open, and abounds with extensive plains, beautifully interspersed with trees and bushes. There is no considerable high land to be observed, excepting what we have taken notice of; but many gentle acclivities, crowned with trees and shrubs, not only give the country a rich picturesque appearance, but afford concealment to a variety of game, such as deer, antelopes, hares, pheasants, guinea-fowls, partridges, pigeons, doves, &c. The banks of the river abound with a variety of aquatic birds. There is great scarcity of good water throughout this country; which is no small inconvenience to the inhabitants. Adampe, as well as Accra, is capable of producing cotton to high perfection, but no other colonial produce, to any great extent: the soil is not rich, nor moist enough for sugar-cane, or coffee: a species of the indigo plant grows spontaneously throughout the country.

As to the character of the natives, we will set it down in the words of Mr. Schionning, a gentleman high in the Danish service; and to whose intelligent observations respecting this and countries in the neighbourhood of the Volta, the writer is much indebted. "Both nations" (Accra and

Adampe), says that gentleman, "are remarkably indolent, addicted to drunkenness, luxury, false pride, avarice, deceit, &c. I am almost sure," continues he, "they are (excepting indolence) not so by nature, but have acquired these, in a great measure from the Whites, whose manners they endeavour to adopt without the power of discriminating between right and wrong."

**RIO VOLTA.**—The entrance of this river is about six miles below Adda, and about seventy miles from the English fort at Accra. From its rapidity, and from the tremendous breakers at the mouth of it, the Portuguese very appropriately bestowed upon it the name of *Rio Volta*. Although the entrance to this river is full of danger and difficulty, and cannot be safely attempted during the rainy season; yet we hear of an American brig having sailed into it\*. The Volta is broad at the entrance and above Adda, but not deep: it is however navigable for small craft nearly as far as Aquamboe; a distance of about a hundred miles from the sea, where rocks and small cataracts render a further ingress impracticable, even for small canoes. The tide ebbs and flows as far as Malfy; a distance of about forty miles from the sea. Excepting Adda, all the towns and villages

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\* Vide Chart sheet to Dalzel's History of Dahomy.

on the left bank of this river belong to the Crepee country.

On the opposite shore of the Volta, and on the sea-side, lies another Danish fort called Prindsenstein : it was built in 1783, and is both strong and handsome.

The Volta runs nearly north-west and south-east, and separates the countries of Aquapim and Aquamboe. It takes its rise very likely in Ashantee, or, what is more probable, it may be a branch of the *Tando*, a large river reported as running to the eastward, and which the Ashantees are obliged to cross in coming to the coast. The banks of the Volta are lined with an exuberance and a variety of timber. The mangrove is the most remarkable, from the universal esteem the bark of it is held in among the natives for tanning.

The Volta, like the Nile, overflows its banks, and annually inundates a considerable tract of country. This annual inundation not only enriches the soil of this beautiful country, and renders it remarkably fertile, but is the source of wealth to the inhabitants of Adda, and adjacent villages. When the waters recede, or are evaporated, they leave behind a thick bed of saline matter, which is converted into salt by the heat of the sun, and sold to the people inland, often at a great price.

**AQUAPIM.**—We have remarked in a preceding page of this Work, that to see this country to advantage, we must proceed a certain distance inland; where we behold a vast difference in the soil, in the climate, and in the manners of the natives: and there is no part of Africa, perhaps, more conformable to the truth of those opinions, than the country which we are now about to describe.

*Aquapim* is a mountainous country, forming a regular continuation of hill and dale; the former crowned with trees of an immense size; the latter enriched with every thing which the hand of nature, apparently, could bestow upon it. It is bounded by Accra and Adampe to the South and East, by Fantee to the West, and to the North by the Rio Volta. It contains seventeen towns and villages; all of them, excepting one, situated on the summits of mountains: which adds very much to the beautiful scenery of the country. It abounds with the purest water, which runs down the hills from numberless springs, that branch off in a variety of directions. To use the words of Mr. Schionning.—“ I have been almost over the whole country,” says he; “ and as to beauty of prospect, pleasing variety, and local advantages, I never saw any thing equal; nor can I compare any part of the world where I have been, to it:

in short, you may compare it to what poets describe when they depict nature in all her elegance \*."

The government of the country is vested in a chief; who exercises his power with an absolute sway: the people pay the most submissive obedience to his commands; and are particularly polite and kind to Europeans. The men are rather of the middle size, clean and neat in their persons; of bright natural parts, but obstinate in their opinions; neither are they wanting in courage. Agriculture is their chief support; and before the present war, they supplied Accra and Adampe with almost all the necessaries of life:—Aquapim was in fact the granary of those countries. Their houses are small, and low, but remarkably clean. Their chief trade consisted in agricultural productions, which always met with a ready sale, and for which they received, in return, salt, dried fish, gunpowder, iron, guns, and cotton-manufactures.

This country is capable of every kind of cultivation. Sugar-cane, if not checked in its growth by ants, will grow to a luxuriant size;

\* According to the language of Milton,

“ Nature here

“ Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will,

“ Her virgin fancies pouring forth more sweet,

“ Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.”

coffee and other Colonial produce would also grow here with success; in short, for colonization, a more desirable country cannot be found. The climate is healthy, and agrees particularly well with Europeans; as has been often proved. The mountains attract the clouds, which often distribute their watery contents over this country; and this contributes not a little to the fertility of the soil. The temperature of the air is likewise much improved from this cause.

The country abounds moreover with medicinal herbs and plants; and the doctors were known to perform wonderful cures merely by simples. "Their medical knowledge," says Mr. Schionning, "is not so extensive as our learned folks in Europe. An able physician, with us, must have systematically studied a vast number of disorders the human body is liable to; and it is therefore no wonder if he be at times left in the dark, and that his memory fails him; for it is extremely difficult to retain the prescribed arrangement, and method of cure of such a number of maladies. The Blacks are not so; a doctor, when applied to, will answer instantly: 'I have or have not medicine for this disorder;' (*i. e.*) I have or have not studied this disorder. If he have not, he will leave you instantly: in the contrary case, you are almost sure of being cured." "When at my plantation, I sent for a famous man in order to consult with him about

a disease some of my people were afflicted with. He answered instantly, 'I don't know how to cure this.' 'What do you understand then?' He replied: 'I understand to cure dysentery, 'eye-sickness, rheumatic swellings, pain in the 'limbs, and sterility.' I employed him frequently since in the three first instances, and always with good success."

"I presume," continues Mr. Schionning, "wheat would grow well in Aquapim; all European garden-productions grow as well here as in Europe: it is impossible to rear sugar, on account of the ants; they are almost every where; and where they are, they destroy the canes before they arrive to any perfection. I have been told, that there are some places in the mountains where these destructive insects are not met with. Here sugar-cane grows to an immense size; but the inconveniences attending the carriage of it would be too considerable, to admit of any advantage."

## II. ASHANTEE CAMPAIGN.

IN February last (1811), a numerous army came from Ashantee under the command of a man called Apocu; and after having marched through Akim, where they met with some loss, in various combats with the brave people of that country, they invaded Aquapim. Apocu met

*Translated  
Verbatim by  
de Marree  
d. vol II  
p 210.*

with very little resistance here ; all flew before him ; the greater part went to Fantee, some to Crabbo hill, and the caboceer with his family to Adda. Apocu soon ascended the mountains, and encamped with his army at Sheye : thence the army went to Adda in pursuit of the Aquapim caboceer Quaw. As soon as the Addas understood that an Ashantee army was approaching, all the inhabitants left the town, and settled on an island in the Volta ; and Quaw commenced his march by private paths back to Aquapim. Apocu began pillaging Adda town, and for a time treated with the Addas about delivering Quaw ; for the Ashantees would not believe that Quaw was returned.

Whilst at Adda, the army committed no great outrages ; governor Flindt and his garrison were treated with civility ; and this behaviour was acknowledged by Mr. Flindt with various presents and acts of kindness, and he placed so much confidence in Apocu, and his leading men, that he daily walked out and conversed with them. This friendly intercourse continued until the 2d of April last ; when, early in the morning, the army broke up, and set the town on fire. Mr. Flindt, at this period, being under no apprehension of danger, or treachery, went out to Apocu, who forced him to march with the army. In the mean while, the scattered Akims and Aquapims united, and being joined

by some Fantees, occupied the Aquapim mountains. When Apocu got intelligence of this, he marched his army back to Sheye, and encamped there a second time, preparing for an attack. He soon ascended the mountains in search of the enemy; but by superior vigilance, and a better knowledge of the country, the combined forces were not only enabled to make good a second retreat, but to annoy the advanced guard of the Ashantees, whenever it approached. This ineffectual sort of warfare was continued for some time; during which, owing to fatigue, and the bad and brackish water at Adda, the Ashantees lost many men. Elated in some degree by this misfortune, the confederates resolved to hazard a battle; and accordingly, some time in June, they marched forward to oppose the Ashantees. A battle was fought, which every report says was severe; night only putting an end to the conflict; and both armies separated in the dark. The confederates however retreated, (the Fantees with their accustomed *bravery* having set the example;) which left the palm of victory to the Ashantees, who in course became conquerors; though, indeed, they had no conquest to boast of, if we except the capture of some harmless women and children, who lived concealed in a large cavern, and who were treacherously betrayed by a Pram Pram woman. All the towns and villages of Aquapim were now burned and

destroyed, and devastation spread itself rapidly throughout the whole country. Apocu, to complete his conquest, invested the hill of Crabbo, where a strong body was encamped: he was however twice defeated here, and obliged to raise the blockade. He returned to Aquapim, where the army again encamped, and remained until the end of September; when they directed their march back to Ashantee, or, as some reports say, to the Akim country; where the army will remain until reinforced. Mr. Flindt remained with the Ashantee army, from the 2d of April to the 2d of September; and in the course of that time, doubtless, experienced many privations: he was however well treated by Apocu, and the principal men, but frequently insulted by the common people; (a circumstance which we might reasonably suppose). He lived with the general, whose table was not indifferently provided: when the army was encamped, he had his own hut or tent; and when on the march, he had men appointed to carry him. The kindness and attention manifested by Apocu did not, however, incline him to liberate Mr. Flindt, without a stipulated sum, amounting to 50 ounces or £200 in merchandize, which, with presents, and various expences, increased that sum to nearly double: so that this gentleman's confidence in the integrity and friendship of the Ashantee general cost him nearly £400, in addi-

[2000 guineas de la vente]

tion to much anxiety and fatigue. It is very probable that Apocu suspected some collusion between the Aquapim caboceer and Mr. Flindt, for the escape of that person: otherwise, we think, that he would not have put Mr. Flindt to such inconvenience and expence.

### III. DISEASES AMONG THE NATIVES.

It will doubtless be expected, that something should be said of the Diseases incidental to the natives of the Gold-coast; with their manner of treating them. But here we must confess, some difficulty presents itself; not so much in laying down the several diseases, as the manner in which they are treated: for where Art is but little understood and not cultivated, there is of course a vast deal of error and confusion; Nature is very often left in an undisturbed performance of her functions: and indeed her beneficence here is peculiarly observable. The women in general perform the office of the Surgeon, as well as of the Physician: their manual operations are confined to scarifications and cupping; both of which they perform with much dexterity. Their manner of selecting different roots and herbs, and their choice of them, discover no mean knowledge in botany: there is scarcely a plant without its peculiar virtue among them. Their me-

[de Meunier  
contains the  
account on  
pp 274-276  
of Vol II  
of his book  
concerning the  
natives  
in 1816]

dical knowledge is confined within the family, and is seldom imparted to more than one, who is usually a female. The men who profess a knowledge in this way, are more bold in their practice than the women, and they may be justly considered in the same light as our mountebank-doctors. They are supposed to perform wonderful cures; and deceive their patients by their expertness and pretended knowledge. These men are ranked among the Fetish-men, and impose very much upon the credulous and superstitious. When a person is suddenly seized with pain in the head, back, breast, or sides, it is often imputed to the influence of some malign power. In such cases, application is made to these men; who, with much ceremony, and to the great satisfaction of the afflicted, extract from the part the supposed cause of their misery, which perhaps is a piece of bone, iron, a small crab, a spider, or some insect.

One of the soldiers belonging to the fort at Winnebah, was taken ill with a fever; from which he recovered, though much reduced by the violence of the disorder. He one morning complained to the surgeon of a pain in his left side; and he administered something to him: this application, however, did not expel the pain as quickly as the man wished. This soldier, it must be observed, is a native: he told the surgeon, that some time ago, he was seized with a similar pain;

and that he applied to a Fetish-man in town, who took from the part a small fly ; which privation instantaneously relieved him. The surgeon perceiving there was much of imaginary ailment in this case, advised the soldier to apply to the same man again, and to send for him when the other was about to perform his cure. The soldier got well in a few days ; but the surgeon's curiosity was not gratified.

It has been already observed, that the women sedulously persevere in the frequent use of a certain operation which excludes the necessity of laxative medicines. In consequence of this, flatulencies are scarcely ever known among them. But this practice has one bad tendency, it relaxes the rectum and sphincter ani, and causes (probably) constipations. It would be the height of indecency, in this country, for man or woman (but especially the latter) to accustom themselves to eructations : indeed they would be considered with abhorrence.

*Specification of the particular Diseases.*

1. **LEPROSY.**—This is one of the most dreadful diseases the natives are afflicted with, and is generally considered incurable ; in some places, it is supposed contagious, and the unfortunate sufferers are excluded from society. I have seen a woman who was very much afflicted with it : her eye-lids, lips, and nose, were destroyed ; the

metacarpal bones of both hands were in a state of corrosion, and the joints in general appeared to be affected: yet in other respects, this poor woman seemed to enjoy good health; she suffered no pain; her appetite was good; and as she was obliged to provide for her own wants, she was very active: the only inconvenience she appeared to endure, was from the flies, which were continually swarming about her. The effects of this disease are sometimes mild, and confined to the hands and feet, and, if early attended to, it may be cured. The natives use in such cases, vesicating and excoriating substances, which, with the effects of the disease, seldom fail to destroy the external skin, and perhaps the internal, and leave an indelible white mark which denotes the *lepra gageorum*. This species of leprosy, we believe, is not contagious, as persons most closely connected with the afflicted object, and dwelling in the same habitation, have been known to escape uninjured.

2. **YAWS.**—This is an infectious, but not a common disease; and is never radically cured: it may for a time be restrained, but it soon makes its appearance again.—The yaws appear in white crusted spots on the skin, the face, the arm-pits, and groins; and sometimes spread and coalesce.

3. **ELEPHANTIASIS.**—This is another incurable disease, and a most extraordinary one; for the legs are commonly the seat of the disease,

and generally only one leg is affected, which then has the appearance of a clumsy deformed leg, swelled to an enormous size, and does not yield to pressure. The other leg is commonly of the natural size and shape, which not only adds to the deformity of the affected one, but, if possible, gives it a more ugly appearance.

4. **SMALL-POX.**—When this disease appears among the natives, it never fails to cause great ravages. In some parts of the Coast, when it is discovered, they inoculate, particularly at Accra; and the puncture is made on the left wrist. Last year (1811), this disease broke out with great violence at Accra. The European residents inoculated in the usual way, and with great success, almost the whole of the natives who had not had the disease. I believe the natives in general apply no remedy whatsoever to the small-pox: they remove those who are afflicted with it, to a remote place, where they are left to the care of Providence.

5. **GUINEA-WORM.**—This is confined to the natives of the sea-coast: if it be known inland, it has been contracted on the coast, where it is received in consequence (as is generally supposed) of drinking pond or puddle water. There is, however, no disease peculiar to this country, that is more extraordinary, and admits of more speculative enquiry than the Guinea-worm. It is

capable of affording the ingenious naturalist and medical researcher, much profitable amusement: it is not confined to the natives; I have known three gentlemen in the Service, who have had Guinea-worms in their legs. Mr. Johannes Meyer, a clergyman, in the Danish service, had, in 1794, two worms extracted from his legs; one measured thirteen, the other nine feet, Danish measure; which is rather more than the English foot. Both of them were preserved in spirits, and sent to Denmark; where they excited much curiosity, and were honoured with a place in the Royal Museum. Mr. Meyer is now discharging his clerical functions in Norway, where, we presume, he is unmolested by Guinea-worms: although indeed, however extraordinary it may appear, an instance is known of a person being afflicted with Guinea-worms after leaving this country. One of the three gentlemen before alluded to, after a residence of about twelve months in England, had a Guinea-worm taken out of one of his legs. It is singular, that the legs should be particularly marked out, as the seat of the Guinea-worm, but they are found occasionally in every part of the body.

In almost every part of the sea-coast, the natives are constrained to use very impure water; and after the rains, every standing pool abounds with such numbers of animalcules, that the water

from these pools no longer possesses the natural qualities of that fluid: it is a composition of water and animal and vegetable substance, in a living and putrescent state. Water thus strongly impregnated with animalcules and vegetable matter, and received into the stomach, must produce some ill-effect. But whether the gastric fluid is favourable to the existence of such animalcules, is a question we will leave for others to discuss. We may however take notice, that it is ascertained, "the gastric juice does not act as a ferment, it is a powerful antiseptic, and even restores flesh already putrefied." Admitting then, that it does not destroy, but favours the generation of those animalcules, inasmuch as to allow them to connect and form a worm, similar to the one in question; Why does it not pass off by the intestines? Can the worm possibly work its way through the cavity of the abdomen, and get to the legs, without danger, pain, and, to say the least of it, without great inconvenience to the sufferer? Without going farther, there are sufficient objections against Guinea-worms being produced from impure water received into the stomach: although indeed that it is the case, appears very plausible from the following observations of Mr. Schionning.

"I. From Accra down to the Rio Volta, all classes of people suffer cruelly from Guinea-worm, and are frequently maimed miserably.

“ A. From Accra to Rio Volta there is not one drop of good water to be had, but standing, or stagnated water, *aliàs* pit-water.

“ II. In Aquapim there are plenty of rivulets, wells, and springs; all water is pure and good every where.

“ B. Guinea-worm is never seen there, and hardly known by name, but by those who have visited the Sea-coast and have imbibed the Guinea-worm, with the bad water.

III. On the opposite shore of Rio Volta, the inhabitants as far as Aflahu have no other kind of water but what they procure in the following manner: they dig a hole on the sandy beach, and clear and tolerably good water issues from the bottom of it, often not three yards from the ocean.

“ C. All these people are never attacked by Guinea-worm.

“ IV. At Aflahu the inhabitants suffer daily from Guinea-worm.

“ D. The inhabitants of this place use standing water.

“ V. From Aflahu to Popo, Guinea-worm is common from the same cause.

“ VI. At Popo you will again find filtered water, or water procured near the sea, as related above, and no Guinea-worm.

“ VII. In the interior, you will never find the Guinea-worm where there is a flowing stream,

and wells; but where there are standing pools, that at least twice a year must stagnate, the Guinea-worm is sure to rage cruelly."

From the foregoing observations, it is evident that the Guinea-worm is the offspring of bad water; but in what way the worm is propagated, is worthy of enquiry. Persons conversant with Anatomy, will (perhaps) deny the probability of its being nurtured in the stomach or intestines, and afterwards appearing on the surface of the body: neither will they encourage an opinion, that the worm is received into the circulating fluid, and finds its way in that manner to the lower extremities. How then is it formed? I answer, that it is not formed in the stomach, or intestines, but introduces itself externally, lodges in the interstices of the muscles, and there increases, insinuating itself along the course of the muscles, until it becomes of such a length, as no longer to bear confinement, and at length forces its way through the skin. Those who go to the pools for water, receive the worm in this manner, it causes no uneasiness, no inflammation; a circumstance rather strange, and which favours an opinion of its ova, or animalcules, being received by absorption. Others receive the worm by infection, that is, by bringing any part of the body (which commonly happens to be the legs) in contact with the part affected. It was in this way, that the three gentlemen before mentioned became affected with

Guinea-worm, or (to explain it more clearly) by sleeping with their women, when their legs were diseased. Thus Guinea-worm may be communicated from one person to another, without the intervention of water: but then the worm must have found its way through the skin, and formed a sore, otherwise the ova, or animalcules, of the worm, cannot possibly be absorbed.

To the naked eye, this worm appears no bigger than a large woollen thread, rather flattened, and of a whitish appearance. Before it protrudes through the skin, it causes much pain, and an inflammatory tumour is formed on the part through which the worm will appear. When it appears, the natives get a slip of wood, which they apply to the sore; and when the worm comes in contact with it, they twist it carefully, so as to get the worm round it: after which, they let it hang, and the weight of it is supposed to draw the worm out faster than it otherwise would come; and in this state they allow the worm to remain until the whole of it comes out. If it happen to get divided, that part remaining in the flesh will recede, and perhaps will not appear for some months. If the extracting of these worms be not carefully managed, they cause much pain and inflammation, and very often produce bad and dangerous sores.

6. ENLARGED SCROTUM.—As the Guinea-worm is supposed to be produced in consequence

of drinking impure water; so this disorder is supposed to be brought on, by an immoderate use of palm-wine. We have called it *enlarged scrotum*; but the Faculty would perhaps term it *sarcocele*. The enlargement is so great in some persons, that they feel much inconvenience, and cannot walk without difficulty.

7. **DYSENTERY.**—This disease, so dangerous and fatal in warm climates, is healed by the natives, with more success than might be imagined. Their plan is to empty the bowels by drastic purgatives; after which, they introduce astringent and stimulating clysters. They keep themselves warm, and frequently embrocate the loins and belly with a composition of pepper; they also make use of suppositories.

8. **OPHTHALMIA.**—This is not a common disease in the country; it is, however, at some seasons very troublesome; and arises chiefly from accidental causes: it is also brought on by excess. The natives use topical remedies only: they draw blood from the temples and forehead, and drop lime-juice into the eye. This application is productive of much pain; but is sustained with amazing fortitude.

9. **FEVERS.**—These are most prevalent after the periodical rains; and if we except external applications, they are usually left to the care of nature. The natives use frequent ablutions with warm water; after which, the body is rubbed

over with certain herbs. If the head and joints be affected, a composition of pepper, lime-juice, &c. is applied; and when the person is free from fever, the bark of a certain tree\*, to which they impute the virtue of a restorative, is used in the same manner.

10. RHEUMATISM, and INTERNAL INFLAMMATION.—The former is a common complaint, and is successfully healed by warm applications, and warm clothing. During the rainy season, and after it, the latter prevail very much. Pleurisies, and diseased lungs, are likewise general complaints in that season.

POISONS.—In concluding our description of the diseases among the natives, it becomes us to say something of the Poisons of the country.—This is a subject that is treated by many in an absurd and extravagant manner; and by others it is considered too insignificantly, and as unworthy of attention. That the natives are acquainted with poisons, is well known among us in this country; and that they employ them to their purposes of revenge, can be pretty well attested:

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\* The tree from which this bark is taken, grows inland: the bark is rough, and of a brown colour; the taste of it resembles more, what is called Winter's Bark, than the Peruvian.

but in saying this much, let it not be thought, that the natives can cause their poisons to act in that slow, and I may add imperceptible manner, which is too credulously believed by many, and which merits reprobation. They are totally unacquainted with mineral poisons; but they have a sufficient knowledge of those of the vegetable kind; and these are chiefly of the narcotic class. The ordeal of the country is a poison; and, as has been already noticed in our description of Apollonia, page 63, it powerfully acts as such.

A SHORT HISTORY  
OF THE  
AFRICAN COMPANY.

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**T**HE Portuguese being the first who discovered the coast of Africa, they built one fort on the island of Arguin, on the North coast; another, called St. George del Mina, on the Gold-coast; and a third at a place called Loanga St. Pauls, on the coast of Angola, to the southward of the Equinoctial line: by virtue of which possessions, they not only claimed, and for many years enjoyed, the right in and to all the said lands and countries, but likewise seized and confiscated the ships of all other nations, as often as they found any of them trading on any part of the said coast.

About the latter end of the reign of Edward the Sixth, some London merchants fitted out the first English ships that ever traded to Guinea;

and in the reign of Queen Mary, and for the first ten or twelve years of Queen Elizabeth, sundry other private ships were fitted out for the same parts: but the English not having as yet any settlements or plantations in the West Indies, and, consequently, no occasion for Negroes, such ships traded only for gold, elephants'-teeth, and Malaguetta pepper; and all such voyages were undertaken and performed at the hazard of losing the ships and cargoes, if they fell into the hands of the Portuguese, without the least ground to hope for any redress or satisfaction for the same.

Queen Elizabeth, in the 30th year of her reign, being then at war with Spain and Portugal, erected a Company for the better discovering, and carrying on the gum-trade, from the northernmost part of the river Senegal, and from and within that river, all along that coast, unto the southernmost part of the river Gambia, and within the same; and granted unto them the sole trade in, to, and from the said rivers and countries, for a certain term of years: with prohibition to all others her subjects to trade to the same places, on pain of forfeiture of ships and goods: and these were the first English merchants who ever traded to the coast of Africa, by and under the authority and protection of the Crown of Great Britain.

In the reign of James the First and his successor Charles, and during the time of the Usurpa-

tion, sundry persons were encouraged by public authority, to trade to other parts of Africa, and to take such measures for the better carrying on and improving the same, as they should judge most proper. In pursuance whereof, they built one fort at Cormantine, on the Gold-coast, and another in the river Gambia, on the North coast: and these were the only places of consequence, which the English were in possession of at the Restoration.

The States-general of the United Provinces observing, as we may imagine, the measures taken in England for the encouraging of a trade to Africa, did also, about the year 1621, erect and establish a company, which they called the West-India Company; and, for their encouragement, granted unto them all the lands and countries which they could conquer or gain possession of in Africa, from the Tropic of Cancer to the Cape of Good Hope, and in America, from the southernmost part of Newfoundland to the Streights of Magellan, and La Maire, on the East side; and from those streights to the Streights of Anian, on the West side, with the whole trade, and right of trading into and from all such lands and countries; and also with prohibition to all others their subjects to trade to or frequent them, or any of them, under the severest penalties. Whereupon the said Company applied themselves to the making of divers important

conquests in Brazil and Africa; and such success attended their arms, especially in Africa, that, in the year 1637, they took the strong fortress of St. George del Mina, on the Gold-coast; and in a year or two more, all the other Portuguese forts and settlements, on the same coast: all which places were afterwards yielded to them by the treaty of truce and navigation, concluded (*anno* 1641) between the Crown of Portugal and the States.

From this time, and in virtue of these possessions, thus taken from and yielded by the Portuguese, the Dutch West-India Company took upon themselves to claim the solè right in and to all the lands and countries in Africa, from Cape Palmas to Cape Lopez, comprehending all the Gold-coast,—Whidah, and sundry other great and populous countries on each side of them. And, although the English had built a fort at Cormantine, and settled factories at other places on the Gold-coast, before the Dutch had made the said conquests; and had, therefore, as good a right and title as themselves to a free trade at all places on the same coast, not in their actual possession or occupation: yet from this time forward, the Dutch West-India Company always kept one or two cruizers on the coast, whose chief business was to watch all such English ships as came to trade there, and to follow them from place to place; and either to lie between them and the

shore, and intercept their trade with the natives, or to frighten them off the coast and ruin their voyages, or to seize and carry them to St. George del Mina; and this not only where such ships were found trading on the Gold-coast, at places near any of the Dutch Company's forts and settlements, but also at places several hundreds of miles distant from them.

King Charles the Second, soon after his restoration, being made acquainted with the precarious state to which the trade of his subjects in those parts was reduced, and having likewise received many complaints touching the interruptions given to, and depredations committed upon, the ships of this nation, by the Dutch West-India Company, on the coast of Africa; it became necessary to consider not only of a proper method for protecting and securing the trade for the future, but likewise in what manner reparation might be obtained for such damages and depredations.

For the first; it being now evident that the single and separate endeavours of private English merchants were by no means sufficient to contend with the united power and interest of the Dutch West-India Company in those parts of the world, and the English having found by former experience in the East Indies, what little stress was to be laid on any treaty that might be concluded between the two nations

in Europe, for the security of such a distant branch of our trade ; the only chance which his Majesty had left for maintaining and defending the right of his subjects to a free and unmolested trade in Africa, against the pretensions and encroachments of such a rival, was to incorporate and unite such of his own subjects as should be willing to engage in the said trade, into one body ; and to grant unto them such powers, privileges, and encouragements, as the circumstances of the trade at that time required : which was accordingly done by letters-patent under the great-seal of England, bearing date the 10th of January, 1662 ; and the said united body of English merchants was called The Company of Royal Adventurers of England, trading to Africa. As to the second ; his Majesty was pleased to cause a particular account of the damages complained of to be drawn up, and transmitted to his envoy at the Hague, with orders to demand and insist upon full reparation for the same. But neither the one nor the other of these steps had the desired effect : for, in Holland, the States started so many difficulties, and made such delays, that no satisfaction could be obtained for any past injuries.

Nothing is more evident than that the chief view of the Dutch at this time, and for some years before, had been to exclude the English entirely from the trade to Africa, and to engross

the same wholly to themselves. And it is equally apparent, that the value which they then set upon this trade was such, that, rather than consent that the English should enjoy a share thereof peaceably and quietly, they made it their choice to stand all the hazards, and to bear all the inconveniences of a war with England. But, however, it so fell out, that the event did not answer their expectations; for, in spite of all the efforts of the Dutch, the English Company kept their footing in Africa: and by the third article of the treaty of peace concluded at Breda, *anno* 1667, it was mutually agreed, that each party should keep and enjoy all such lands, islands, towns, fortresses, places, and colonies, as during that war, or before, the one had by force of arms, or otherwise, taken from the other. And in virtue of this article, the Dutch West-India Company kept possession of the English fort at Cormantine, and the Royal African Company kept possession of the castle at Cabo Corso, which they had, by the assistance of Admiral Holmes, re-taken from the Dutch before the war began, and to which they had an undoubted right.

But the stipulations of this treaty, in favour of the English Company, were by no means sufficient to enable them to bear up against the many difficulties they had to struggle with. They had found it extremely difficult to per-

suade people to come in at first, and be concerned with them in so precarious a trade; by which means, their stock was much too small for such an undertaking: they had been obliged to be at great charges in Africa, and they had met with many severe losses by captures and otherwise at sea, during the war, and, for want of sufficient stock to begin with, they had contracted a large debt at home. And as under these circumstances, they were so far from being able to carry on and improve their trade, or to make any new acquisitions, that it was with the utmost difficulty they could maintain those places which they had still in their possession:—For extricating themselves, therefore, out of these and the like difficulties, as well as for opening a way for others to undertake the care, management, and improvement of so valuable a trade with more success, they consented and agreed, in consideration of a certain sum of money, which was to be paid unto them by another Company then intended to be established, to surrender their charter to the crown, and to assign and transfer all their estate, property, interests, and effects in Africa, and elsewhere, unto the said new Company. His Majesty likewise approving of this, as the most proper expedient, as well for doing justice to the Company of Royal Adventurers, as for the better preserving and enlarging the trade to Africa, was thereupon pleased to accept of the

said surrender; and by his letters-patent under the great-seal of England, bearing date the 27th day of September, 1672, to establish and incorporate the late Royal African Company of England, and to grant unto them, all the lands, countries, havens, roads, rivers, and other places in Africa, from the port of Sallee, in South Barbary, to the Cape of Good Hope, for the term of one thousand years; with the intire trade and traffic into and from the said countries and places, with prohibition to all others his subjects, to visit or frequent the same without the licence of the said Company: and also with such other powers and privileges, as were then judged proper and necessary, for enabling them to undertake so hazardous and chargeable a work.

Hereupon the new Company provided proper books to take subscriptions in, and kept them open for nearly twelve months, and invited all His Majesty's subjects who pleased to become adventurers with them, and to subscribe for what sums they thought fit, towards raising a sufficient joint-stock for retrieving the said trade out of the precarious condition in which it then was; and for the better securing and enlarging the same for the future. But so backward and fearful were merchants and others, at this time, to be concerned therein, that all the subscriptions they could get from all parts of the king-

dom, amounted only to the sum of £111,100. With this stock, however small it was, this Company applied themselves, with all possible vigour, to pursue the ends of their establishment\*.

At this time, the Dutch West-India Company were in possession of the strong fortress of St. George del Mina; and of the English fort at Cormantine, called Fort Amsterdam: and they had likewise another, named Fort St. Anthony, at Axim; another called Fort St. Sebastian, on the river Chamah; a fifth called Fort Nassau, at Mouree; a sixth called Crevecœur, at Accra; and a seventh, named Fort Conraadsburg, at St. Jago, within gun-shot of St. George del Mina; all on the Gold-coast, and lying very commodiously to co-operate with and assist one another in case of need. The Danes were in possession of one small but impregnable fort (afterwards called Fort Royal), on the top of a hill, within gun-shot of Cape Coast; and of another at Accra, to the eastward of the Dutch fort at the same place. The Elector of Brandenburg had one good fort, at Cape Three-points,

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\* The small stock the Company had, and their great desire to establish themselves as speedily as possible, in opposition to the Dutch interest in this country, sufficiently account for the hasty, and I may add, unskillful manner, in which some of their forts were constructed.

and two smaller ones at some little distance to the eastward of the same : and the new English Company were in possession of one small fort at Cabo Corso, that being the only fort on this coast, of which the Dutch had not dispossessed the former Company during the late war.

The first thing, therefore, which this Company found most necessary to be done, was to endeavour, by all lawful means, to strengthen themselves as much as possible on this coast, as other nations, and especially the Dutch, had done before them : and for this purpose, they enlarged Cape-Coast Castle ; they built one fort at Accra, another at Dixcove, a third at Winnebah, a fourth at Suecondée, and a fifth at Commenda ; and rebuilt a sixth at Annamaboe ; all on the Gold-coast, and three of them about musket-shot from Dutch forts : and they likewise purchased Fredericksberg, or Fort Royal, of the Danes ; without which, Cape-Coast Castle could not be safe. They also built another fort at Whidah, for the security of the slave-trade at that place. And, although in the prosecution of these works, the said Company met with all possible opposition from the Dutch West-India Company on the Gold-coast, which often broke out into open hostilities, and many times ended not without bloodshed on both sides ; and the Company were put to an incredible charge and expence in purchasing the

consent and assistance of the natives, for making such settlements, as well as for transporting, from time to time, the requisite supplies of soldiers, artificers, provisions, and all other necessaries and materials from England for such buildings, (all which were rendered still more difficult, chargeable, and hazardous, by the long war which ensued with France): yet, nevertheless, the said Company never ceased their care and endeavours, until they had completed their undertakings, and thereby put the English interest on an equal footing with the Dutch.

The losses and damages which the Company sustained during the war, were more and greater than can be easily imagined: but the chief grievance was the loss of their fort on the river Gambia, (*anno* 1695,) which was taken, plundered, and destroyed, by a squadron of French men-of-war. And in addition to this misfortune, when the Company came to take possession thereof again after the peace, they found the French settled in the river, and claiming an equal share of the trade.

In 1697, the Parliament, having taken the trade of Africa into their consideration, thought fit, as a further means of enlarging and improving the same, to lay the trade open to all His Majesty's subjects for thirteen years, and from thence to the end of the (then) next session of Parliament: and, in regard the Royal African Com-

pany of England had been at the charge of building and maintaining a considerable number of forts and castles on the said coast, which the Parliament likewise judged necessary to be maintained in future, for the preservation and better carrying on the said trade; they were further pleased to impose a duty of 10 *per cent. ad valorem* on all goods and merchandize exported to Africa during the said term; to be assured and paid to the said Company, for enabling them to maintain their said forts and castles.

This act continued in force from the 24th of June, 1698, to the 24th of June, 1712: in which time, the charges of the Company in maintaining their forts and castles, amounted, at a medium, to about 20,000*l. per annum*; and, in fourteen years, to 280,000*l.* in the whole. The duty which the separate traders paid in the same time, amounted in the whole to 73,785*l.* 10*s.* 6½*d.* and no more; and 10 *per cent.* upon the Company's own exports for the same time, amounted to the sum of 36,387*l.* 13*s.* 1½*d.* Whence it appears, that, even while that act continued in force, the total of the 10 *per cent.* duty fell far short of half the charges and expences, which the Company were at in maintaining their forts.

Since the expiration of this act, in 1712, to this day, all others His Majesty's subjects have traded as freely and openly to all parts of Africa as they did, or might have done, under the autho-

rity of said act. And the said Company did, at their own cost and charge, defray the expences of maintaining the said forts and castles ; which, at a very moderate computation, has been represented by the late Royal African Company to amount to above 250,000*l*. By which means, and by the extravagant rise in the price of slaves at Annamaboe, and other places on the coast, and by the decay of gold-trade which ensued thereupon, the proprietors of the Company have been, for many years past, obliged either to raise sundry great sums of money for maintaining their forts and castles, without receiving any profit from the trade in return for the same, or to run the risk not only of losing all the money which they had from time to time raised and expended for supporting their own property, but of becoming accessaries to the entire loss of the trade to Africa, and consequently by relinquishing and abandoning their forts, to be seized and possessed by such foreign nations as were long watching for an opportunity to get them into their hands.

This being the case with regard to the Company ; and it being the sense of the nation, that the trade to Africa should continue free and open to all His Majesty's subjects ; the only thing that remained to be considered was, whether, or no, forts and castles were necessary to be maintained for the preservation of the said trade to this kingdom ? And if they were necessary to be kept up

for that purpose; who, upon the footing of an open trade, ought, in justice and reason, to bear the charges of them?

That it is absolutely necessary that forts and castles should be maintained in Africa, was urged from the following considerations.

For a series of years it has been the constant policy of all such European nations, as have been fortunate enough to make any new discoveries, and to gain any established power and authority in remote and barbarous countries, to build and maintain forts, and, in virtue of such possessions, to claim a right to whole kingdoms, and to tracts of land of vast extent, and to exclude all other nations from trading in, to, or from them.

By this method, the Portuguese long enjoyed the whole trade to Africa, and to the East Indies.

By similar measures, the Spaniards for many years claimed and engrossed to themselves almost the whole continent of America, and most of the adjacent islands.

By a like method, the Dutch had rendered themselves absolute masters of all those islands in the East, which produce cinnamon, cloves, nutmegs, and mace; and from them supplied the whole world with those commodities, in such quantities, and at such prices, as they thought fit: besides which, this enterprizing people, for some time before and after the year 1660, attempted to gain the entire possession of the most valuable parts of the coast of Africa, and to exclude the

English from any share or interest therein; which, in 1664, produced a war between the two nations.

It is apparent, that the safety and preservation of our trade to Africa, against the pretensions and encroachments of such nations as are strongly settled in those parts, particularly the Dutch, depends absolutely upon our keeping the forts and castles on the coast in a defensible condition; and that it was but just and equitable, that the public should have supported those forts and settlements.

While the Company enjoyed the entire trade to Africa, they purchased, built, and maintained their said forts and castles at their own sole charge; and thereby acquired an undoubted right and property in and to them. The expences of maintaining them, from the year 1672 to 1698, was not less (according to the Company's account) than 15,000*l. per annum*; which, in twenty-six years, amounts to 390,000*l.*; the charges for the next fourteen years, *viz.* from 1698 to 1712, at 20,000*l. per annum*, deducting the amount of the duty which the separate traders paid in the same time, came to about 206,000*l.*; and the charges which the Company were at, on the same account, for the succeeding seventeen years, reckoning but 15,000*l. per annum*, comes to 255,000*l.* Which three sums make together the sum of 851,000: and so much,

at least, the Company represented that they had expended in keeping and maintaining their said forts and castles since the commencement of their charter; and this, exclusive of many other necessary articles of expenditure, which might be brought in, if they wished to swell the account.

Now, although the Company did willingly and cheerfully bear the expence of the first period, because nothing had been done by public authority in all that time to deprive them of any of their privileges: although they continued to keep and support their said forts and castles for the next succeeding fourteen years, in hopes that the duty of 10 *per cent.* upon their own and the separate traders' exports to Africa would have fully defrayed that charge, as the Parliament undoubtedly intended it should: and although the Company, for the preservation of their own property, as well as for the protection of the trade, continued to keep up and maintain their forts and castles for seventeen years after, at their own sole cost and charge, whereby they expended in the service of their country above 250,000*l.*: yet, while the trade to Africa remained free and open to all others His Majesty's subjects, there was no reason why the Company should be obliged to maintain the said forts and castles at their own sole cost and charge.

Accordingly, in the year 1730, the Company

petitioned Parliament; and they obtained 10,000*l.* to enable them to support their forts and settlements: which sum was annually paid to them, excepting two or three years interruption, until the last change effected in the state of this Company, by an act of parliament made in the year 1751; intituled, "An Act for the application of a sum of money, therein mentioned, granted to His Majesty, for making compensation and satisfaction to the Royal African Company of England, for their charter, lands, forts, castles, slaves, military stores, and all other their effects whatsoever; and to vest the lands, forts, castles, slaves, and military stores, and all other their effects, in the Company of Merchants trading to Africa: and for other purposes in the act mentioned."

By this act, the said Company were divested of their charter, and after the 10th of April, 1752, ceased to be a corporation; and their forts, castles, and all other their possessions in Africa, are vested in the new Company of Merchants trading to Africa: and in consequence of the trade to Africa being, by virtue of the said act, and that also of the 23d of George the Second, made free and open to all His Majesty's subjects, the Parliament allow the said Company from 10,000*l.* to 15,000*l.* *per annum*, for the support of the forts and castles for the public service. And in consequence of the abolition of the Slave-

trade, and a rise in the prices of India goods, and other articles, with which the expences of the Company are defrayed in this country, Parliament voted the sum of 23,000*l.* for the support of the British establishments on the Gold-coast, and Whidah; which sum was annually paid\*.

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\* This increased grant was made from the representation of the Committee, to enable them to enlarge the salaries of their officers, who suffered a diminution of their advantages in consequence of the abolition of the principal trade of the country.

When the very limited means appropriated for the maintenance of the forts and settlements on the Gold-coast of Africa are considered, it will rather appear more wonderful how they can be kept up at all, than that they are not kept in a more respectable state of defence: the whole expenditure is not more than that of many a private gentleman's house in England.

FINIS.