

SKETCHES ON THE WESTERN COAST OF AFRICA.



KING PEPPEL, OF BONNY-TOWN.

I forgot to mention the hospitality shown by Mr. W., the Presbyterian missionary, who resides on a hill at the back of Creek Town, and who kindly asked us up to his house, and invited me to luncheon. He has established a school, which amounts to from 70 to 100 of each sex. He is a great friend of King Eyo, in spite of his having so many wives. There is a school at Ephraim Town, and a chapel well attended.

I now portray

KING ARCHIBOLD DUKE,

Chief of Old Calabar town, as he appeared on the quarter-deck of her Majesty's steam-sloop *Rattler*, wearing his crown and state sword. His loins were covered with a rich silk, and round his neck and ankles he wore a quantity of coral beads. His age is about twenty-eight years; and he was created King about eight months ago, at the death of his uncle, Duke Epheram, who had so many slaves immolated with him as a human sacrifice. The custom of the country is, that any great personage dying, all his property is locked up in his house, and left to decay. I went to the house, and looked in at the window, and, to my surprise, saw large mirrors, English chairs, tables, &c.—in fact, the appearance of an English drawing-room. This was the house of the last King, made of iron, and sent out from Liverpool at his desire. It is instant death to those who dare to enter it, by the laws of their country. Archibold Duke is King of the lower town, opposite to which the ships anchor.

Eyo Honesty's palace is called Creek Town, some distance up the river, and is considered much superior and richer. He derives his name, Honesty, from being upright and just in his oil trading with our merchants.

All the captains and merchants of our traders were invited on board on both occasions to meet these Kings; and Captain Cummings, with his usual liberality, gave them a sumptuous *déjeuner* on the quarter-deck. Our large gun astonished them very much, from the King downwards putting their head in the muzzle to try the calibre: it is a 68-pounder.

We sent our boats up the Benue, where trade is less extensive, the slavers lying too close. For miles around the Bight, palm oil is not of much value. The river runs up into the Eboe country: the capital, situated upon a river coming from the N.E., is large, and apparently contains about 15,000 inhabitants. The King of Benue is *fetich*, i.e. he is worshipped by his subjects as a god, and must not on any account be supposed either to eat or drink. However, his Majesty does not disdain the occupation of a merchant. The Warrea country, inclosed by two branches of another stream flowing through this alluvial district, is beautiful and fertile. The King had just died, and a sort of Queen appeared to rule in his stead. The place is very small—about five miles in circuit—and appears as if it had been dropped from the clouds: even in the dry season the water is a foot deep on the ground.

THE SLAVE TRADE.—Her Majesty's schooner *Bermuda*, Lieut. Jolly, arrived at Port Royal, Jamaica, on the 21st of May, with the Brazilian brigantine *Clementino* (of Rio Janeiro), Joas Gonsales Bandeira, master, which he captured after 49 hours' chase from the Isle of Pines. The prize is a remarkably handsome vessel, well coppered, and of the burthen of 187 tons; and had on board, at the time she was taken, 280 slaves, many of whom have since died from want of food, which was completely out of board the slaver at the time the capture took place. [A Jamaica paper says:—"The agent-general of immigration, and the gentlemen of the mixed commission, were summoned to Spanish Town yesterday forenoon, by express, to confer with his Excellency the Governor as to the disposal—we suppose—of the slaver and her cargo. The slaves, it seems, have been landed at Ocho Rios, and having once touched British soil are, of course, free; but we are told that, according to the treaty stipulations, which have been so religiously observed by her Most Catholic Majesty's subjects, if taken under Spanish colours, both ship and slaves should be sent to the Havannah, and if it be really so, we are rejoiced to learn that the miserable slaves being landed are in any case beyond Spanish jurisdiction; for we cannot suppose for one instant that they will be given up after entering a British port, much less after having stood on British soil. The ship may be condemned here, or sent to the Havannah, or given up altogether, for what we care; but we do trust that not one soul of her living cargo will be given up to the rapacious and unprincipled man-stealers of Cuba. The demands of Cuban slavery have been too long supplied with victims in the same way. Captured slaves have been allotted to the Cuban planters in thousands, but the emancipados who have been released from their bondage cannot be counted by hundreds, scarce by scores; and, therefore, we trust that our Government will not be any party to a further increase of victims. The present capture proves the truth of what we have all along advocated, namely, the propriety of blockading the coasts of Cuba and Brazil; and we congratulate Lieutenant Jolly on being the first to demonstrate practically the truth of our arguments. The African blockade withdrawn, and a dozen such active cruisers as the *Bermuda* set to watch the coasts of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and we should soon see an end to the slave trade."

SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.—On Wednesday, the 149th anniversary of this society, which was incorporated by Royal charter, in the year 1701—"For the receiving, managing, and disposing of such funds as might be contributed for the religious instruction of her Majesty's subjects beyond the seas; for the maintenance of clergymen in the plantations, colonies, and factories of Great Britain; and for the propagation of



KING ARCHIBOLD DUKE, CHIEF OF OLD CALABAR.

the Gospel in those parts"—was solemnly celebrated in the cathedral church of St. Paul. The proceedings created great interest, and drew together a large number of visitors, both clerical and lay. Amongst them were—the Archbishop of Canterbury; the Bishop of Winchester, Bangor, Chichester, &c. Full choral service was performed. The Bishop of Oxford preached the sermon, selecting for his text the 20th verse of the 19th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." From a statement of the society's operations which was presented, it appeared that, for more than fourscore years, that is, from its foundation in 1701 to the period of American independence, in 1776, the chief field of the society's labours was in the colonies which now form the United States. At the commencement of the revolutionary war, in 1776, nearly 80 missionaries were maintained by the society in the colonies of New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. Many of the missionaries, when driven from the independent States, settled in Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. The principal spheres of the society's present labours are Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Bermuda, the West Indies, the Cape of Good Hope, India, Ceylon, Australia, Van Diemen's Land, and New Zealand. The sum of £1858 was received during the year, towards the Emigrants' Spiritual Aid Fund; 18 chaplains, or religious teachers, were sent out in emigrant vessels. With regard to the financial condition of the society, for 1849, the total income, exclusive of rents, dividends, special funds, &c., was £53,000. The society's whole foreign expenditure from its general fund, for the year 1849, might be ranged under two heads:—In the British colonies, £35,729; for heathen countries, £21,994. The number of baptized converts under the pastoral care of the society's missionaries in India was about 18,000.

THE NEPAULESE AMBASSADOR.—On Tuesday (last week), a Daguerrotype of his Excellency was cleverly executed by Messrs. Beard. The likeness is admirable; the Ambassador was not in full costume, but wore in his turban a large ornament of diamonds, pearls, and emeralds, with an aigrette.

BONNEY'S SAFETY YACHT.—On Saturday afternoon, some interesting experiments were made with this new vessel upon the Serpentine, in Hyde-park. The yacht was hauled over, and thus half filled with water; but, on being released, she righted immediately: she was then baled quite full, and in that state she sailed, and answered her helm well. She was then pressed down by the mast-head, with her sails set, until she was bottom upwards, when the pressure being removed, she at once righted.



EPHRAIM TOWN, WITH OLD CALABAR.—KING EYO-HONESTY'S CANOE.—HER MAJESTY'S STEAM-SLOOP "RATTLER" SALUTING.

"Sketches on the Western Coast of Africa." Illustrated London News, 22 June 1850, p. 436+. The Illustrated London News Historical Archive, 1842-2003, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/HN3100025067/ILN?u=viva_gmu&sid=ILN&xid=6f3d7550. Accessed 16 July 2020.