

TWO TRIPS ON THE GOLD COAST.

(FIRST TRIP, THE BEULAH GARDENS AND THE AJUMANTI HILLS.)

THIS "little war" in Ashanti, which by-the-by has now outlasted ten long years, is acting upon veteran African travellers, causing us to brush up our journals and notes which have long been laid on the shelf—let us hope without serious detriment. If the campaign do no other good, its lamentable losses in life and money will serve at least one useful end. The presence of invading Britishers will shed a new light—the light of publicity—upon the outer glooms of the West Coast; and it must end, we trust, in dissipating the darkness with which the anti-slavery writers of the early nineteenth century have invested men and matters in the Land of Gold, and in Africa generally.

Those philanthropic spirits, when demonstrating, could not but exaggerate, the evils of an institution which they had pledged themselves to destroy, and the natural corollary of the equality-theorem was an estimate of the negro character utterly at variance with all our experience. I do not mean that they always over-estimated their "black brother"; they simply misunderstood him; they studied him in Jamaica, where he caricatures the white man; they lauded his fancied virtues and they blamed his imaginary faults, whilst they lost no opportunity of indelibly impressing their delusions and foregone conclusions upon the public mind.

These delusions, again, were deepened by the action of various missionary bodies, whose duty it was, and still is, to identify themselves with their proselytes, as shepherds to take part with their sheep. I knew one, of course an Englishman, who, the better to please his committee, and to preach against the "stupid prejudice of colour," married his white daughter to a full-blooded negro. And the propagandists, often honest, were supported by a class which certainly was not. Its object was simply to make capital out of the pet negro, to butter its bread in fact with "black brother." Its process was to preach Christian love by breeding all manner of envy, hatred and malice, between Japhet and Ham. These seditionists mostly adopted the form of journalism, as being likeliest to become popular; and unfortunately, they were not always local journalists. They carefully wrote down to the level of their readers; they attracted attention by the cant of charity, and showed their devotion to "the Bible and nothing but the Bible" by proving that the earth, having "four corners," is square and flat; and that the sun, which once "stood still," must move round its parasite.* The manner of this pestilence was right worthy of its matter, and the style would be scouted in a decent "house-keeper's room." But they spiced and peppered their columns with the most libellous communications against every name in authority; with farragos of falsehoods, signed "An African" and "A Negro," and evidently cooked, as a rule, by themselves; they hoped that a prosecution would give them the notoriety of mild martyrdom, and they utterly ignored the "conduct of gentlemen, that, when a scandalous charge has been brought and denied, it should either

* I am not joking: such a display appears impossible in the nineteenth century, but it is true, and the worst part of it is, that honest ignorance took no part in the matter.

be substantiated or withdrawn with grace." Finally, they imposed themselves upon the deluded black as familiars of the Colonial and other public offices, and printed every line which they could worry out of the Secretary to the Right Honourable Lord Blank. It is not too much to say that they bred a deep and general discontent upon the Coast, and that if their action be not arrested (we might take a hint from the Dutch press-law in India), England may again expect to see—as in the end of the last century (1793 and 1800)—the civilised scenes of Jamaica renewed at Sierra Leone.

What then could we expect, who took the rational and realistic view of the subject, except the petty outpouring of Tartuffe's wrath, calumny and abuse, whilst our attempts at reforming public opinion were not refuted, but simply remained unread? I say we, especially associating myself with Mr. Consul Hutchinson, late of Fernando Po, who, to his honour be it recorded, never pandered to popular and profitable errors, and who had the courage to describe West Africa and the West African, not as they should be, nor as they have been misrepresented to be, nor as his professional interests would have suggested, but as they really are. This official, whose medical studies and whose long residence on the Coast, made him at once an authority, has doubtless been consulted upon the hygienic measures absolutely necessary when a "white" campaign is being fought, and I trust that his arrangements will be scrupulously carried out.

The sickness on the Gold Coast during last November, and the imminent approach of Yellow Jack from the South Coast, have rudely dispersed those pleasant visions of the press which showed a campaign in West Africa a perfect copy of an Anglo-Indian affair. They now know—they formerly did not know—that every white man who steps upon the shores of the "Dark Continent" will suffer, more or less, from climatic remittents, or from the intermittents which it is now the fashion to call "chills"; that many will be cured, but that not a few will die; that fighting in the sun and sleeping in the bush, after a life of ease and plenty on board a transport-steamer, will greatly add to the number of casualties, and that a non-commissioned officer who has been acclimatised—such is the common term for a European shorn of his redundant health and vigour—is better than a commissioned officer who has not. And without undervaluing, or inditing "penny dithyrambs" over, our opponents who, being sons of

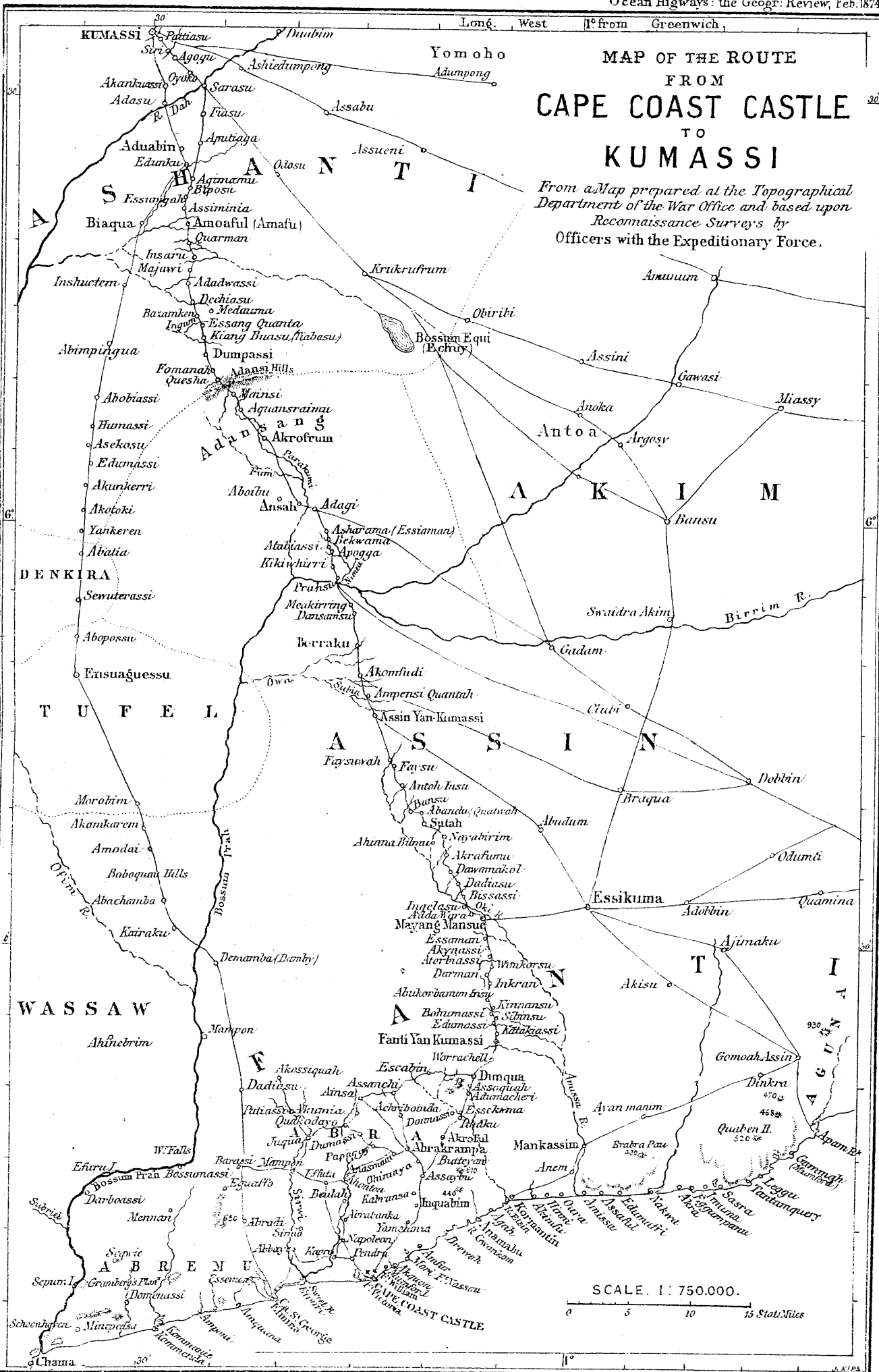
"The land of Bocchus by the Black-land Sea,"

will alternately run like rabbits and fight like fiends, I am pleased to read at last "the only enemy seriously to be considered is the climate."

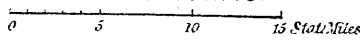
During a residence of some four years on and off the West Coast, I became tolerably acquainted with the list of its simple but effectual diseases. "At forty a fool, or one's own physician," says the old saw: and it was often my fate to physic others as well as myself. Commander, now Captain, W. J. H. Grubbe, commanding H.M.S. 'Tamar,' can answer for the practice of an amateur physician, during a cruise of nearly a month (March—April, 1864), when a raw crew was suddenly exposed to the deadly climate of the "Oil Rivers," a region well described as "uninviting

MAP OF THE ROUTE FROM CAPE COAST CASTLE TO KUMASSI

From a Map prepared at the Topographical Department of the War Office and based upon Reconnaissance Surveys by Officers with the Expeditionary Force.



SCALE 1:750,000.



when first descried, repulsive when approached, dangerous when examined, and horrible and loathsome when its qualities and its inhabitants are known." The main secret of success under these circumstances is to watch every action, to treat the men like babies: otherwise they will stand bare-headed in the sun, sleep in wet clothes, and spit their medicines overboard; whilst many, as Captain Cook complains of his sailors, take a perverse pleasure in opposing all efforts for their own good. After the seasoning fever, the babes have become children, and somewhat more liberty may be allowed.

The climate of Fernando Po is as bad as that of any part of the coast: and my lively friend, the "Wanderer in West Africa,"* has recorded the suicidal feelings bred by a first night on the island. The *Île Ste. Marguerite* must be a *Palais Royal* compared with that "lofty and beautiful island" which has just managed to murder another consul. Fortunately I had one resource left: the whole Bight of Biafra, some 600 miles long, was under my jurisdiction; the Bight of Benin adjoined that of Biafra, and the Gold Coast was just beyond Benin, separated only by Cape St. Paul, 15 miles east of the Volta. In Africa, change of climate is the chief doctor; and even from bad to worse, a trip does good. It is curious to see the man who is evidently dying, who will be a corpse within the week, rise from his bed when he hears of a ship coming to anchor, and with brightened eye give orders for packing bag and box. Many, however, require main force to stimulate them; and these are fatal cases if not stimulated. I remember one patient who was ever yearning for the arrival of the mail, and anticipating the pleasure of seeing friends and home: when the gun fired he fell hopelessly back in his bed and begged, with tears in his eyes, to be left quiet till the next steamer. My answer was to send for a hammock and krumen, to carry him almost by violence on board, and to make him over to the skipper, with the distinct understanding that if recalcitrant he should be shut up. He went off to Tenerife, where he gave lively proofs that he was himself again, and two months afterwards returned to the Coast in perfect health. This unwillingness to move generally, if not always, shows itself in the strongest instances of depressed vitality. My poor friend, Colonel Hamerton, of Zanzibar, during the evening chat would look forward with delight to leaving Africa; in the morning he loathed the subject, and could not bear to hear of packing up. Mr. Consul Becroft, whose exploration of the Niger Delta, the Benin, and the Oil Rivers, will long be remembered, was at last, with considerable difficulty, put on board the mail steamer at Fernando Po. As the departure-gun sounded, he asked what it was, insisted upon being landed, and died that night.

Thus it was that about the middle of June, 1862, the year before the war began, I found myself once more at Accra—a change appeared necessary. The various "Illustrateds" have made the pleasures of the surf, and the excitement of landing in "bar canoes," pictorially familiar to the home reader. I only wish that the artists would sketch, from a small canoe,

the Lagos mouth when somewhat angry. June had not thoroughly developed the breakers and rollers, which, raised by the rainy south-westers, and heaped up by a shallow, shelving shore, rage with peculiar fury between July and September. The Aharabatá-be (Harmattan season), from November to February, shows the smoothest seas, and at times you may land almost without a swell. Believing that the Raz de Marée (rollers) is caused, as Captain Fishbourne explains, by a "want of hydrostatic equilibrium," I would willingly see a series of thermometric and barometric observations carefully taken in the offing, as near the bar or the break as possible, and on shore. The ascending atmosphere and sudden relief of pressure at present best explain a phenomenon seen along all these coasts, where without warning, from a surface like glass, rises a huge billow, with green shoulders, black breast, and snowy white head, rearing and plunging with a roar into the green expanse before it.

I shall presume that my readers are familiar with the facetious "Wanderer's" "Day in the Land of (driver, not white,) Ants." He is justified in thus translating "Inkran," Enkran, Nkran, or Kran, but he has neglected to show the classical origin of "Accra." This, says native tradition, was the first of Portuguese settlements upon the Gold Coast, and the settlers possibly, as Bowdich suggests, took the name from the Periplus of Hanno; Akra being one of the five cities built by the Carthaginian navigator between the Solor Promontory (Bojador?) and the Lixus (Rio de Vuro?)* His words are, τὴν τε λίμνην παραλαξάντες ἵσον ἡμέρας πλοῦν κατοκίδαμεν πόλεις πρὸς τῇ θαλάττῃ καλουμένας Καρικὸν τε τείχος καὶ Ἄμραν καὶ Μέλιτταν καὶ Ἄραμβιν. And I presume that there is no need of describing the seaward aspect of Accra and Ant Land; the town which acts as capital of the Leeward districts, Forts James and Dutch Crève-Creux, the British Hotel, the "Commodore" or Bannerman House; the Wesleyan Mission, Garden House, and the Big House of the Hansens, now Hansons. The memorial effect of a first glance at our Protectorate—a hybrid and deprecable "institution," neither colony nor garrison,—was that of wretched, pauper Aden after wealthy Cairo, whose noble barracks and parade grounds put to shame the miserable relics of the great emporium. I was humiliated by the mean and tattered condition of English settlements built upon the very outskirts of an African California; and the general listlessness of the race, so stirring and energetic north of latitude 50°, suggested that only superhuman efforts could awaken it to life. Whilst the negresses panned the precious metal under the walls of James Fort and Cape Coast Castle, not a cradle, not a puddling machine, not a quartz-crusher, not an ounce of mercury, could be found among these "desperate (white) lack-alls" along the length or breadth of the Gold Coast, which

* *Wanderings in West Africa from Liverpool to Fernando Po*, by a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. London, Tinsleys, 1863. I am surprised that the war has not produced a second edition of these volumes, which want only corrections of detail, and the few additions which would bring them up to the present day.

* I am pleased to see that Mrs. Hall has republished her father's *Mission to Ashantee* (Messrs. Griffith and Farren, London, 1873). At the same time, the public should be cautioned against the prevalent rose-tint of the clever and learned volume, the romantic and sensational incidents, and the author's consistent resolve to see all things, the Ashantees included; *en beau*. The best antidote to this evil would be a reproduction of sober Joseph Dupuis' *Journal of a Residence in Ashantee* (London, Colburn, 1824). The author was appointed His Britannic Majesty's Envoy and Consul, but he soon found residence impossible. As he knew Arabic and could compare other parts of Africa with the Gold Coast, his views are broader than those of his predecessor.

stretches some 225 miles between Cape Apollonia and the Volta River.

Fresh from "Californy," I determined to "prospect" the placers of "that golden country," as Barbot calls the land about Accra,* and to ride over the leeward districts which begin with the Secoom River (W. longitude 19° 30'), about 6 direct miles west of Fort James (Accra), and extend eastward some 62 direct geographical miles as far as the Volta, in East longitude 42° 18'. I may generally state my conviction that the country is a mine of wealth, and I volunteered, if made "Administrator," to send home one million sterling during the first year, and double that sum during the future. The statesmanlike reply assured me that "gold is becoming too common,"—a view which I venture to recommend for the consideration of the coming political economist.

But before the prospecting trip, it was judged advisable to inspect the country about Accra, especially with an eye to a sanitarium, and the first "zita" proposed by the Civil Commandant, Major de Ruvignes, was to Beulah Gardens, on the banks of the Secoom River. I propose to describe the country as minutely as possible, despite the many obvious disadvantages of the "photograph style." Indeed, we travellers often find ourselves in a serious dilemma: if we do not draw our landscapes somewhat in pre-Raphaelite fashion, they leave no distinct impress upon the reader's mind: if we do, we shall be told that their length wearies, and that half would have been better than the whole. The latter alternative must often be risked, especially in writing upon a country where many at home have absent friends, and concerning which they will desire to have as many details as possible.

Despite the heavy gale of the last night, we resolved to set out on Friday, June the 13th. The hammockmen were engaged at the rate of 2s. a day when marching, and 3d. at the halt. At Prampram they will ask 4s. 6d., and receive 3s. This first attempt was a strong hint never to travel with less than six bearers. The vehicle is made fast by cross-pieces to a bamboo, which is carried jerkingly on the head; Europeans prefer to sling it slack; natives choose a tighter fit, and old books show the British officer sitting short, often with legs dangling on one side, and an arm thrown over the pole. The bearers are so tender of themselves that they would not even carry my sword; and their pace varies from 3 to 4½ miles an hour.

The run to Beulah Gardens takes about two and a half hours, and by pedometer-wheel the distance is 8 miles. Beyond the western outskirts of the town, the wells where half-naked women draw water, and where lies the first lagoon, all mud and mangrove, mosquitos, and malaria, we debouched upon an improved country, the "natural park" land described by every traveller in Unyamwezi, the Gaboon, and the regions within the Cape; a succession of groves and glades, based upon red and stoneless soil, much affected, as their architecture shows, by the insects which have named the land. Our road was a rut, along which the men staggered painfully. After an hour we reached a swampy backwater, based upon sand, overgrown with

* John Barbot, writing in 1682, carefully describes and sketches the three forts.

salsolaceous plants and rhizophora, rich in dragon-flies and stinging dipters. All was nude of man; but the little "crooms" (villages) of the interior betrayed themselves by the blue curls of smoke that caught the rays of the setting sun. A patch of sweet potatoes led again to a tract of bush which smelt of death: the cause, however, is life,—a fetid ant that everywhere taints the African jungle. But at times the corpses of slaves, and of women who have died in childbirth, and therefore may not be buried, are cast into the thicket. As day burned out we entered a little gate in a hedge of manioc, passed up the sandy avenue of pine-apples, and in ten minutes more reached Beulah House, where we were made welcome by the owner.

The Reverend Thomas S. Freeman is the grandson of a slave, born and bred upon the estates of Lord St. Vincent. He was educated as a market-gardener, when a "call" induced him to join the Wesleyans, a sect to which West Africa is grateful for not over meddling with politics. He was sent as missionary to the Coast, and successor of the Rev. Joseph Dunwell, in January, 1838, the same year that brought sentimental L. E. L., who "love-learned, had sung of lover and love." This shrewd and energetic man at once began to *faire époque*. In and about 1842 he successively visited Badagry, Dahome, Young Abeokuta and Comassie (Kumassi), the capital of Ashanti-land, and he established the most friendly relations with two great despots, Gezo and Quako-Deo. He was even allowed to travel 30 miles north, or inland, of Comassie a remarkable, and in those days a unique, exception to the general negro African rule. Having planted various missions, and after giving an excellent example of zeal, not without knowledge, he became known as the "Bishop of the Gold Coast," and he had the management of funds which amounted to some 9000*l.* per annum. In an evil hour he became Civil Commandant of Accra (1847), a position which aroused the prejudices and jealousies of his white neighbours, and in 1858 he was finally superseded by the Acting Governor, Colonel Bird, for reasons concerning which we will be silent. His state, verging upon destitution, showed that he had honestly administered large sums; and, forced to retire from office, he laid out Beulah Gardens and bravely returned to the adamical pursuits of his youth. When I last saw him he was on a fair way to a fortune, won by his own unassisted exertions.

The house is a one-storied African bungalow, at the foot of a lumpy hill bearing a grassy platform upon which most Englishmen would have preferred to build. As we struggle up the ascent we find the *charpente osseuse* to be sandstone, fleshed with red clay and spotted with bits of porphyry and fragments of quartz, clear and rusty. The spear-grass works its way through our clothing, and makes us disregard the partridges and the wild pigeons, whose accents are heard from the bush. To the north we descry the blue hills of Akim; and Mount Bannerman to the south-east hides the houses of Accra. From this point to the sea is a stretch of 6 miles, by river 10, which can be canoed in three hours. The Sakumofio or Secoom stream, some 10 miles higher up, is called the Humo, and higher still the Densú or Dansú; it rises in the northern uplands, and separates from Accra the little-known "Forest districts," which stretch along the coast to Cape Apollonia and to an unexplored depth inland. The stream can be stepped across in March; it

floods in June from the rains which begin about mid-May and end with the first week of July. The "smokes" or fogs, developed—as amongst us—by the earth being colder than the damp-laden air, alternating with occasional showers and bursts of bright weather, cause the volume to shrink till the end of September, and usually there is a freshet about the beginning of January, the season of the "latter rains." The native Christians have preserved, possibly from the Portuguese, a curious legend about Jacob having been metamorphosed into the Secoom, whilst Esau became the Tema River and Lagoon to the east. We also hear of Nmanma, "unicorns," which proves that the coast-dwellers are at any rate a highly imaginative race.

Mr. Freeman began work about the end of 1859, and by degrees he has reclaimed 14 acres, of which 8 are under coffee, despite the plague of lizards. He can extend along the Secoom River *ad libitum*, and he proposes to breed stock on the right or western bank. Meanwhile he grows manioc, maize, and ground-nuts (*Arachis hypogaea*); peppers and sugar-cane upon the wet banks; radishes and rhubarb; plantains and papaws; cabbages, cucumbers and "Kullaloo," an excellent West-Indian spinach. His pomegranates will not ripen; his muscatel grapes must be guarded by bags against the wasps, and he sells his 7000 pine-apples for threepence each, and sixpence as price of carriage per dozen to Accra. His coffee shrubs, originally from the Portuguese Island, São Thomé, are all grown from seeds, which are bedded for three or four months, and protected by palm-branches day and night. They are then transplanted to the nursery, and after six months or so, when the side-shoots sprout, there is a second removal. At the beginning of the "big rains" (June), they are permanently settled in life, about 8 to 9 feet apart, shaded by maize, manioc or plantains, and they are watered when the percolation from the stream does not correct the over-dryness of the ground. The failure of the Aquapim Missionaries has arisen from their adopting the West Indian system; they also, by neglecting the nursery, lose half their seedlings. Mr. Freeman owned 8000 shrubs of all sizes, including those of 1860, which would bear fruit in October, 1862. He looked forward to a total of 40,000 to 50,000, which would be worth 2500*l.* This number requires some twenty hands, with their families, for weeding, hoeing, picking, and other operations, and "liberated fugitives" are found, by experience, to do most work. Each shrub bears a minimum of three lbs.; and the pound is worth 9*d.* on the coast, whilst water-carriage to the beach, a feasible process, will greatly increase profits. I found that neither the leaves nor the husks, which the Arabs of Yemen call "el-Kishr," are utilised at Accra: yet the former give excellent tea, and the latter are the best of manure.

Determining to see as much of village life on the Gold Coast as possible, we set out on the 15th for Wejá, a "croom"* lying about two miles and a quarter west-north-west of Beulah Gardens. The path led over rolling ground from the river, where the black nymphs were disporting themselves in the

costume of the Naiads; they chaffed us severely, but their morals are better than their language. All the peasantry was unarmed, and the mildness of their manners was pleasant after the roughness of the western barbarians. With the pretty blue hills forming a saddle-back on our right, we passed through the plantation of a native missionary, Mr. Wharton: it was all aflame with the Pride of Barbadoes (*Poinciana pulcherrima*); and it grows huge gourds and calabashes, arrowroot, grapes and pine-apples. Ascending a stony hill we entered Wejá, the capital of Cudjoe (Monday), King of Accra, a mediatised dignitary who would recover "the stool" if the Sassenach made himself scarce. It is a filthy, tumble-down mass of wattle-and-dab huts, with open flying roofs of palm leaves. But it has a church, the Fetish-house, over whose door hang wooden slippers, and whose walls lodge certain abominable images. The people have the *sensus numinis* like Hindús who speak of the Bhagwán (Giver of Good) yet worship Wittoba, Khandoba and Tukaram, rather than Bramha, Vishnu and Shiva: here, however, Fetish never having been a written system is essentially vague and capricious. Within a circular paling round a neighbouring tree, were piles of horns and bones, the spoils of the Gaboon Nyáre (*Bos brachyceros*), the wild cattle of the West Coast. Unlike deer, leopards, and Pattakoos (hyenas), which affect the bush, and can be dislodged only by curs, these animals, graceful but savage, wander over the inner savannahs in herds of four or five. Near the seaboard of course they are well nigh cleared off.

My next visit was to Báwe, a settlement distant about a mile and a quarter. It belongs to the chief Quamina (Saturday), popularly called Quárte, a vassal of Dutch Accra. He was absent at head-quarters on Church business, a man having "put himself in Fetish," as the Anglo-African phrase is: thus he takes sanctuary, and any one who figuratively tears him from the "horns of the altar," incurs the high displeasure of the mysterious protector. On the other hand, to "put a man in Fetish" is like *hukkahi páni band* (stopping pipe and water) in Hindostan; it excommunicates the victim and drives him from all temporal society. This process, which is connected with slavery, and which threatens all order, is necessarily made penal; the fine for the rich being from one to five ounces of gold-dust. The people were not over civil to Englishmen; and although the "bushmen" fired two salutes on consideration of a gallon of rum, we failed to secure a guide to the distant settlement, Brekesú. They pertinaciously occupied the two round log-seats raised inside their houses, and not a soul said *Heni ojen* (How is it)? The local deity appeared to be an old pot at the foot of a tree surrounded by a circular paling, and we again saw the spoils of the Nyáre-cattle. The villagers secure themselves from the mosquitos by an oven-shaped framework of wands built over their bed-mats, and covered with cloths. Some of them were suffering from helcoma, which is not easily dislodged when it attacks the legs; and one man wore black armlets as amulets against the foul skin disease "craw-craw." Outside the settlement stood graves, under thatched sheds: these people do not bury in the houses, and a solitary tomb denoted one who had fallen from a tree, or had been killed by wild beasts, or who for some crime had been ordered to shoot himself, the local form of "happy despatch."

* An Anglo-African word for a village. It is properly the Oji (Fanti and Ashanti language) Kru, a place or settlement. Kru-mis for Kru-mu locative, meaning "in the town;" and the last syllable appears often to be pleonastic, like the Kisawahili-ni.

On our return to Accra, in company with our kind host, we passed through the "Leopard bush" and a little farm "croom" called Makau. The fetid swamp had no longer terrors for us, and we could admire the pink-flowered Ipomœas and the many-coloured salsolaceous plants which affected the rare patches of sand. It was a good shooting ground for excellent curlew, duck, and plover; whilst "parson-crows," so called from their white ties, doves and pigeons, bush-turkeys (Floriken?), paddy birds and fish-eagles formed the rest of the feathered population. At Jamestown the late Mr. Nicol Irvine showed me twenty-three ounces of gold-dust received from Akim, where the land is described as pitted like a warren. The frequent earthquakes, concerning which more presently, had turned up the strata, and exposed the precious metal.

Although I slept under a blanket at Beulah Gardens, the climate can hardly be recommended: the cold is the result of damp, and the flies and mosquitos are an Egyptian plague. The success of Mr. Freeman shows what an able and energetic man can do: no one would expect to see such a plantation within the sea-board of Africa. He has even attempted to grow Ashanti cotton; but this article, like sugar-cane, can hardly prosper without the "regimentation of labour." It has been tried again and again on the Coast, and lately Mr. Hutton expended some 1500*l.* But the slave question has invariably turned up, and outlay has failed, despite the excellence of the article (*Gossypium vitifolium* and *tricuspidatum*) to secure fair income.

My "sanitation" schemes, however, were not much discouraged by the aspect of Beulah. The next trip was to the Ajumanti uplands, a line which rises, blue and feathered, nearly due north of Christiansborg. In those days the Hollander was still in the Land of Gold, which, till 1850, he shared with the Danes, the French, and the English. Lord Grey bought out the Scandinavians for the moderate sum of 10,000*l.*, and in 1867, seventeen years afterwards, we "swopped"—as the country phrase is—with the Dutch; England extending eastward from Elmina to the Volta, and Holland westward from the Sweetwater River, a streamlet which disembogues between Cape Coast Castle and Elmina. In 1872, Mr. Administrator Pope Hennessy, received from the last representative of Holland on the Gold Coast the whole of the territory last (1867) assigned to the Netherlanders. I at once foresaw that the Ashantis, who, since 1800, have persistently attempted to "make a beach," or establish a port, would resent the change of masters at Elmina—which they held virtually to be their own—and that the war, which had smouldered since 1863, would presently blaze up with renewed violence. Recalled from Damascus, I proposed to Mr. Swanzy, Mr. Reddle, and other influential West African merchants, to organise a mission to Ashanti; and it is still my belief that, with due prudence, such as requiring hostages, with the expenditure of 2000*l.* to 3000*l.* upon presents, and with the willingness to grant the great desideratum, this ugly affair might have been settled. But my views on the Ashanti question were well known, and it was not judged advisable to support my application to Her Majesty's Ministers.

The fact is, two lines of objection are popularly offered to the Ashantis holding a harbour upon the sea-board. The first is the mercantile; and, as we well know, commercial interests are sure to be sup-

ported against almost any other by the reformed House of Commons, and, in the long run, to gain the day. The Fanti and the maritime tribes under our protection are mere brokers, go-betweens, middlemen: they are backed up and supported by their patron, the wholesale European merchant, because he prefers *quieta non movere*, and he fears lest the change should be from good to bad. I, on the other hand, contend that both our commerce and customs would gain in quantity as well as in quality by direct dealing with the inner races. The second, or sentimental line, belongs to such papers as the *West African Times*, and even their intelligence can hardly believe the *ad captandum* farrago which they write. The favourite "bunkum" is about baring the Christian negro's throat to the Ashanti knife. But the Fantis and coast-tribes were originally as murderous and bloodthirsty as their northern neighbours; and if they have changed for the better, the improvement is wholly due to the presence and the pressure, physical as well as moral, of Europeans. Even Whydah is not bloodstained like Agbome, because it was occupied by a few white and brown slavers. Why then should not the Ashantis have the opportunity of amendment offered to them? Ten years' experience of Africa teaches me that they would be as easily reformed as the maritime peoples; and it is evident to me that the sentimentalist, if he added common sense to the higher quality, should be the first to advocate the trial.

Finally, the French, who occupied Assini, Grand Bassam, and other settlements on the Western Gold Coast, extending from the Assini River nearly to the Liberian frontier, found it most prudent, after the Franco-Prussian War, to lease their forts and trading-stations to an English mercantile firm. Our countrymen, as usual, have fared far better where trade has its own way, as in the Oil Rivers, than where we administer or protect the land: the best proof is that they have forty vessels plying upon the Assini and Tando streams and the lagoons lying between them. Thus, practically, since the year of grace 1872, England holds the whole of the Gold Coast.

I still maintain that we did well to buy out our rivals in this part of Guinea, and the *Wanderer in West Africa* (vol. ii., chap vii., p. 58, *et passim*) will tell the reason why. It would be the direst folly to remain in a "pest-house" which does not pay. The castles and settlements were originally built as slave-depôts; they then served to crush the export, and now their occupation is thoroughly gone, unless they serve to foster trade, and to increase customs-dues. That commerce wants no such adjuncts we learn by the instance of the "Oil Rivers," where business is greatest because Government action is least. And I still hold that it was wise to raise the import duties upon tobacco and spirits, arms and ammunition. But common prudence should have deterred the authorities from jumping to double and even treble rates, with a suddenness which can serve only to sow deep-rooted discontent, and to defeat its own objects. Besides, did the innovators consider the danger of their innovation? There might have been a Yankee house on the coast. What less could it do in these days than to protest against measures which entailed unexpected loss? And what would have been the result? A reference to Washington, an exaggerated claim, a hint about war levelled at the poor Britisher, and, finally,

an "ARBITRATION"—a new implement of state-machinery which has been happily described as adding a new horror to the unnatural condition of humanity called Peace?

But these measures take for granted that we resolve to retain our "Homes of Fever," and all must confess that the advisability of so doing is more than questionable. Though loath as any man to yield one foot of British ground, I maintain that "the game is not worth the candle" unless we resolve to trade direct with the Ashantis and the whole interior. This warlike race has now been fighting for a place on the seaboard during three quarters of a century, and it will fight till it wins: we cannot annihilate it even if we wished, and ten years hence we shall have to meet, not trade-guns, but breech-loaders. And if we did annihilate it, the nation which takes its place would certainly, inevitably, follow the same line of policy. An influential party at home (the philanthropic) forbids us to think of imitating the French, Spaniards, and Portuguese; of deporting our criminals to these pestilential shores: even the glorious heights of Camarones Mountain are not good enough for convicts, although missionaries and consuls look upon them as sanatoria. Another influential party (the economist) proposes to retire bodily from the coast. Might we not adopt as a golden mean, if such thing be, the sensible practice of the early Portuguese, who occupied the great centres of trade, the ports and harbours, but who never claimed the land beyond cannon range of their forts and castles? It may be rejoined that they failed, even at Accra, and that the whole history of their possessions is one of massacre. But these are not times when we should commit the crimes which led to their fall; and steamers altogether change the conditions of the 17th and the 19th centuries.

On June 17th, we set out in our hammocks for the coast range and the "Forest country;" the start was to be at 5 A.M.; it took place at 7.30. After an hour and a half we reached Akotobabi where the town-slaves meet the country "pawns,"* and the walk lay through outlying plantations. The country was a flat of deep red soil upon which the white ants had raised their palaces and pagodas: some of them, regular cones backed by glorious trees, were highly picturesque. Legon, a village of bushmen, seemed to be a *pays de Cocagne*; even at this early hour all were dancing, singing, and drinking. On the left or north-west rose the tree-clad cone of Quabenyáng, a hill conspicuously seen from Accra. At 11 A.M. we rested in the neat village of Páppau, where the reception-house and guest-room were thrown open to us: it belongs to Fred. Dávúná, King of Christiansborg, a civilized man, educated in Denmark, who believes iron, copper, and coal are to be found in the neighbouring hills.

Resuming our march in the warm, smoky rain which made the stony path greasy and slippery, we experienced all the displeasures of the hammock; stumbling bearers, backs wetted by dripping grass, sharp prods from projecting stubs, and the fierce attacks of a dipter, in which I soon recognised an old East African acquaintance, the tsetze. Near the shore this pest has been diminished by clearing and cultivation, as in the field-tracts of Unyamwezi, and it

* We read (*Wanderings in West Africa*, ii., chap. vii.), "the word panyarring (*i.e.* kidnapping) is said to be Portuguese, but I have been unable to trace it." Of course it is from "apanhar," to catch, to seize.

probably might be quite abated by the introduction of muscivorous birds. We met a caravan of Aquapims, men and women from the inland north-east, headed by an English flag, and looking as wild as wild could be—they seemed not to want the "Aquapim Mountain Road, of which we had read so much.* At noon, approaching the village of Ashongmán we received a message from Inkruma, head-trader of Christiansborg, to the effect that breakfast was ready. An "advanced" African, married to old Mrs. Bannerman, received us, naked to the waist, a sign of respect, and he led us to the guest-room, where *jalousies*, chairs, tables, and sofas, covered with fine "country cloths" contrasted with penny prints, here sold for a dollar. Mostly in West Africa the menu suggests Henri Quatre's souper de volaille; poulets à la broche, poulets en ragout, poulets en hâchis, poulets en fricassée; but this is not the case on the Gold Coast. The table groaned with native dishes, "kankie"-bread, pepper-soup, "kickie," hotly seasoned but most enticing, and showed signs of cognac and gin, claret and champagne. The spread was a godsend; my factotum, Selim Agha, had been left at Fernando Po, and Joe, our head servant, had naturally carried our provisions to Kucháchá, a well-known shooting ground behind Christiansborg, whence, finding his mistake, he had followed us *via* Accra. He was soundly rated with a roaring voice by our host, who, being a grandee, must speak, as an Abyssinian chews his raw meat, *ore rotundo*.

From Ashongmán we began with a slight descent, passing two villages, each of four or five huts, upon the so-called "Queen's Plantations," and from one of them (Adansi), a stout Miss Hessi of Christiansborg came out to shake hands. This fine estate ("Sensami") was granted in 1860, by Mr. Governor E. A. Andrews, to Major de Ruvignes for 99 years, in consideration of his paying annually a pine-apple quit rent. We then attacked an ascent overgrown with wild custard apple (*Anona squamosa*), and saw below us to the east of our road, and far too near the hot plain Abokobi, a station of large, whitewashed, thatched, and shingled houses, belonging to the Basel Mission. The employés, who kept us waiting half an hour in vain, have another higher up at Abude or Aburi, some 25 miles from Accra: it is 2000 to 2500 feet above sea level, and the climate is described as delicious. Beyond Abokobi, which boasts of a planked well, 90 feet deep, and so managed as to pay well, is a third station; a fourth is at Akropong, where the King of Aquapim has his head-quarters; and still further are Odumesse, west of the upper Volta, and Ahwanu on its right or eastern bank. Upon the seaward slope lay a heap of ruins, broken arches, and cut stones, one bearing the inscription, "Frederiksgave, vi. 1832." This truly royal gift was intended as a sanitarium for the officers of Christiansborg. When shall we be as generous?

The first stony ascent of red earth, here and there swept away by the rains, showed us a fine spring: had the Romans or the Persians held this coast they

* As I have repeatedly explained, the best macadamised highway in this part of West Africa would be ruined in six months, because the people who always walk in Indian file, would cut it up into threads of paths; every rainy season would break it, and the repairs would soon exceed the original cost. The clamour for such outlay arises from the benevolent intention of making some pet's pocket a trifle heavier by a few pounds sterling.

would have built an aqueduct to Accra, and thereby abolished dysentery and the dire cohort of evils to which putrid rain-water gives rise. Even the civilised must think of pipes, but whence is the money to come? The rise, scattered over with farms and plantations belonging to the merchants of Accra and the villages of Blogoma and Gyaben, was followed by a plainlet, and this again by a short ascent which showed a charming valley, through which the western road winds without ascent. The dark bush, and the green clumps of plantains, were relieved by glorious ceibas or cotton trees (*Bombax*), with white boles and a wealth of silver flowers. Beyond the depression, and slightly raised, stood the neat "croom" Brekesú, whose snowy walls and berry-brown thatches were disposed somewhat in the shape of Swiss châteaux. In the absence of the old "King" Mánché, we were welcomed by the Chief Quárte who, besides the normal list of French stimulants, gave us some excellent palm-wine, fully equalling that of Akim. It is drawn from the nut-palm (*Elæis Guineensis*): unfortunately the tree is destroyed by the wasteful process. That day's work had been 5 hours 25 minutes = 15 or 16 miles, and as we awoke in the chief's comfortable beds, not a trace of perspiration appeared on brow—or nose.

We spent the best part of two days on this sub-range of the Ajumanti, or Ajimanti range, which runs from north-west to south-east, beginning at the Volta and stretching near to the Secoom River. The noisy palm-birds battling the widow bird* (*Vidua of Cuvier*), in the cool and fragrant morning air, innocent of mosquitos and sandflies, aroused us betimes, and we found a charming natural bath in a deep tree-grown hollow, near the village. The motherly old crocodile, who lived there with her three hopefuls, seemed to regard us as pleasant visitors, and her tameness reminded me of "Muggur Peer," in the distant valley of the Indus. After the choti haziri, the "lesser breakfast," of early tea and biscuits, we set out to choose a place for a shooting box, which the Civil Commandant has long intended to build at Brekesú, and we soon pitched upon a proper site, where limes and oranges, tamarinds, sweet and sour sops (*Anona squamosa* and *muricata*), and coffee almost run wild as in its original Negro-land home, formed an African orchard. Before noon we proceeded to the bush beyond the Fetish-house, where a thatched roof protected the usual old pots, in a clearing surrounded by circles of stones, stakes and tie-ties (Ilianas). Our servants refused to enter a place so truly awful. The desire to send home certain coal-black skins with white whiskers and tail (*Colobus Ursinus?*) made me do a savage deed upon the happy family which inhabited the neighbouring trees; but I sincerely repented, and resolved never again to shoot a monkey except in self defence. Nothing could be more pathetic than the look which the wretch cast at his wilful murderer, or more startling than the scream with which he gradually, like Quasimodo's victim, dropped from the height: the sensation was as "bad" as that of shooting a woman. If one could only make sure to kill without preliminary pain! And when to murder we added cannibal intentions, the body was so tough and "strong" that neither of us could touch our "poor relation." The people declare

* As the feathered tribe is not usually "widowed," our trivial name for the pretty finch is probably taken from Dahoman "Whydah", the place from which it was first exported.

that this branch of the human ancestry bites fiercely, after the fashion of Somersetshire, and that the survivors bury their dead out of their sight. When we revisited the place after noon, all the colony had made tracks. A cool and pleasant evening was spent in admiring the dark chasm patched with green light, and the monkey had made us sentimental—

"'Tis the pure hour for poetry and thought,
When passions sink and man surveys the heavens
And feels himself immortal!"

On June 19th we returned to Accra down a devious rut, called by courtesy road, to the east, and I was perfectly satisfied with the sanitarial capabilities of the Ajimanti range. Such, however, is always the contrast in tropical Africa between the true and the false coast. The former, though elevated only a few hundred feet, is dry and comparatively comfortable; the latter is the home of fever, ever malarious, and peculiarly fetid where the mixture of salt and fresh water breed the mangrove. In neither can the unseasoned European, and notably the Englishman, expect to escape sickness, but inland he will probably suffer from intermittents and diarrhoea; on the seaboard from dysenteries and bilious remittents, dangerous as yellow fever; not to mention dropsy and guinea-worm (*dracunculus* or *Filaria medinensis*). Nor do I, judging from the analogy of Dahome, consider an expedition of white troops at all out of imminent danger, until the Bossum Prah is left well in rear.

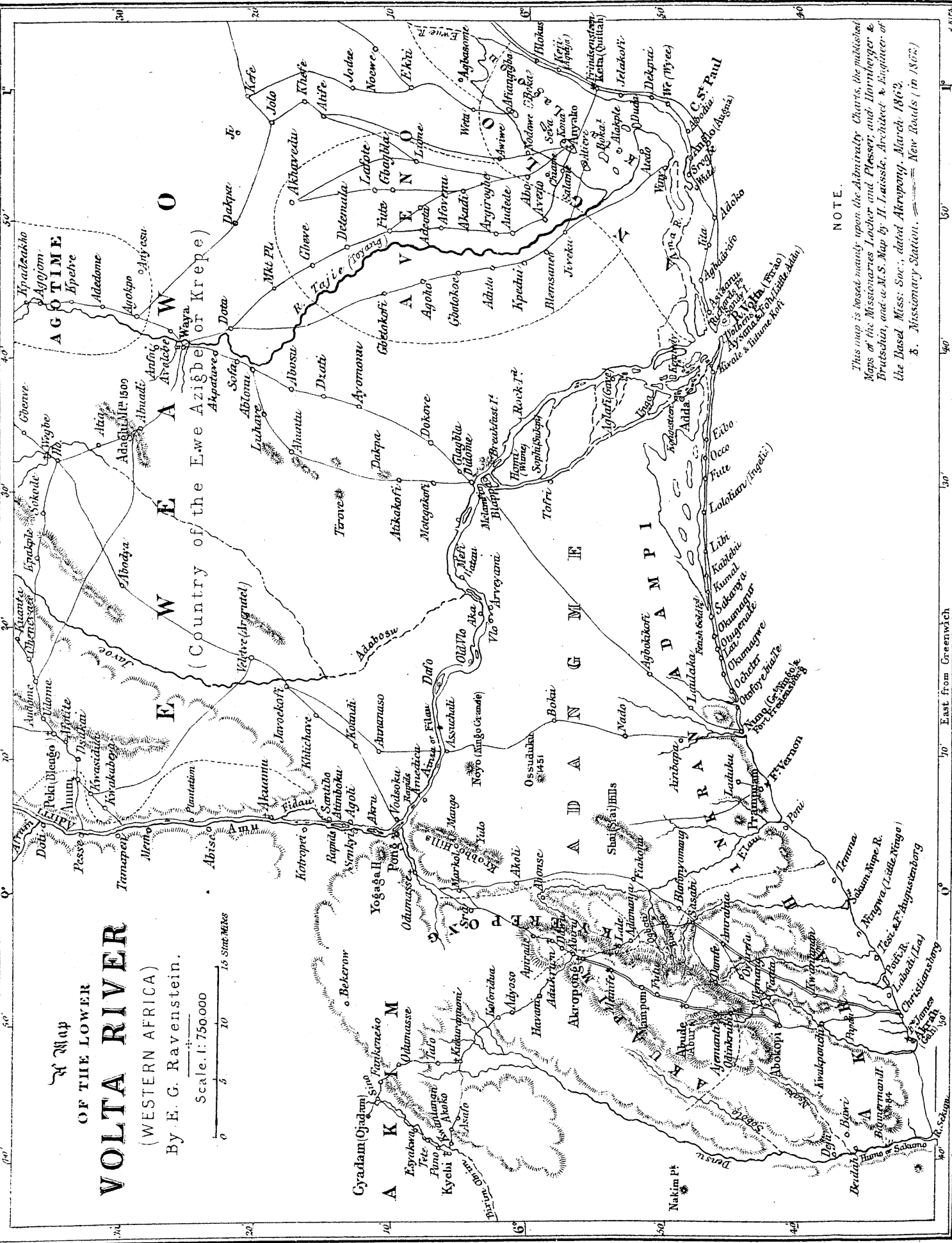
SECOND TRIP ALONG THE SHORE TO THE VOLTA RIVER.

ENCOURAGED by this pleasant excursion, we resolved upon a second, eastward, along the shore to the Volta mouth, a direct distance of 44 geographical miles. I shall be as particular in detailing the route: it has not been described since the days of Dr. Isert, the Danish physician and botanist, who wrote in 1752, and published in 1797. Before the latter date he died of hardship while attempting to colonise Aquapim (See *Bowdich*, fol. 218-19; but he misprints the date 1452).

I was anxious to view the emplacement of the six Danish forts—Christiansborg, Frederiksborg, Augustenborg, Friedensborg, Kongenstein, and Prinzenstein—which became ours on August the 17th, 1850; to prospect the gold-diggings, and to make up my mind about the value of Ada, formerly called Adda or Addah, on the "winding river." This time the hammock-bearers were discarded: we had baggage—"tats" which we hired at an exorbitant rate (2*l.*), although the prime cost is only 10*l.* or 12*l.** Our company was

* The native currency on the Gold Coast is, or rather was, the barbarous cowrie, of which Leo Africanus speaks at Timbuctoo ("in rebus minutioribus cochleis quibusdam utuntur quæ huc ex Persarum regione convehi solent" (*i.e.*, from India). They are now becoming obsolete upon the West African shores, though still highly prized in the interior. In 1862 the following table was, and perhaps still is, useful:—

40 shells	= 1 string,
5 strings	= 1 tokoo (the seed of <i>Abrus Precatorius</i>).
10 strings	= 6 <i>d.</i> (the day labourer's hire in 1862, now increased to 1 <i>s.</i> and 3 <i>d.</i>)
50 strings (2000 cowries = 1 head)	= 2 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> , or the local half-crown (The people will take silver money, but they object to it if at all worn).
The ackie is at present	= \$1; in Bowdich's time, 5 <i>s.</i>
His <i>Gold Table</i> (p. 330) gives:—	
8 tokoos or carats	= 1 ackie.
16 ackies = 1 newemeën (or ounce)	= 4 <i>l.</i> (in 1819-20).
36 "	= 1 benda.
40 "	= 1 periguin = 10 <i>l.</i> (p. 283).



40° 30' East from Greenwich

composed of three; Otu, *alias* Francis Ankra, all here being bilinguals and binominous; Abánáto, the horse-keeper, a rascal who cannot do without garotter-treatment once a day; and the lad "Tette" (the first-born child), popularly known as "Currant Jelly," because in early boyhood he had disposed of a potful of that comestible, together with a haunch of venison belonging to his master. He is a mild-looking youth: "such melancholy eyes!" say the ladies; but he would eat an ogre dog-sick.

The path led past holey Fort James, the most tattered piece of masonry I had seen for a long time, and yet I was fated to see it in still worse condition. Fort St. Francis Xavier, now Christiansborg, 2 miles to the east, at any rate had the decency to wash itself white. Frederiksborg, a mile north, was a ruin fit only for the reptilia, and these had attained a very fine development. They are chiefly of the horned family (*Cerastes*); black-hooded snakes, grey vipers, and cobras. Dr. Martin assured me that one of the latter had attacked him, and had pursued him as he retreated. I consider this worth recording, as a similar case never came within my experience. Even that dreaded Brazilian trigonocephal, the Jararacusú, flies from, and not at, man. On the other hand, I have everywhere heard of traditional serpents assaulting intruders. A Frederiksborg cobra was afterwards shown to me; its huge broad head, preternaturally bright eye, dirty, earth-coloured markings, and narrow neck, made it look ugly as it was venomous and formidable.

We took the longest line by skirting the sea, where the tides, throwing surf some 20 feet high, cascading over ledges and spouting under hollow rocks, seem to be in a state of perpetual flow: hence the succession of dunes, lined with tough-leaved convolvulus and strewed with shingle. Inland the ground is a level grassy down, pitted with crab-holes, and most unfit for hard riding. The first stage of two hours (= 5 miles) placed us at the Fetish village La or Labaddi. Like all these settlements it has a red look, the colour of the swish, which in some cases is tinted with yellow clay: outside lay salt-huts of palm-fronds, like sentinels' boxes. The people being mostly reverend men eyed us rudely. "This is the residence of the grand Fetish Lakpâ and the Bishop," says Isert, and as we rode through their lanes, the abominable cactus-thorns punished even our boots. These settlements are distinguished from afar, even during the smokes, by the arch of cocoa-nuts, and palms: the people catch rainwater from the trees by leaves leading into large earthen pots, and the green puddles used for bathing are the homes of guinea-worm.

And now we began to understand the make of this "false coast." The surface is laid out in parallel and perpendicular ridges that project seawards long tongues mostly tipped white with foam: the ground waves, and intervening hollows are lower and narrower than those of the western country between Winnebah and the Secoom River. The depressions are either swamps, ponds, or lagoons, mostly of higher level than the sea, but divided from it during the dry season by a bank of loose, deep sand, with strews of pebbles, a barrier which the rains sweep away, and the tides annually renew. These features are of two kinds—the perpendicular, disposed at right angles to the shore like British Salt Lake, near Accra; and the lateral, of which

the best specimen is that which extends from near Ningo to the Volta. A little canalization would render them useful for transport. Early in July the people open their lagoons, when the pent-up waters fail to overflow the 30 feet of sand which confines them; and by means of crates at the beach they catch quantities of fish at the season when food is scarcest. At times they are drowned, as in Iceland, by attempting to ford the outfalls.

Labadi, in Barbot's day, was "a large populous place enclosed with a dry stone wall," and the capital of a little kingdom 4 leagues in circumference. Leaving the surly village, a short hour placed us at the neat settlement of Teshí, also called Tassy, and meaning stone-land. It is a fort-town, with a square redoubt of cut stone bastioned à la Vauban; this Augustenborg is supplied with a glacis about 200 feet above sea level. The old guns lie about the town, which is built a little lower; and the precincts for lodging negroes—the barracoons—in fact, are permanently desert. The houses of the settlement are of swish, with a fair sprinkling of trimmed-stone tenements; and umbrella-trees with sessile figlets form an avenue up the main street. Faces looked at us from the casements as we rode by; men sat sewing upon their earth-benches and chairs; and the blacksmith's forge had a curious screen of thick yellow clay, raised about 4 feet, adorned with a negro iconograph, pierced with nozzle-holes for the bellows, and useful to defend the artist's complexion from fire. The people showed more modesty than about Accra, and the women bathed in the Shim or T-bandage, which Hindostan calls Languti: the triangle is fastened to the waist by a string of Venetian glass or coloured porcelain beads; amongst the wealthy these are gold. The village pond bore a colony of ducks, and the adjacent downs showed sheep and lambs and pretty humpless cattle, either white-spotted or black and white—at times the bulls will charge, and charge home. Briefly, I have seen many a village in Essex with less of comfort and civilisation than Teshí. We breakfasted at the house of a civil native trader, Akron; and here, as elsewhere, we had no need to use a mat instead of chair and table. On the Gold Coast there is no Nawwáb, nor Rajah class, superior in birth and fortune, in manners and education, to the stranger-ruler—which ought to facilitate ruling. The older settlements are always known by the men taking off their hats, and bowing or rather curtseying. They have muskets at home, but their only arm abroad is a bayonet mounted upon a staff in case of meeting the "Pattakoo." Most of them have the saucer eyes with brown "whites," the nobby noses, the round fat features, and the dark, tarnished skins that distinguish the typical "Guinea Negro"; and the chiefs as a rule show physical as well as mental superiority.

Our path then passed the Ningwa (Nunwa) village and three several lagoons, divided from the sea by a convolvulus-grown land-strip, which the surf had nearly breached. Some three hours of this loose surface, very fatiguing to horses, placed us at Tema, "the stone-building" (in older writers "Temmen"), a village which has a Tuesday market crowded by both sexes and all ages. The people, like those of Helbon (pronounced Halbaun) near Damascus, have been made the butts of wicked wits at Accra, and are considered the model Bœotians of the coast, even as it is said *gaudet Mechlinia stultis*. I have already

alluded to the wild Christian tradition about their streamlet and lagoon. Then we turned inland from the rough path towards a hollow about a hundred yards from the sea, to examine a reported bed of coal. It proved to be discoloured syenite, quartz, hornblende and felspar, *alias* horse-tooth, near a white dyke of the same material, and above it was the usual micaceous gneiss, highly up-tilted and striking north-south. The rain came on before we reached Poni—in 1819 a deserted Dutch fort converted into a factory. The inhospitable villagers refused to sell us grass and hot "kankie"-bread for our wet nags: this weather is apt to give them loin-disease and paralysis, which begin with a swelling of the belly. The village lies prettily situated upon a high neats-tongue; hence its name "Kpon," a hill; and I hardly wondered at the absence of civility when told that some years ago it had been knocked to pieces for slaving. Miss Engmann, of Christiansborg, however, kindly gave us a lodging, and here we enjoyed rest after a sunny and rainy ride of seven hours, = 21 miles. Nothing wearies more than this slow work, especially when preceded by a night skirmish with mosquitos.

On June 27th we managed to set out early, and followed the red and broken "Trader's Path," a *route au roi* in its sense of Rotten Road, reeking with wet grass. The line then crossed the neck of the Prampram lagoon, which being near the overflow, was too deep for wading. Fetish is here becoming a tyrant whom the natives would perhaps gladly see deposed: he will not allow a canoe to be put upon any of these waters, nor are the people permitted to keep sheep: mutton is only to be bought from the Crepee (Krepi) shepherds, who are known by their blouses of blue and white cheque, curious knives, and short swords like matchets. The lagoon is tenanted by terns instead of ducks; and the oysters, they say, have yielded small pearls. It is reported that the India-rubber vine abounds in this part of the coast. The principal trees are the Bombax well buttressed against tornados; the umbrella ficus, the true Banyan-tree (*F. Indica*), also found in Congo-land; the brab, the oil-palm, the cocoa and the Ronnier "Run" or Fan Palm (*Borassus Flabelliformis*), a sign of healthy soil, and often 50 feet tall; various rubiaceæ, acacias, mimosas, and leguminosæ of whose chestnut-coloured and flattened seeds snuff-boxes are made; the adansonia, the locust-tree (*Inga*) and the guinea-peach (*Sarcocephalus esculentus*). Those most familiar are the cactus and arbutus, the amaryllidaceæ and convolvulaceæ; cardamoms, helianthus, santana (*Odorata*), datura and canna Indica; the solanum, the maranta, purple below and pale green above; the gardenia (*Hedychium*) or garland flower, the jasmine (*J. Gracile*) with its pretty blossoms; the black or Jamaica pine-apple, the euphorbia (chiefly quadrangularis); the dolichos, clematis, trumpet-flower, various myrtaceæ and lobelias, papilionaceæ and nymphæaceæ, the asclipias and a wild vine (*ampelopsis*) with edible grapes. The ferns are numerous, especially the elk-horn (*Acrostichum alciome*), and epiphytical orchids abound: these parasites are chiefly *liniodorum* (*Guineense*) eulophia, epidendrum, cryptarrhena, vanda and vanilla. The other families which have been collected by Mr. Freeman are the calycanthus, plumbaginaceæ, caprifolaceæ, and campanulaceæ.

Prampram, by purists written Kpukprã and Ghubbrã, which we reached after an hour's ride, is the nor-

mal red town whose large white European houses speak of civilisation. "Here the English have a small fort or fortified factory," says Isert. "Fort Verona," possibly so called from the "Two Gentlemen," is now in a sad state of seediness, partly ruins, partly pig-stye, and the guns are lying all about the townlet. The latter is far more unclean than usual, and the people are accused of throwing out the dead bodies of their children to be devoured by hogs. Lying 24 miles from Accra, it was also a station of that happily defunct corps, the Gold Coast Artillery; and the serjeant, in command of twelve privates, was as ragged, disreputable and impudent an "officer" as it was ever my fate to endure. These fellows live by looting and "panyarring." The civil power cannot punish them, and *esprit de corps* causes them to be supported. A native magistrate and police from some other part of the coast would do far better; and it would be easy to repair Fort Verona as a station for the "protectors of the peace."

At Prampram my companion was delayed by aguish symptoms for two days. The traveller in Africa must expect this result from sudden exertion, unless he knows how to guard against it. Here we met Messrs. Irvine, Reichter, and Reid, who assisted me in procuring a hammock and bearers for a trip inland. In descriptive geography we have often to see what there is *not*, as well as what there is; to find out, in fact, what is not to be found. According to the tradition of the Coast, a colony of Jews, expelled by Philip II., had settled at Laduku, a place some 3 miles north-north-east of Prampram.* We travelled along the hollow which contains the great lagoon, and presently reached a wave of ground showing heaps of rubbish, "Kankiestones," and traces of long swish walls, everything evidently native work. The situation was excellent, the only disadvantage being the presence of the Akakaentyerre (scorpion), which affects the dry sandstone formations scattered over with rusty quartz. A little east of north, distant 15 to 16 miles, rose dim and blue the long peak of Ningo Grande, regular as Camerones or Fernando Po, and familiar landmark to every coaster. Barbot, who sketches it, calls the cone "Mount Redondo." North stood the shaggy serrations of the Shai (Siai) Hills, especially twin peaks, like the "Dome of the Camel" which salaamed to Caliph Ali's corpse. From north to north-west, the long azure curtains of the Aquapim highlands, streaked with golden light, contrasted with the gleaming water at our feet, and the smooth green plain, dotted with black bush and calabash-tree, and speckled with thousands of cattle. According to the people, La-duku (the father of La, or "fire," like Ussu-duku, father of Ussu), was deserted after intestine feuds; part of the population emigrating to La Dade or Labaddi, and the rest to Prampram.

On June 30th my companion was well enough to make a short afternoon march, and we left the foul town amidst the hideous frantic shouts of the demon children, who were apparently never tired of screaming Kpongo-e! (the horse!). We rode to Upper Pram-

* Can this strange report have originated from the Ashanti Moors speaking to Bowdich (fol. 187) about Yahooodee (the Jew), a country north-east of Tinbuktou (Timbuctoo)? Bosman tells us that the people of Ardra and Fida (Whydah) traded to the Barbary Coast and with the Moors, who might have introduced the legend.

pram, where Fetish will not permit pigs to be kept: also trade is stopped if a Klan (hyena) be killed, until the body is buried in a white cloth, and unless rum be supplied for "making custom," and drinking over the grave on the 1st, the 3rd, and the 8th days. The people guard their flocks against this currish animal by dogs, which bark loudly enough at strangers, but which will bolt from the charge of an angry hen. Hence we made a *détour* over grassy plains, the Dutch "brakke-streek," affected by cattle and "horse-deer." On my return I tried the short cut along the sea-line, where the lagoon had been breached: rain and wind were in my face, and the plucky little nag plunged with difficulty out of a kind of quicksand. From the bush we came upon painfully deep sand, sprinkled with sponge and coralline, and riddled by crab-holes: it was outlaid by fields of rock, which looked black in the foaming sea. It is now the spring-tide, and the shore falls deep as off the Gaboon country. Yet the people speak of an unsurveyed bank in the offing, where one of our cruisers ('Bloodhound?') lately grounded. Bathing tempts but is dangerous: besides the strong under-tow, ground-sharks are common.

After an hour and a half we struggled girth-deep through the neck of the lagoon—which was opened on the following Tuesday, when one man lost his life in the outpour—and presently we reached Nuno or Noyo, commonly called Ningo: it is the port of the Adampee country, a republic not larger than Monaco, and the half-way house between Accra and Ada. Some call it Ningo Grande to distinguish it from Ningwa or Little Ningo, east of Teshi. Isert has noticed that the people "speak a different language called Adampee, a mixture of Ashanti, Kerrepee (Crepee)* and Accra." But the missionaries have determined Ada-gbe, or the language of Ada, to be the mother of the Ga or Accra tongue; and the Rev. J. Zimmermann has published (Stuttgart, 1858) a sketch grammar and dictionary. It extends from Tema to the Volta River. The lanes were lined with *pampi* which exclude evil spirits—cactus-hedges supported by dwarf palings; and the red walls and brown thatches, half-hidden by the cirlet of cocoa-trees, with two white-washed houses for European agents, looking like flags hung from the branches, showed the end of our 6 miles ride (= 1 hour 45 minutes). The regular cone of Great Ningo, which some declare to be granitic, and others an extinct volcano, 15 direct miles to the north, presented, under the change of angle, an eastern tongue and a western bluff blushing in the last rays of the sun.

The children received us with the usual frantic shouts, and the people, though they were "making customs," welcomed us civilly enough: the "funccon" consisted of men drinking and firing guns, and of women dancing behind a white flag. After housing our luggage at hospitable Mr. Leutrodt's, we wandered amongst the huts, streets being, as usual, absent, to the east of the settlement, where stand the remains of Fort Friedensborg. It was one of the largest on the Gold Coast, but, deserted about 1842, it has become a kind of open sewer. Two half-curtained bastions defended the water-approach; the enceinte was formed

* A tribe living east of the Volta River, also termed Eipe or Ayigbe; they call themselves Ewe, and their tongue Wegbe.

by a loop-holed wall; four guns still remained in position; the thick walls of the tall rooms and strong powder-magazines yet stood firm, and the tank was full of water and green weeds. Nothing would be easier than to repair this building if required.

"Behind Adampee," says Bowdich, "is the Krobo Mountain, the people of which, though but a few hundreds, have hitherto baffled the Ashantis by leaving their croom at the bottom of the mountain, which is of great height, rugged, accessible but by one narrow path, and with springs of water on the top, whence they roll down upon their enemies the large stones and fragments of rock which abound." Mission-schools, and many troubles with the Krobo hill-men since 1858,* have pretty well taught us the geography of their highlands, which lie west with a little northing of Ningo-cone, on the right bank of the Volta River, and some 45 miles above the mouth. I was shown a collection of valuables from Krobo—a tolerable lignite, iron-ore, orchilla-moss, fine pine-apple fibre, yellow dye-wood, and the limestone so much required upon the Coast region. Fair specimens of gold were not wanting.

As my companion still suffered, the next day we repeated the short march. We set out at 7 A.M., and presently passed through a little fishing croom called, from the detached boulders, Ofofoya-biá-Te (the "young Custom-woman's Rock"). Here a lagoon enters and flows eastward. The slushy path which passes north of it runs over a white, silty plain, now dry, and warted with hillocks; the salsolaceous vegetation defines the limit of the floods, and beyond it grow grass, aloes, and cactus. This lowland ends at Ochetu, or Kofi† Ochetu, where a tall sand-bank begins, and extends as far as Okumagwe, distant about 5 miles. The sea appears to be encroaching upon this section of the shore. After an hour and a half we passed three dirty coast-villages called Lai, where the people would have nothing to do with us, and we breakfasted at Otugenate—three fishers' huts raised on piles against mosquitos and other vermin. Sheep are here plentiful, costing \$3 to \$6 each.

As the villages of black dab show, we are now entering upon a new country, the Delta of the Volta River, and the beginning of the Slave Coast lagoons, which will extend hundreds of miles to the Rio del Rey. Although pebbles strew the sand and mud, we shall find no trace of surface-stone from the meridian of Ningo-cone to the skirts of the Camarones volcano. On a clear and sun-lit day the aspect is not unpleasant. The earth, clad in gauzy verdure and pink-flowered samphire, separates the lagoon, whose northern banks show many a village, and whose still waters are the homes of ducks and paddy-birds, terns and gulls, sand-pipers, and lily-trotters, from a tropical sea, wearing the brightest tricolor: the offing is a cool dark blue; a warm, green light plays upon the middle-distance;

* See the *Wanderer in West Africa* (vol. ii., p. 164). Had President Maclean been alive, he would have made a night march or two with 100 men, carried off the chiefs, and not allowed them to break jail. But matters are sadly altered since his day. Krobo Mountain has only two considerable villages—Yilo and Manya—which ought not to have troubled us long.

† In the dialect of Ada and its neighbourhood Kobe, Kowe, Kope, and Kofi, in Crepee or Ayigbe, mean simply a plantation village. In Ga or Accra Ko is the "bush," the forest land of the interior, opposed to "Na," the grassy savannah along the shore. We will write "Coffee," and it has been useful to Mr. Panch.

and nearest us waves a broad hem of creaming billow.

Our road followed the edge of the stiff sand-bank, some 20 feet high, in places much reminding me of the Indus bank: here and there it plunges into the water. Heavy rain from elephant-shaped clouds to the north-east, in the face of the stiff south-wester, made us take shelter at Okumágwe, where we were made welcome: these people are more civil when receiving than when taking leave of guests. It is backed on the north by a savannah, prolonging the hollow lagoon. The high bank now disappears, and only a low strip of sand and shingle separates the sea from the Volta backwater. We reached Great Sankanya after a short march of 11 miles (3 hours and 30 minutes), and passed a horrible night amongst the sandflies, mosquitos, ants, and ticks. Our men had the sense to sleep upon the beach. "Pulex" is not a native of this part of the Coast, but, as in India, he will probably colonise in force; and "Cimex" is said to be a gift from Europe. I can hardly believe this, remembering what a plague is "B-flat" in Hausa and Unyamwezi.

At Accra the people had spoken of a large gold-field east by south from Sankanya. The aspect of the shingle-strip, sprinkled with black alluvial sediment, which is again powdered with sand, suggested the usual circumstantial African lie; and, as we drew near, the legend assured us that the precious metal appears only at the season of the "Yam Customs," and moreover, that it will not show unless prayer, sacrifice, and presents are offered to the Fetish. Yet I determined to inspect the spot; and, despite all his terrors, Master Otu was compelled to accompany me. Presently we saw a white rag on a pole, which the dark youth called a "sign," and groaned forth that the "sign" would surely slay us. A woman, whose white and black beads showed a religious order, pointed to a place where gold is "abundant as ashes after a fire," but many rites were required to make it visible. The report of this excursion at once spread to Accra; Major de Ruignes had taken up in his arms a *golden dog*, and at once fell dead from his horse. Again this speaks well for the imaginative powers of the Gold Coasters.

Ada, with its neighbourhood, is probably the only place in the world where you grossly insult a beggar by giving him a sovereign, and where, spitting with wrath, he throws it upon the ground. The Ashantis, so the story runs, once dug treasure near Sankanya, and, as the people were becoming too independent, the chiefs and the high priests put the precious metal in "Fetish," making it an accursed thing. A Danish governor filled his pockets and was struck blind: he recovered his sight only by throwing away the plunder. Yet "custom" is made here once a year; and if it be delayed too long, the Fetish sends some traveller to demand the ceremony. A brother of the Ada chief offered to show the non-existing "placer" to the late Mr. Nicol Irvine *moyemant* the small sum of 50*l*. The transaction reminded me of the Hindú alchemist, who asks ten rupees to make a ton of gold. Doubtless there is truth in the many tales of jars full of gold-dust buried under trees or sunk in the lagoons; but the "divining rod" has not yet been a general success.

Next morning we took the path to Ada; it was by

no means deserted, and many people were carrying to market their ducks and turkeys in two handled cradles. The lagoon lying in a miry bed to the left became unusually fetid, and the sulphuretted hydrogen tarnished silver spurs: it was not a continuous sheet, the line being everywhere broken by islets, tree-clumps, and bare mud banks. The ocean tides here rise from 4 to 6 feet, and where the sand bar is too steep to be overflowed, the salt water enters by percolation, a phenomenon very common in Iceland. The path of deep and wearisome drift-sand led us past sundry fishing settlements, Little Sankanya, Kablebú and Lololian, shady with groves of cocoas and ronniers—it is all palm-land. Near the latter we mistook the white Fetish rag for the usual gate outside the villages, protected from ghosts by two bottles below; and, to the great disgust of some Fetish huts, we found ourselves trespassing upon holy ground, till set right by an old wood-cutter. At neat little Fute the sand-strip widened and the path improved, and at Kwále Kofi (Kwále's village, not coffee) it becomes a broad road. Tutume-kofi, the adjoining hamlet, has a Fetish figure, a flag-staff and halliards for signalling slavers. It was dark, and our nags were quite knocked up—in the English not in the American sense—before we reached Little Ada, called by the people Foo or Foh. We found hospitality at Miss Bessy Hanson's, who was trading up-country. That day's work was 5 hours 45 minutes (= 17 miles), over deep sand equally wearying to man and beast.*

We employed three days in inspecting this important part of the coast, and the Volta River, which is called at the mouth "Firáo" by the Adas, "Ainza" by the Akwimbas, and "Filau" or "Shirau" by the Accras: the upper part is known as the Odirri or Flou (Bowdich, fol. 173). Mr. Dupuis (part ii., p. xxxi.) calls it the "Aswada" or Black River, a name palpably derived from his Moorish friends: his "Adirray" (p. xlix.) is evidently the Addiri of his predecessor. If Dr. Isert report truth, that in his day no breakers were at the mouth, there has been a change for the worse. On the other hand, the veracious Bosman, who tells us that this fine river was probably called Volta by the Portuguese, from its rapid course and reflux, especially notices the "very high burning of extraordinary violence, as well as lofty agitations of the waves." From the Asanya village on the western sandspit, washed by the meeting waters, you see a hideous semicircular bar, with the concavity as usual facing inland, and girt on both sides by a tide-rip, in which gulls are plunging. The "white horses of the main" rear highest at the south-western convexity, and the fairway passage, which probably by this time is totally changed, lies between these and the surf, which breaks on the left or eastern projection. At one-third ebb the minimum is 11 feet.

* The total, windings included, was 63 miles (= 50 on the map). My companion rode back in three days with stages, as follows:—

1. Little Ada to Lololian 3 hours 30 minutes = 13 miles.
2. Lololian to Prampram 8 " 40 " = 24 "
3. Prampram to Accra 8 " 45 " = 25 "

the latter generally called 27.

Thus the grand total was nearly 21 hours, and the rate, under the influence of crab holes and deep sand, was a crawl of 3 miles an hour. Bosman (1700) laid down the tract between Poni and the Volta at about 13 (Dutch) miles: Isert made the distance from Christiansborg to Ada 72, and Meredith, whom Bowdich calls very careless and incorrect in writing, 67.

The Volta was visited by Mr. Dalzel; and the Engineer Colonel Starrenburg,* of Elmina Castle, during the last generation went up 60 miles, accompanied by a Danish officer and flag. He met with no impediment so far, but turned back reluctantly in 3 or 4 fathoms of water" (Bowdich, fol. 174). He made the channel between the breakers about a mile wide; now it is reduced by nearly a quarter. The next explorer was the late Lieut. Dolben, commanding H.M.S. 'Blood-hound,' a most active and ambitious young officer, who was miserably drowned on the Lagos Bar. Poor fellow! he had safely crossed with me the most dangerous breakers of the "Seven Rivers" between Brass and Bonny, places so risky that they are never attempted by Europeans. He entered the Volta at 1.30 P.M. on October 28th, 1861, and came out at 6.30 A.M. on November 5th. During his week's boating he ascended nearly 80 miles to Medika, where the rapidly narrowing stream has bars of coarse sandstone stretching right across. Opposite "One Man Village" (Medika) the depth is 10 feet. The people of Kpong or Pong, a large place 7 miles beyond, where the river changes its east-south-eastern course for a north-south direction, bring their palm-oil and other produce by land, or shoot the rapids in small canoes. From Medika the Bossum Prah bears north-west and by west. According to the map of Herr Laissle, engineer and architect to the Basel Mission (March, 1862), the Volta forks at Doti, some 30 miles north of Pong; the eastern arm being called Amu,† and the western Afram. The latter is comparatively unimportant, and upsets the theory of Bowdich, who is disposed to make the Bossum‡ Prah a western arm of the Volta: thus he would convert the whole Gold Coast into a Delta of the "Winding River." Mr. Dupuis makes the two streams head close to each other. The people speak of upper "lakes," probably enlargements of the bed and not true reservoirs, as the water often floods 20 feet and subsides as suddenly; a proof that the river rises in or traverses high land—Mr. Dupuis derives it from the "Sarga" Range, north of Kumasi. I send you Lieut. Dolben's and Herr Laissle's maps, with a few notes of my own, and I need not point out their peculiar interest and value at this moment, when Captain Glover is massing a force of Hausas at Ada, and Captain Butler is collecting native troops for a flank attack upon Kumasi.

The usual dirty little intrigues, the "*tracasseries* and other *asserries*" of a slave station began even before we arrived. A certain Mr. Bossman, agent to Mr. J. Hanson, at once warned us by letter that Sr. Gerardo Lima was sending round messages to the chiefs as we (two) were about to "break" the town. The Adas had been startled last October by a visit of three boats carrying the party of Governor E. B. Andrews; and although the only effect had been to call the sand-bank on which he stepped "Andrews Island," the negroes did not expect much good from the renewal of English civilities. Then Herr Supercago Unger, of

* He also canoed three days up the Chamah (Bossum Prah) River: which probably was not known to Commodore Comorell.

† Others say that Amu is the Ayigbe or Ewe name of the Volta generally.

‡ Bossum for Bosom is a demon, spirit, Fetish, &c. (in Oji), to whom Nyankupong or Nyonmo (in Ga), the UNKNOWNABLE, entrusts certain powers, and who is therefore worshipped and propitiated.

the Bremen ship 'Marie Louise' (Messrs. Victor) declared that he was offered "chattels" by Sr. Lima, who had some 500 stowed away in his "barracoon": this was not improbable, as Lieut. Dolben had met a Spanish dealer upon the upper river. I believe that in most cases of fatal assault upon Europeans, Africans are actuated rather by fear than by hate: they are startled like wild beasts, the preservative instinct acts without leaving time for thought, and the spear is used at haste to be regretted at leisure. This, however, is a very broad rule, proved by a multitude of exceptions.

We devoted the second day to inspecting Ada. A trough canoe, hired at Joo, carried us along the left bank of the miry stream which sweeps round from north-east to south-west and east-south-east. The smallest breadth is half a mile, and the channel is broken by many long islands and islets of mud and mangrove, bush and reeds, which at low water are seen connected with sunken banks. The shore, projecting spits here and there, is an upper shelf of grass and thin scatters of shrubs: below it stretches the mud-flat which supports curlews and crabs, and here I saw, for the only time in the Volta, a small crocodile, sunning itself upon a bit of drift-wood.* We passed two creek-mouths leading to the western lagoon, and, following the canoe or southern passage defined by the largest of the islands, we landed at the bosquet of cocoas denoting Ada, after paddling and poling an hour.

We walked straight to Fort Kongenstein, a redoubt standing some 30 feet above the town, which lies to the north, provided with four bastions about 150 feet long, and formerly mounting some twenty guns: of these, several were thrown like logs upon the banks. The enceinte showed the usual tall rooms for the head factor and officers, and the warehouses were outside the "compound." All was in the foulest condition, and much of the cut stone had been carried off to build a house for Sr. Lima in the southern part of the town. The fort dates from within the last hundred years; its object being to overawe, they say, the Awunahs of the opposite bank, who murdered a Danish surgeon. The tenants neglected this grand position, or rather used it only for slave-trading, and reduced their establishment to a serjeant and a few blacks: thus they never could keep their lieges in proper order. The fort was deserted in 1819, but not the less did the Danes claim sole possession of the Volta.

The rest of the tenements were the usual swish, and they may lodge 3000 souls. The population struck me as peculiarly dark and large: the men were the burliest that I had seen in Guinea, and they had an excessively independent bearing. There is a great difference of aspect in the townspeople, possibly the result of the slave trade and of European officials. Mostly they had the features of the "Guinea-nigger," as before described: one of them, if his wool had been shaven and a mustachio supplied, might have passed for a dark Hindú, whilst not a few had the simian and prognathous faces of the lowest organisations, an exaggeration of the ugly African which may

* I also heard of, but did not see, "cat-fish." In the Soubine branch of the Bossum-Prah they are said to weigh 10 to 15 lbs., the result of being fed, like Roman lampreys, upon slaves' flesh; and to crawl up the bank when called to meals.

be found in Asia, America, and Europe—notably in Western Galway—wherever man is barbarised and degraded by his surroundings. And these three typical forms are to be met with, more or less, in almost every West African people.

Some of that “necessary evil,” the “chattering, finery-loving, ungovernable” sex, of which Cato so politely speaks, are said to be pretty. I can answer for their size; these “armfuls of charms,” look far too large for their little canoes, and viewed from the rear they are not to be distinguished from the ruder sex; moreover, they seem to be exceptionally hairy, hirsute of face as well as limb. I will not venture upon the extensive subject of relative male and female size; it depends partly upon race and partly upon climate, which governs racial habits. Here the equine rule of equality in size, weight, and endurance prevails: it would be easy to quote instances where the differences of the *falconidae* and the *gallinacea* extend to the unfeathered biped.

We sent a message of “no bad palaver” to “King” Akwáku, upon whom officials as a rule call: there can be no greater mistake. At Sr. Lima’s we met the Rev. Mr. Bábláyá, the head Fetish-man, who wore his canonicals in the shape of white and black beads. A huge and paunchy ecclesiastic, not unlike an Ashanti eunuch, this

“Burly, round, fat, oily man of God,”

as Thomson sings, took no notice of us “infidels,” nor did we of him. The Ada priests are said to possess a poison which, like the Hindostani “Post” (poppy-seed), deprives men of their wits without endangering their lives. The people, hemmed in on both sides by the two great despotisms, have carried independence to the utmost point: now they refuse to allow passage for goods up stream, lest the permission should injure their monopoly. It is to be hoped that the Ashanti war will correct all such negro restrictions.

Ada lies on the western bank of the river, at the head of the reach which bends to east-south-east. The power of position will some day make it a great centre of trade. It is within twenty-four hours’ journey of Ningo-cone, and thirty-six of Kpong, so that its sanitaría are close at hand. The soil is sandy, and the climate is notably healthier than Accra. It has any extent of water-carriage down creeks leading south-westward to its great lagoon, and eastward to Quettah (Kwita). There is good ground behind the settlement fit for growing any tropical produce, and the sea, as well as the river, abounds in fish. I recommended for it a swish redoubt, with a river front of 40 yards, and mounting four guns, with cavaliers or bastions to defend flanks and rear: the gate to be of iron, as these people have learned to burn down wood. With a company of police stationed here to regulate the river-trade, by this time we should expect to see Ada contain 30,000, instead of 3000, inhabitants. Mr. Freeman, who believes that the people of the west bank, between the mouth and Pong (Kpong), number at least 27,000 souls, proposed to build a fort on the sand-spit near Sakanya, with concrete base, and upper works of native cement. It would, he declares, command the entrance and enable us to utilise the gold-fields on the Fetish Rocks to the east of the stream. But it might be swept away by the

first flood; and indeed this part of the river is ever changing.

I afterwards visited Jela Kofi (Jellah Coffee) and Quettah, where the ruins of Prinzenstein still lie. But both are essentially foreign to the Gold Coast, and must therefore remain undescribed; if you wish it, however, I can send an account of the Slave Lagoons, having canoed over every mile of the line from Quettah to Lagos. Meanwhile, if the report be true that the people of “Jellah Coffee”—long the station of our coal-hulk—combined with their neighbours of Quettah, have, in sympathy with Ashanti, burned down factories and compelled Europeans to quit the country, I may suggest that after the fall of Coomassie, their sanguinary friends might be permitted to “make” the much wished for “beach” anywhere east of the Volta River: they will soon effect lodgment, despite all the Awúnhas and Crepees.

Our return to Accra, *viâ* the same line, showed nothing new. The only event of it which remains in my memory is a startling which we received near Tutume Kofi. We were jogging along far before our men, in that early dawn when a trifle of mist exaggerates the size of objects, and suddenly we saw, right ahead of the path, shaggy, brown masses, not unlike bears. “Dog-faced baboons, by Jove!” whispered my companion. We hurriedly agreed to ride forward without taking any notice, and, if attacked, to dismount, to tether the horses’ forehands with our pocket handkerchiefs, and to “form square” by standing back to back, the better to use our swords and revolvers. These cynocephals, when in numbers, are sometimes very dangerous. On this occasion they were in a playful mood, running before us, squatting upon the mounds and thick bushes, and exposing their rainbow-coloured quarters as they sprang and dropped from place to place. Yet it was a relief to us when they disappeared.

On the second day I was beginning to suffer from “fidgetty fever,” in consequence of the slow pace, and, with my companion’s leave, started at a gallop from Prampran. Reaching home, I sent news of his safety, and heard that all his household were in tears and deepest grief: a woman, *splendide mendax*, had come all the way from Christiansborg to tell the lie about the “golden dog.”*

Accra was not a pleasant place in July, 1862. Men who remembered as far back as March, 1858, when Colonel Bird ruled the land, declared that since that time they had never felt an earthquake. But on the morning of April 14th, 1862, there had been a severe shock, followed by many lighter movements, and lastly by the most severe: some counted a total of seventeen, others of twenty-five. The direction was supposed to be from north to south, or from inland to sea, and it was reported to be the tail of a great earth-storm, whose focus was behind Sierra Leone. A rumbling, like the rolling of guns, had been heard under the main square; the shocks were felt by the

* The expenses of the month, half of which was spent in travelling, were not heavy. For instance:—

Hammock to Beulah Gardens	£1 1 3
Ditto ,, Ajumanti Hills	2 0 0
Trip to Ada (including horse at 2s. 6d. } per diem)	4 3 0
Hotel bill at Accra	3 11 6

Total ... £10 15 9

ships in the roads, and they were reported to have been far more severe up-country. The houses at Accra were much shaken, the rains fell heavier than usual. August, the worst month in the year, was approaching, and great sickness was the result.

A "curious coincidence" happened to me on July 10th, and made me pass for a tolerably malevolent magician. The Moslems of Accra were accustomed to visit me, especially three Hausa men, and a certain old Adama, who ignores his birth-place: he had been long in the Brazil, and he spoke tolerable Portuguese. These honest fellows, who consulted me about their gold discoveries, were not particular; they had seen their countrymen, Shítá and others, at Lagos wearing the English dress and conforming to European customs: the only remark was "Dunya!" (the world) meaning that life sometimes requires these sacrifices.

On the morning in question they had begged me to read out a chapter of the Koran, and when taking up the Book it opened at the chapter (99) of earthquakes, beginning "Iza zulzilati'l arzu"—when the earth shall quake.* Hardly had I finished it when Major de Ruvignes, walked in and, dismissing my friends, I set out with him for a stroll along the sands to the west of the town. The morning was close and cloudy; what little breeze there was came from the south-west, under a leaden sky and over a leaden sea. At 8.10 A.M., as we were returning amongst the rocks about three quarters of a mile off, there was a sudden rumbling like a distant thunder-clap, the sands seemed to wave like a shaken carpet, and we both staggered forwards. Others also described the ground as "rising and falling like the waters of a lagoon." I looked with apprehension at the sea, but the direction of the shock was apparently from west-north-west, and the line was too oblique to produce one of those awful waves, 70 feet high, which have swept tall ships over the roofs of cities.

We ran as fast as our legs could carry us to the town and found everything in the wildest confusion; half the stone buildings had cracked and fallen. The "Big House" and Mr. John Hanson's were mere ruins; the Court-room had come to pieces, and the police cells yawned open. I distinctly saw that the level of the rock-ledge under Accra, between James Fort and Crèvecreur, had been upraised from the sea; canoes had before passed over what was now dry. Another shock at 8.20 A.M., and a third about 10.45, completed the disasters, split every standing wall, and were fatal to the three forts. The clerk of the works, sent from England to report upon the state of what belonged to us, declared that it would be useless to attempt repairs.

There was a singular scene in the town, where five deaths were reported. At Mendoza the great earthquake was followed by general "looting," at Accra by a grand outburst of debauchery. These accidents seem as a rule to loosen all the bonds of society. The negroes crowded into the streets, drinking and making Fetish: the women, with heads in twist like old thrum-mops, and brown legs, striped and stockinged with chalk, ran about, sang, danced, clapped hands and "did customs." A native gentleman of facetious turn

began to "sky-lark," and came out attired in pork-pie and petticoat, and, if general report be credited, there were not only scenes in the broadest style of Ostade, but doings still more disreputable.

In my journal I find the notes "earthquakes" and "earthquakes again" every day from the 10th to the 15th of July, the date of my escape. These, however, were minor effects; the shocks had shrunk to mere vibrations, unaccompanied by subterranean thunder. We had no seismometer, but all agreed that the heaviest waves, as the walls showed, were from north to south; the mildest from east to west. The oldest houses stood the best; yet, every morning a line of white plaster on the floor showed where they had suffered during the night. Bad tidings came from all directions. Lagos was reported to have sunk bodily, probably because the mail was late; and Accra, where the *appetitus delusionis* appears to be strong, is the head-quarters of what Crimean men called Shaves. At Prampram the stores upon the beach were knocked about, and the "boys" would not enter the houses, from whose ceilings fell large flakes: the missionaries "shook in their shoes" but continued praying—apparently with scant results. At Akim the earthquakes were especially severe; the hill strata were so much tossed and broken up that all the people flocked to the diggings and dispensed with the shafts generally sunk. At "Jellah Coffee" the walls of "Tay" the chief's house were split, and the shocks were felt by ships ten miles further east. When the wave reached Agbome, the late Gelele of Dahome, with characteristic filial piety, exclaimed, "Don't you see that my father is calling for blood; he is angry because we send him no more men!" and at once ordered three prisoners from Ishagga to take the road of Ku-to-men, Hades, or Dead-land.

Wooden sheds were at once rigged up at Accra, but sleeping so near the wet ground, just after the heaviest rains, caused a perfect plague of fever and dysentery. Some pitched tents, others built native huts, and others slept in the verandahs, ready to "run for it" if occasion required. At last the heavy weather compelled nearly all to shelter themselves within the ruins, and then, as usual after such severe trials of nerve, the worst sickness followed. Many who had felt no fear during the shocks, suffered from nightmares, and groped about the dark, shouting out that they were buried alive. I confess to have seen, with the utmost pleasure, an old friend, 'Bloodhound,' anchor in the roads on July the 13th. My fellow traveller, Commander Stokes, offered me a passage, and, after affectionate adieux, on the morning of the 15th, I bade adieu to the Castle o' Balwearie and its last earthquake.

"The literature of the Ashanti war threatens to be considerable," remark the papers, and there will be no want of medical books. I see that Surgeon-General Gordon, C.B., is about to supplement Dr. Horton with his *Life on the Gold Coast*—in especial reference to death. But we can hardly have too much of "sanitary precautions;" and perhaps a ten years' experience of Africa may justify even a non-medical man in offering an account of the system which brought him out of his trials hale and strong.

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* The verb is in the past, but it bears evidently a future sense, referring to Judgment Day.