

records the discovery of the long-sought termination of the Niger,—the river of Herodotus, ‘full of crocodiles and flowing to the east,’—the Nile of Strabo,—the Arabian ‘Nile of the Negroes,’ pouring into the ‘Sea of Darkness,’—the object of more inquiry and the occasion of more effort, perhaps, than any other locality on the face of the globe.”

Making remarks on the capability of Africa, it is said—

“The palm-tree is too well known to require description. As Lander some where remarks, it seems peculiarly intended by Providence for the untutored and destitute savage. It affords him a pleasant drink, and indeed the common and favourite drink, especially along the coast. The wine, as the juice is called, is obtained precisely as the juice of the maple is in this country for a different purpose. A hole is bored in the trunk of a tree, a spout made of a leaf inserted, and through this the liquor flows into a calabash beneath, which, holding two or three gallons, will probably be filled during the day. It soon assumes a milky appearance, and is generally used in that state; if kept longer, it acquires rather a bitter flavor. The palm-tree also affords a valuable oil, of which immense quantities have been heretofore taken off by foreigners, particularly by Liverpool traders, from the coast and the lower part of the Niger and other rivers. The palm-wood is an excellent material in building the simple dwellings of the natives.

“This tree becomes scarce as you advance into the interior, but from the Journal, as well as from Park and Caillie, we learn that its place is well supplied with the *mi-cadania*, or butter-tree, which yields a very savoury and nutritious kind of vegetable marrow. The tree is said to resemble the oak. The nut is enveloped in an agreeable pulpy substance, and the kernel is about as large as our chestnut. This is exposed in the sun to dry, after which it is pounded very fine and boiled: the oily particles float; and when cool, they are skimmed off, and made into little cakes fit for immediate use. \* \* \*

Not to pursue the catalogue further, it would really appear that no country is furnished with greater capacities than the whole of Western Africa, on the banks and in the latitude of the Niger and its vast and various branches, for supporting a prodigious population. Already indeed the soil swarms with human inhabitants, in scarcely a less proportion than the streams with fish, or the forests with game. Immensely large, though not indeed elegant cities, are more frequent than, without so good evidence as we have, could possibly have been believed. Marts, fairs, festivals, and even horse-races, (and a most amusing picture is given in the Journal of one at Boossa) attended, some of them, by thousands of people, from all quarters, occur regularly, the year round; for no people on earth are more addicted to society, sport, hustle, or traffic.”

In concluding the Reviewer says:

“We cannot dismiss these exceedingly entertaining volumes, without a passing acknowledgment of that noble liberality which, for the last half century in particular, has distinguished the British Government, and not less the Association for promoting African