

be to transfer the volumes to our columns. We give a few more samples:—

"The most dreadful of the Ashantee festivals, Bantama, or 'death wake,' now approached. The King went early in the morning of February 5th, to Bantama, where the remains of his deceased predecessors were preserved in a long building, approached by a gallery, and partitioned into small cells, the entrances of which were hung with silken curtains. In these apartments reposed the skeletons of the kings, fastened together with gold wire, and placed in richly ornamented coffins, each being surrounded by what had given him most pleasure during his life. On this occasion every skeleton was placed on a chair in his cell to receive the royal visitor, who, on entering, offered it food; after which a band played the favorite melodies of the departed. The poor victim selected as a sacrifice, with a knife thrust through his cheeks, was then dragged forward and slain, the King washing the skeleton with his blood. Thus was each cell visited in turn, sacrifice after sacrifice being offered, till evening closed ere the dreadful round was completed.

"We had heard the blowing of horns and beating of drums throughout the day, and were told that nearly thirty men had been slain. These, alas! were not all, for at six o'clock, after the King had returned, the horn and the drum again sounded, betokening that more victims were yet to fall, and far into the night the melancholy sound continued. Two blasts of the horn signified 'death! death! three beats of the drum 'cut it off! and a single beat from another drum announced 'the head has dropped!' Powerless as we were, amid the fearful darkness around, to hinder such atrocities, we could only sigh and pray that our captivity might bring about a better state of things."

By and by the King's youngest brother died, and here is what followed:—

"The deceased youth was to be followed to the grave by slaves only, some of his own, and others who had long been languishing in irons. It was expected that every great chief would offer a gift of human life, and many men who were going about free fell beneath the knife of the odumfo. Up to midday the King and his followers had been sitting at the north side of the market place under the tree where we used to preach. Around him were crowds playing the wildest music, who all fasted, but drank the more. These offerings from the chiefs were presented—dresses, silk cushions, gold, ornaments, sheep, MEN! In the afternoon he resumed his seat in the

market-place, and all who had guns fired them; at this signal some victims fell.

"M. Bonnat and Kuhne, who were in the street for a few moments, saw three odumfos rush upon a man standing among the crowd, pierce his cheeks with a knife, and order him to stand up; then they drove him before them with his hands bound behind like a sheep to the slaughter.

"The deceased prince had besides several wives of royal blood, three of low birth, who when they heard of his death ran away and hid themselves. The King supplied their places by other girls, who, painted white and hung with gold ornaments, sat around the coffin to drive away the flies—and were strangled at the funeral. The same fate befel the six pages, who, similarly ornamented and painted, crouched around the coffin, which was carried out at midnight. For three hours previously the poor lads had known they were doomed to go with the unhappy women to the grave.

"On Friday, the day of the 'king's soul' (he was born on Friday), no blood must be shed, and all the bodies of the slain were dragged away early in the morning to the entrance of Apetosini. The Fantees were filled with horror at the sight; they had witnessed the murder of twenty human sacrifices, some of them lads of ten years, others old men. We wondered how the people could sit down and eat after they had pointed three days' fast. The town was quieter, and the King divided sheep among his chiefs. The funeral ceremonies were continued on Saturday, the 6th, by every one having their heads shaved.

"The dancing women attended at the palace to comfort the King, for which they received presents of gold. On this occasion a princess quarrelled, and allowed herself to utter insulting words. The King ordered her to be taken out on the spot, and not only did she lose her head, but a princess and other Ashantee nobles fell on the same day. It was really a reign of terror, none could understand whether it was an outburst of ungoverned passion, or an intimation of absolute power. Monday week after the death, a fast was again observed, and we knew too well the usual accompaniment. We could only sigh and cry to the Lord of hosts, and we knew that He would hear us, although we were taunted by the question, 'Where is God?'"

The horrors of war are sadly illustrated in these pages. Crowds of prisoners to be seen now and again—gaunt and dragging their famished babes and children—starvation, disease—cruelty in every form; no mercy to the victims in light in torture, blood and death.