

over which there is likewise commonly hung grass or some other thing by way of charm. Around the left arm is tied another string, under which is stuck a knife, and most commonly a tobacco pipe, which string thus serves by way of pocket. They are, personally, a well-formed race of men, but the habit they have of smearing themselves, head and all, with palm oil and clay, and their extreme nudity, are far from pleasing. They also disfigure their faces much, by gashing them all over with a knife, so as to leave large scars, making their countenances hideous enough. The yam is the principal article they cultivate. A few coconuts are also grown, but they do not care for the plantain, and they carefully avoid planting a fruit tree, from the superstitious notion, that he who does so, is sure to die. The goat is not plentiful with them, cattle they have none, and their chief animal food is the flesh of fowls and antelopes, various species of which are found on the island. Those on the shore employ themselves a good deal in fishing. The poor women are forbidden by custom, the use of most kinds of animal food, in order that, as I suppose, the larger share may fall to the men.

Slavery is unknown amongst them, and, notwithstanding their naked and filthy habits, Mr. Diboll supposes that chastity, at least in the women, is preserved. In these respects they are superior to the continental tribes. A man looks out for his wife while she is an infant, and he betroths her, so that she is henceforth looked upon as his wife. He gives her mother presents, and provides her with food for her child, till she comes to marriageable age, so that the girl is, in fact, property. Should she violate her engagement to him, her hand is struck off, and she is repudiated. Before the marriage is completed, the young woman is shut up, whether as in Calabar, for the purpose of fattening, I did not learn, nor what particular ceremony, if any, is celebrated as a marriage rite. Polygamy is practised, but not nearly to such an extent as with us, nor are the married women at all secluded.

They are, I believe, honest. Mr. Diboll said that nothing was missed out of his house, whatever articles might be lying about; though some of these, such as knives, would be of great value in their eyes, while others would appear useless to them, from their total ignorance of the usages of civilized life. To illustrate their simplicity in this respect, I may mention, that one day Mr. Diboll took a Chief from the mountains, on board one of the mail packets, which lay in the cove of Clarence. He was brought into the saloon, and, after taking a survey of the apartment, he cast his eyes on the ground and sat mute in astonishment. At length he nudged a Clarence man who had accompanied him on board, and asked, "Where am I?" "In the canoe," he replied. "I cannot believe you," said the Chief. He was then shown the engine, when, turning to his friend, he said "Me say you are devil-men that is, supernatural beings—and say me not truly, what man could make that?"

In their civil polity, each town or small tribe is independent, and is governed by its Chiefs. They have their first, second, third, and occasionally their fourth king, at the same time. The first is in general an old man, able to claim but little influence, and when he dies, the next in rank steps into his place, as a matter of course. The offices, if not in theory hereditary, seem in practice so, but it is the nephew who succeeds the uncle, not the son the father, a rule of succession which also prevails among the Fantees at Cape Coast, and likely among other tribes. The men of the town or tribe assemble in the market-place, the gate of the city, for the discussion of any public matter. In that belonging to the tribe we visited, a great many conch-shells were stuck upon a stick in the middle of the space as offerings, and two large snake skins were hung alongside of them. The women have a curious custom of carrying out their infants and making them touch these skins, in order, as they say, that their children may grow long like the snakes. On occasions of public discussion, the throne of the king is a stone, fenced with charms, placed at the side of the space; and if a party wishes any new law enacted, or any change upon the old, the spokesman takes his seat in the middle of the space, so that all may hear what passes in the discussion. They thus debate everything with open doors.

Their instrument of war is the spear, formed of a species of hard-wood, sharpened at one end, and cut into barbs. Though but a slender rod, tapering at one end to a mere wand, yet it is thrown with great precision, and with much greater effect than one would suppose. The musket is now coming into use, but from its expense, and in general its worthlessness as it reaches the hands of the Boobies, it is not very