

by the dreaded power of witchcraft or wizardry, and the individual on whom suspicion fixed itself, or whom the ju-ju man on being consulted accused, was subjected to the ordeal. The method of administering it was to pound the *esere*, a kind of bean, throw it into water, and make the accused drink it. If the stomach rejected the poisonous draught, he was acquitted; if not rejected, it was sure to issue in death, and the accused was held forever guilty. Many perished through this superstition; but now, even the appeal to the ordeal by individuals anxious to vindicate themselves from suspicion or charge of evil is discountenanced.

An effective breach is made in that most unnatural of their customs, infanticide. They are desirous of having a numerous offspring, and in his prayer which the patriarch of the town made on sacrificing the goat to Ekpo before the palaver-house to provide an Egbo feast, he supplicated that children might be given them, that their town might increase. The dark superstition which Satan had taught them led them in certain cases to destroy their infants, and the strongest feeling which God has implanted in the human breast, that of the love of the mother for her new-born babe, was turned by it into hatred and loathing. Children, rescued from the terrible doom to which this superstition devoted them, are now growing up amongst us; and though the crime, I am sorry to say, is still too often committed, it no longer has the force of a country custom, the observance of which must be maintained in its integrity.

The practice of human sacrifice for the dead, which ever filled the land with blood, has for several years been abolished. The immediate occurrence which, by Mr. Anderson's energetic action, seconded by our countrymen in the river secured this, took place at Duke Town. On the death of an individual of some note, a number of victims were slaughtered and buried with him, and others were penned up for slaughter. This information Mr. Anderson got from refugees who took shelter at the mission house; and asking the aid of our countrymen, which was heartily given, he charged the authorities of the town with their dead, and demanded that those shut up should be let go. The facts, as usual, were denied; but Mr. Anderson was sure of his information, and proposed that the grave should be examined in order to test the matter. They then confessed what had been done, liberated those in bonds, and after the heads of Duke and Creek Towns had consulted together, they resolved to accede to our constant remonstrances, and the remonstrances of our fellow-countrymen, official and otherwise, and with much ceremony proclaimed the abolition of the custom. We rejoiced in this happy issue to our efforts to bring to an end this custom of blood, which no longer pollutes our land.

Such changes, irrespective of the higher influences of the gospel, have passed over the native community, and in themselves amply repay the Home Church for all she has expended on Calabar. The gospel has much more to do amongst the tribes of intertropical Africa than among the semi-civilized Asiatic nations. Their customs of blood, for the most part a legacy of the slave trade, have to be extinguished; and the broken fragments of nations left by the devastations of that terrible scourge have to be united, their tribal antagonisms removed, and formed by the peace-making power of the truth into civilized commonwealths. This great work the gospel will gradually accomplish, and make a people of such as are no people. He states that around the older stations the Sabbath is as well observed as in most of the towns of Britain. There are now four native churches, with 100 converts.