

better colonised, and facilities for intercourse between its different ports increase, the dread of the climate and its dangers will still more diminish, and that missionary operations will be carried on in Western and Central Africa as extensively and securely as they are in South Africa or Hindustan.

The general health of the mission agents, and of the shipping in the river, when I left, was pretty good. Mrs. Edgerley, you are aware, had been suffering much, but was nearly better. I am happy to add, that not only did we leave all friends well, but in peace and love. Whatever differences of opinion may at any time have existed between some of us—as may be expected while so many among persons associated in a great work, on which all are intent, with entire freedom of opinion and action—they have ceased; and for a long time we have enjoyed a delightful harmony in our intercourse and operations, which I trust will never again be interrupted.

*Progress made in acquiring the language, and in printing.*—By some more than others has progress been made, according to their age and other circumstances. But either in speaking or reading it, in writing or printing it, every one has been helping forward the most praiseworthy and most important preliminary work of mastering the native tongue. Several are able freely to speak in it, though perhaps not very perfectly, while others have only attained to write it by careful preparation, and to read what they have thus previously prepared. Besides the books already printed in that language, and of which copies have been sent home to you, I now present an unpretending, but I hope a useful little book, called the *Calabar Primer*—a series of progressive spelling and reading lessons, systematically arranged. It is the last thing I was engaged on before coming away. Mr. Goldie had his series of New Testament lessons in the press, and Mr. Anderson has sent home, by me, a translation of the Gospel by John, to be printed in this country.

*Notices with regard to the schools and young men.*—The schools at Creek Town and Duke Town were in a healthy and encouraging condition. Our school children are like a little army of auxiliaries preparing to maintain the conflict hereafter against old heathenism and devilism, and already exercising their youthful abilities with such good will on the right side, as materially to help and encourage us in our warfare. There is not a good work on which we have entered for the improvement of Calabar, but we have had a band of the school-boys at Creek Town on our right and left hands helping therein. The growth of many of them in general, and especially in Scriptural knowledge, and of some few very obviously in Christian feeling and principle and visible godliness, so as to lead us to hope that they are not far from the kingdom of heaven, is such as I can reflect on and state with pleasure. May the Lord perfect what has been begun.

Before passing from the subject of our schools, I must observe, that of the young men who were formerly at them, the greater part still hold by the missionaries, and take part with us, in all the great questions of social and moral improvement that are agitated there, and are also more or less attentive to the means of their own improvement. Some of them, indeed, are very careless, yet there are but few who have altogether lost what good they seemed to have got, and gone back to their native condition. On the other hand, two or three seem decided for the cause of Christ and their own salvation. These two extremes, at present small, will be augmented, doubtless from time to time, from that larger middle class whose feelings and judgments are with us, while the flesh and the world yet hold them back from their Lord and Saviour.

The Sabbath continued to obtain a fair outward observance at Creek Town, and I believe also in some of the plantations, so far as consisted in the stopping of ordinary work and play, and attending meetings for Christian instruction. The public meetings there continued to be well attended, and also the private yard meetings. I may note that in these latter, inquiries were always instituted as to who had been at the public meeting, and what they learned there, which were usually answered in a satisfactory manner. The same was done in the Sabbath School, and in our Sabbath evening house meeting, and most generally with interesting results.

Of King Eyo, I cannot yet say that he is near the kingdom of God.—Yet the strict attention that he pays to the word of God preached, the fulness and general fidelity with which he delivers it again to his people, the deep feeling he sometimes manifests under the power of the word, and the influence which it has exercised frequently in controlling his temper and conduct, together with the interest which he obviously takes in the success of our mission, and his uniform support of our operations at his own town, leave us not without hope that he is really on the Lord's side, and that the Spirit of the Lord will yet work great things in him and by him.

Young Eyo, in whom so many are interested, has not gone back from his avowal of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and obedience to Him; nor is his general conduct inconsistent with such a profession; yet neither has he gone forward as we all expected and so greatly desired. He seems to fear the stronger obligations, which the profession that the Lord has ordained, by baptism and the communion supper, would lay on him; or at least, fears that he would not be able worthily to maintain such a high standing. I believe that he is still inquiring his way to Zion with his face thitherward, and have hopes that as his convictions seem to be striking their roots more deeply, an increased growth outwardly will in due time appear.

*The decay of superstition, with examples.*—The barbarous usages and base superstitions of the people received by traditions from their fathers,

continue to decline. We do indeed meet strong opposition sometimes in our humane and enlightened efforts. But that must be expected. Opposing forces create commotions.

The decadence of old superstitions is evidenced also from the diminished regard paid last year to the *Indok*, or biennial purgation of Calabar from evil spirits; and the sport the school-boys made of the *Nabikim* or rude images, set before their houses at that season, tumbling them down, and running off with them to throw away in the bush. Some of the householders laughed at these boyish tricks; while others, who kept watch at their house doors over these figures, found the perseverance of the boys too much for their vigilance.

*Idols*, or sacred things, have fallen greatly into disrepute, whether those which exist in the form of old trees and other natural objects, or those which are prepared as charms for averting evil or obtaining good.—Hundreds there are now, both old and young, especially the latter, and of both sexes, who utterly disregard them as foolish things; though the grown women, from their greater seclusion, are the slowest to get free of their superstitions. In like manner the whole practices of *Idong* and *Ebo*, we want English words for such things, set at naught by hundreds, who neither fear nor favour them. Witchcraft and sorcery, till lately universally believed in, is beginning to be ridiculed by many, who have learned to see and acknowledge the providential government of God, and to pray to him for all they need, whether deliverance from evil or the obtaining of good.

*The use of the prison-nut*, both in legal investigations and in judicial punishment (if such terms as legal and judicial can be applied to any practice in that country), is also getting into disrepute and disuse. In Creek Town, since that fearful night-scene before the palaver-house, which I reported last year, when we succeeded in so checking the proceedings as to save two out of the three victims, no new case had occurred. At that time, King Eyo said, and probably with truth, that but for him, twenty instead of three would have had to chop the nut; and that he was present to limit the proceedings which he could not wholly prevent. I have heard of cases since then, where the use of the nut was proposed, and repudiated by King Eyo. He used to keep a large supply of these nuts in his house, ready for every occasion; and I am assured that he keeps none now, having abandoned the use of them in his own affairs. His utter rejection of all appeal to this ordeal on the occasion of his own house being burned, was a triumph of civilisation and humanity.

The fearful loss of life by the nut recently at Duke Town, when Duke Archibong died, does not disprove these remarks. I look on that murderous proceeding as almost the expiring effort of a dying cause, which will tend powerfully to the abolition of that absurd and diabolical test. It showed itself then and there in its true character, as an instrument of murder. Legal sanctions, and judicial forms were quite discarded. By an arrangement two years previously, it had been prohibited in private cases, and placed entirely under the cognisance of Ebo law. But Ebo law failed to regulate or restrain it; and therefore we may hope that the native authorities will be convinced that it must be prohibited altogether. They have received an awful warning.

*The late abolishing human sacrifices kept.*—Such full details were published at the time, when humanity triumphed in the abolition of human sacrifices at Calabar, that I need only refer here to the manner in which the Ebo law on that subject has been observed. At Creek Town I believe that it has been duly maintained. Some chief men have died there since the law was made, men for whom slaves would certainly have been sacrificed in former times, and I heard not a surmise of any infringement of the statute on the occasion. Suspicion exists that it was violated in one instance during the past year, at Old Town, on the death of the nephew of the old chief. At Duke Town it has been observed, except in so far as the victims of the nut at the death of Duke Archibong, may be considered as sacrifices to his remains. These were not indeed slaves, nor claim avowedly to honour his death and fill up his grave; yet it is probable that the death of so many on that occasion may have been caused by the grief and fury of the "queen mother," being restrained from venting itself in the old way. Her murderous excesses were of such a fearful kind, and produced such unexpected and alarming results, tending to the destruction of herself and the whole town, as to deter others from treading the same dangerous path. At the village of *Elunda* the law was broken; but the crime having been discovered and exposed by us, the perpetrators were punished by a severe fine. No other attempt at renewing the old barbarous usage has come to my knowledge.

*Specimens of newly discovered enormities.*—We are never done discovering new enormities in the murderous system of black heathenism.—It is but recently that we have learned, that formerly it was an annual custom to sacrifice a human being some way down the river, to promote the arrival of new ships for trade. It seems have ceased for some years trade being good, but we hear that last year it was revived, when Duke Archibong and other chiefs of his town, being hard up for coppers, went to Parrot Island to make sacrifice for new ships. We find it difficult, however, to obtain certain proof of the fact.

Again, at Tom Skotts villages, near the mouth of the river, where the people live by fishing, we have discovered that they annually devote a man, by fastening him to a stake in the river, at low water, to be covered by the rising tide, and devoured by the sharks, with the view of promoting the success of their fisheries. A head-man of one of these villages being at our house one day, when spoken with on the subject, said, that they never knew that God did not like them to do so, farther than Abia-iding had told them it was good to bring fish. He added, that if we