

a poor little lame boy, apparently somewhat idiotic, sitting all alone in the town or in its outskirts. When all others ran away, he was unable to accompany them, and it is supposed that his master did not consider him worth the carrying. He remained unscathed amid the destruction that played around him. He was taken on board the man-of-war and kindly treated. The Commander sent him up to us next morning, and he is now with us at the mission house. Poor fellow! he understands not a word of either English or Efik, so that he has not a single person to converse with. We trust that God has purposes of mercy towards him. Solitarily did he bear the brunt of sixty shot and shell which were thrown into the town. Alone, yet not alone."

Thus we have given from the papers in our possession, as brief an account as was practicable of this sad affair. It remains to be seen whether it will operate to the advantage or the disadvantage of the mission; whether it will increase or diminish the beneficial influence of the white man over the native mind. We abstain from comments; but it will be obvious to our readers that certain very grave questions are raised by these proceedings, which the committee on Foreign Missions will require fully to consider; such as, Is it right for a British consul to order the destruction of a native town on the complaint of those who are merely visitants, and in opposition to the protest of British residents? Is it right in a British consul, on the complaint of those trading in the neighborhood, to destroy a town at which a mission station has been formed, and thus abolish that mission in the face of the protest of the missionary? Has a British consul authority, not merely to destroy a native town, where such a mission has for years existed, but to prevent its being rebuilt? Has not the Church a claim upon the government for losses sustained by such a transaction? If the first three questions be answered in the affirmative, then may Duke Town and Creek Town, and the other native towns along the coast be destroyed, and the missions which have been formed at them, and which are the hope of Africa, be extinguished.

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#### THE DESTRUCTION BY FIRE OF DUKE TOWN MISSION HOUSE.

This deplorable event happened so shortly before the sailing of the mail steamer, that we have only scanty notices. The Rev. William Anderson says, 13th Feb., "You will regret to learn that the roof of Duke Town mission house accidentally caught fire on Friday last, the 9th instant, and that in little more than an hour the whole was burnt down to the ground, with the exception of a few of the mangrove posts on which the house was supported. Most of the ship-captains and surgeons, and a large number of native gentlemen, with drawn swords in hand, came to our aid as soon as possible, and, under their direction, a portion of the household furniture, and about the half of my books, were saved from the flames. I cannot enter further into particulars at present. We are occupying two small apartments which escaped destruction." Mr. Edgerly also says, "On the 9th instant, between 12 and 1 o'clock noon, a fire broke out in the Duke Town mission house, the first mission house erected in Calabar, and in one short hour it was a heap of ruins! Hundreds of persons, consisting of white people, Kroomen, and natives, were soon on the spot, and laboured with intense zeal, in the first place ineffectively, to subdue the flames, owing to the parched and friable nature of the matting, together with the combustible character of the asphalt felt with which it was covered. They were, however, pretty successful in saving a good portion of the furniture, although very much was lost, stolen, or destroyed. We were all bewildered with the suddenness of the calamity. The wind was very fresh at the time."

This severe calamity has not only destroyed much property belonging to the church and to the missionary, but it has deprived our agents of suitable house accommodation. Mr. and Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Sutherland had to take up their abode in two small out-house rooms which were saved; and Mr. and Mrs. Edgerley were residing in a small house, erected by one of the ship-captains, and which the Mission Board some time ago purchased. There are not proper building material in Calabar, such as stone, lime, or brick, and the mission houses, are formed of boards, taken out chiefly from this country. The committee on Foreign Missions are accordingly taking steps to have houses made and sent out by the May steamer,