

of a purple colour, veined with pink markings, and of a butterfly shape. They are most remarkable for a large hood or sac which extends along the upper part of the convexity of the style and covers the stigma. It has been compared to an admiral's hat set in a jaunty manner.

Calabar Bean is of great interest to us as A POISON. It is used as a judicial poison at Calabar in the so-called "trial by ordeal," after which the bean is called ordeal. Other names for it are the Eseré or Chop Nut. This trial is set up to find out if a person accused of a crime be innocent or guilty of the charge. Beans are administered to the accused, if he die the death is thought to serve him right and prove his guilt, but if he vomit and get well he is declared innocent. The mode of proceeding is this: a council of the chiefs, presided over by the "fetish man," is called, the charge heard,—and in self-defence an appeal is made to the bean, each chief then lays one down upon the ground, the accused is told to take up at least two, sometimes a great many more. There and then he is bound to chew and swallow the prescribed amount, and afterwards he is carried to the town hall or Palaver House when a further dose is forced into him in the shape of an emulsion or infusion by way of enema or draught. Trials of this sort are very numerous, upwards of a hundred and twenty persons out of a hundred thousand have been thus sacrificed annually. The only check against still greater frequency is that if the accused escape he turns upon the accuser, who has to take his turn with the chop nut for having been false or to show he was not actuated by spite. The Fetish man has the right to stop the affair at any stage and his prejudices may influence the result, for it is supposed he can tamper with the beans before they are taken so as to deprive them of much of their power. The most improbable causes suffice for an impeachment. When any one gets sick or meets with a misfortune of any kind, it is believed to be due to some enemy of his who has used "witchcraft," or "freemasonry," against him, or cast an evil eye upon him, and whoever is suspected must succumb. One instance, I read, was of a child of about eight years of age. He had been amusing himself and his little companions by indulging in some extravagant gestures. These were taken to mean he was up to "freemasonry," next he was accused of being at the bottom of certain proceedings of a frightfully cannibal description that had lately occurred, he was then supplied with chop nut, and death soon closed the scene.

Sometimes the beans are taken for suicidal purposes or to try one's powers of enduring their effects.

In 1864, about seventy children were poisoned at Liverpool by eating the beans by mistake. A ship had lately arrived from the West