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A Scene at Old Calabar in Former Times.

Duke Ephraim was the king of Old Calabar before king Eyamba. Against his own wishes, expressed before his death, many human victims were murdered at his funeral. In the "New-Year's Penny," the following narrative occurs:—

"The victims were prepared, and in a particular part of one of the houses of the late chief, the grave was commenced. The mouth of the grave was something like the hatchway of a vessel, and the inner part was hollowed under ground for some yards. At one end a complete cavern was formed for the corpse of the duke, and this part was laid with valuable cloth. When all was ready for the interment, five of the youngest of the wives of the late duke were brought to the grave, their legs and arms were most cruelly broken, and turned up towards their body. One was then placed by the cruel executioner on the spot where the head of the corpse was to rest; another was laid on the spot where the right arm was to be outstretched; another was placed for the left arm, and one for each leg. Their cries and groans were heart-rending, but no heart there seemed to feel. Even their parents were prohibited, on pain of being sacrificed, from lamenting the fate of their children. The corpse was next put into its place. Then six free men were compelled to eat each a poison nut, which soon caused death. They, too, were placed near the corpse. Then began the sacrifice of slaves: about fifty fell victims. They were brought near the grave, and struck on the back of the head with a club and allowed to fall into the yawning sepulchre. Some were

not killed with the blow, but it mattered not. They were speedily dragged below the solid earth from the mouth of the cavern, and packed along its sides by the 'fetish' men, and the outer hole was filled up upon the living and the dead. Still the sacrifice went on, but was now removed to the bush behind the town, as the ship captains objected to its taking place on the beach by the side of the river, the former place for the completion of the offerings. Posts to the number of from thirty to fifty were sunk firmly into the ground. Victims were supplied by free men, and dependant chiefs; and for a full week some were sacrificed daily. When the numbers to be sacrificed for that particular day or occasion were brought out, they were tied firmly to the stakes, the head being also secured by a rope passing above the eyes.

"The executioners then approached; one loosed the upper rope, and tightly pulled down the head of the wretched man towards his breast. The other then deliberately cut off the head from behind with a knife of about eighteen inches long, of native manufacture. The bodies were left for the birds of the air and the beasts of the field to devour. The horrid scene ended in the erection of a "Juju" house by the side of a river, in which were placed broken sofas, tables, chairs, dishes, plates, &c., all they thought the dead man might want in the other world; but all completely broken, lest any on earth should think it worth their while to believe the dead man had no use for them, and so carry them away. A flag was hoisted above the Juju house, and the place was sometimes visited by the friends of the deceased."