

called oysters) which are found sticking to the branches of the trees when left by the tide; so that they are vulgarly called "oyster-trees." These are gathered by the negroes, and burned to make lime, which answers well for the stone houses of the Europeans. The stone is chiefly brought from Dog-Island, a few miles up the river. There are many good houses in Bathurst-Town, which is the name of the principal settlement of St. Mary's. Here are a Government-house for the Lieutenant-Governor of Gambia, barracks, a military hospital, court-house, &c. The premises of the Wesleyan Mission lie to the back of Bathurst-Town, in rather a low situation; but they are thus in a more retired and central position. They consist of a very good dwelling-house, which has lately been improved, and rendered more commodious, and a neat chapel, built by the Rev. W. Fox; for Missionaries must often be architects and master-masons, as well as Preachers. Besides the Europeans, there are many mulattoes, who are a base mongrel breed, composed of English, French, and negroes; and whose minds frequently unite all the evils of each race. But the mass of the population is composed of liberated negroes and Jollofs, called also Jalloofs.

In St. Mary's we find also Soldier's-Town, Melville-Town and two or three other small villages, which have the pompous epithet of towns. The negroes dwell in huts of strong wattled cane, covered with long grass. These are generally circular, and the roof consequently forms a cone. They are built without any reference to order, of which the Africans have no idea, except that the lots of ground apportioned by the Government are intersected by regular streets of considerable width, as a protection against the spread of fire. When the latter occurs, there is little hope of saving the hut in which it originates; for the dry grass is almost as inflammable as gunpowder. The negroes, therefore, proceed to level all the contiguous fences, which are made of wattled cane, tied to upright posts; and thus the flames are quickly checked, unless in case of a high wind, when great havoc has sometimes taken place. The river is three miles across from St. Mary's; though immediately above the Island, it widens to twice that breadth. Directly opposite is a small British Fort, called Fort-Bullen. This is situated in the Barra country, on a part of the land ceded by the King and Chiefs of Barra to Great Britain, at the close of the Barra war. This ceded territory consists of a mile inland along the river, through the whole extent of the Barra dominions. At Fort-Bullen there is also a small town of liberated negroes; and a stone house belonging to the Wesleyan Mission, which serves as a residence for an Assistant Missionary, and also for a chapel and School-house. The operations of the Wesleyan Mission at St. Mary's settlement have been eminently successful, and might have been still more so, had it not been for the oppressive system pursued by the Government with respect to the negroes, as shall be hereafter mentioned. The number of those at present united in Christian fellowship is four hundred; whilst those who attend upon religious worship amount to some hundreds more. The Assistant Missionaries and Local Preachers hold divine service in the villages of the settlement, and preach to their own countrymen in the Jollof language. The Mission schools are the only places of instruction in the settlement; so that all the negroes who can read or write (and there are hundreds who can do so) owe it entirely to the exertions of the Wesleyan Missions. The girls' school contained about seventy scholars, who were superintended and taught by the wife of the Missionary. This is likely to prove one of the greatest blessings to the Colony; for the negro women are generally more debased and untractable even than the men. But in school the girls acquire habits of order and regularity, besides learning the principles of Christianity, and the elements, at

least, of education; and some of the elder ones have been truly converted to God. Most of these children are clothed by the Missionaries, by presents sent for that purpose from their own friends and friends of the Missions. The Missionaries have also no little trouble in arranging petty quarrels amongst the natives; for "Minister" is the person to whom they have recourse on such occasions, and they place implicit confidence in his decision.

But we must now ascend the Gambia. It contains several islands besides St. Mary; the principal of which are Elephant-Isle, Deer-Island, Baboon or Deane's-Isle, Kayaye, and McCarthy's Island. These have been purchased from the native Princes by the British Government or merchants. The last-mentioned is called by the natives Jinjiberry, and was bought from the King of Calabar by the unfortunate Sir Charles McCarthy, who perished in the Ashantee war, and from whom it has derived its European name. It is about six miles long, and a mile and a half wide in its broadest part. The greater portion of it is a very rich soil, in which respect it differs from St. Mary's, which is sandy and almost barren. Like the latter, however, a considerable part of the island is under water during the rains; but this circumstance, though injurious to health, is favourable to the growth of rice. This brings us to notice the different seasons of the year at the Gambia, and the difference of climate between the coast and the interior. At McCarthy's Island, the first shower usually falls in the last week of May, but it is frequently two or three weeks later at St. Mary's. The rainy season is ushered in by a month of tornadoes. These invariably come from the east, or a little to the north-east. Notice of their approach is given by the rising of the black clouds in that quarter of the heavens, and the sound of distant thunder, and the faint flashing of the electric fluid. From half an hour to an hour's warning is thus constantly afforded, or the consequences might be very disastrous, especially on the water. For the air is perfectly calm, and every breath is hushed, till a rustling sound is heard, or two or three drops of rain begin to fall, and in a moment a tremendous blast rushes along with ungovernable fury, levelling the fences, uprooting trees, blowing down or unroofing any huts into which it can enter, and mixing heaven and earth in a thick cloud. The latter quickly discharges a torrent of rain, which literally streams from above; whilst the peals of thunder are sufficient to appal the stoutest heart, and the vivid flashes of lightning illuminate the country, so as to make every object visible at a considerable distance during the darkest night. The low parts of the country are quickly covered with water, which is soon absorbed by the thirsty ground, or evaporated by the heat of the atmosphere. These tornadoes are usually of short duration, and the sky quickly regains its clearness. They are sometimes dry tornadoes; that is, without rain, and the first blasts are the most violent. At the close of a shower, the air frequently becomes still, but it is almost insupportably close and heavy. Langour and listlessness seize the frame, till the atmosphere is purified by a breeze of wind. In two or three weeks after the falling of the first rain, the whole country is covered with verdure; and the most parched streets and enclosures, which appeared to be nothing but dry sand, afforded abundant pasturage for cattle. And now the sickly season has arrived. The vegetable matter which had fallen during the dry season, and had been merely dried up by the heat of a vertical sun, begins to decompose and send forth those noxious effluvia, which produce fierce fevers wherever they reach. The stench proceeding from these vapours is sometimes almost insupportable. As the tornadoes increase in number and length of duration, they decrease in violence, and gradually merge into regular rains. These usually last for upwards of two months, (longer at McCarthy's Island,) and then

finish with another season of drought. The lands are mean-while converted into temporary deserts, which is a great evil. The oldest residents expect to be laid out in a new place, and to be restored to their former situation when the good breezes do not place is supplied from the north, and a hot wind, gradually till in March resembles the thing is dried up, tables, doors, becomes strong, and whirlwind air, and in a should they be ly calm, though the sea. In thermometer rose months; whilst. At 9 o'clock gradually rose it continued to and 80° during the sea. In the land-breeze this season of tor immediate a difference of St. Mary's is sometimes less. St. Mary's of all the British. This results in and contiguous taken to clear embank the proved. As rich soil, and facilities are river is here and therefore

Fort-George Island. It is a northern band native houses, and a chapel below. This Sabbath congregation. Many themselves a ship in Christ has lately been ficers and a tion. One of house and st on account of taken place stantly artic a store endan fic formerly the river, v for this pur cunda, lies d dwindled to it was stip the natives been fright of some of marking up by the Briti it is charac and cruelty