

or a lamb out of the adjoining kraal. This, you may well think, was very alarming; but God preserves His servants who trust in Him, from the devouring beasts, as you know He did the pious Prophet Daniel from the power of the lions.—These animals are sometimes killed by the colonists, and are greatly prized, especially the elephant, because of the ivory it produces, and the tiger for its beautiful skin. There are also great numbers of reptiles of various kinds, which are very venomous. There is much danger, when walking over ground covered with tall grass, of treading upon these creatures, and thus of being bitten. But accidents of this kind are not so frequent as might be expected.

I have, however, written sufficient for one letter; but I hope to write to you again, and give a little information about the *people* of Africa and its *Missions*.

February 23d, 1853.

HOUSES AT SIERRA-LEONE.

Captain John Thomas's house! and who was Captain John Thomas? He was a native Prince, or King, who lived at Sierra-Leone two hundred years ago. And as I dare say you would like to know what sort of a place Sierra-Leone was then, I will tell you. Instead of being a fine open country, with good roads leading to the interior, it was all overgrown with trees; and there were so many lions and tigers living in the woods, that the people were afraid to go any distance from the shore, for fear of being devoured by them.

The village of Captain John Thomas, who was Governor of the country, consisted but of a few huts. He had felled the trees for a hundred paces round, to have a little ground to sow maize, a grain which they used for food. There were many fine springs of water; but when it rained, the stream brought

down so much decayed vegetable matter, that it was quite poisonous. An Englishman who visited the country at the time, says, "The climate is very unwholesome for Europeans; for during six months it rains, thunders, and is so intolerably hot, especially in June and July, that for a whole fortnight men must keep close in their huts to avoid the malignity of the rain-water, which breeds maggots in an instant, the air being quite corrupted by the lightning and thunder." Apes, monkeys, and baboons were so numerous, that they overran the country in mighty flocks. There are three sorts, and it was said that one sort, of a monstrous size, when caught young, were taught to walk upright, to pound Indian wheat, and fetch water in calabashes. These creatures were such lovers of oysters, that at low water they went down to the shore among the rocks, and when the shells opened with the violent heat of the sun, they clapped a small stone between, and so pulled out the oyster; sometimes it happened that the stone slipped aside, and then the monkeys being caught as in a trap, were taken and killed by the blacks, who reckon their flesh delicious food; and the Englishman I mentioned before says, he saw an ape boiling in a pot in the house of Captain John Thomas, but could not be prevailed upon to taste it.

The people were idolaters, as many of them are to this day. Their religion, if such it could be called, consisted in veneration to *greegrees*, or *grisgris*, as they called them. Every person kept in his house, in his canoe, or about his person, something that he highly revered, and that he imagined defended him from misfortune. These *greegrees* were very curious, every one choosing his idol according to his fancy; either a piece of wood, or a little bundle of sticks, or bones; a monkey's skull, or the like, served for the purpose. Some choose