

who ridiculed, threatened and persecuted the people, saying, "What, you turn white? You know not that God gave the Bible to white man, and fetish to black man! How dare you forsake the religion of your forefathers?"

Still Mr. Dunwell's work prospered. One woman publicly burned her household gods in the presence of her heathen neighbours. But in the very beginning of his work Mr. Dunwell fell a victim to the dreaded African fever. The next four missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Wrigley and Mr. and Mrs. Harrop, gave their lives for Africa in less than one year!

About this time Thomas Birch Freeman, an able and devoted young man, through whose veins there flowed African blood, and whose early life had specially prepared him for this work, became stirred by the story of darkness and oppression and offered himself as a missionary to the Wesleyan Society. He passed a satisfactory examination in London and was immediately appointed to the Gold Coast, where he landed in January, 1838, to find himself face to face with the entire responsibility of the mission. The last missionary had died seven weeks before!

With undaunted courage Mr. Freeman took up the work and the suffering. In a few weeks he was attacked by the inevitable seasoning fever, fatal to so many. His wife was taken ill and died in a few hours. So six precious lives were sacrificed before the work was well begun, and in the twelve succeeding years no less than sixty noble men and women laid down their lives for the cause of Christ in Western Africa. As more missionaries joined Mr. Freeman the work extended to other places. Churches were built and schools established at Anamabu, Winnebah, Domonasi, Accra, Dix Cove and many smaller places. Mr. Freeman was indefatigable in his

labours and his successes were great. But he had to endure much opposition from the native priesthood, who feared the decline of their power.

The idea of a supreme being called "Yankumpon" or "Very Great Friend," lies at the very foundation of their system. The "fetish" (from the Portuguese word for witchcraft) are subordinate deities. They also firmly believe in a satanic being always near at hand to perpetrate mischief. A great "custom" is held every August at Cape Coast, to drive him away, when the people gather from all parts armed with sticks and weapons of every description. They rush into each house with the wildest of shouts, beating out the most obscure corners and washing and purifying their household utensils. They then rush out of the town in a body, pursuing the invisible enemy for several miles, with torches, shouts, beating of drums and volleys of musketry, until they suppose him to be completely routed. They have a great many periods called "bad days," when no trade may be carried on, council held, or national concern undertaken. In Ashanti the good or lucky days only number about 150 in the year. This superstition often causes great loss of time in mission work, journeys, etc. The amount of time spent in the daily worship of their household divinities, and with the idea of fortifying themselves against evil, is incredible.

It is in honour of the fetish, and the shades of departed kings and heroes, that most of the terrible human sacrifices are offered in Ashanti. The funeral customs, especially for persons of distinction, are scenes of the most horrible barbarity. When the king's brother died, in 1824, over four thousand human beings were sacrificed during the funeral rites. Dr. Beecham says, "When the king dies, Ashanti is one vast Aceldama!" The fetish-