

cows and oxen, indeed all animals, are of very diminutive stet, the ox being only as big as a small American calf.

The dwellings of the natives are made of bamboo cane thatched with palm leaves, beds are simply mats of palm leaves. Fishing and hunting are little practiced, as they require more bodily exertion than is agreeable to the natives. The disposition of the people is so mild that it is a mystery how they can indulge in the cruelties, such as human sacrifices, for which they have become famous. The missionaries believe that but for the fetish priests, who are exceedingly shrewd, and have a strong interest in perpetuating them, as their power is based on these bloody sacrifices, the country could be civilized easily. The Fathers have uniformly exerted themselves strongly in opposition to these brutal rites, and have often succeeded in entirely preventing them, especially if they had been informed in time.

Under the reign of Guezo, the late King of Dahomey, human sacrifices had become comparatively rare, but his successor, Greriy, a slave to fetish priests, has revived them with greater cruelty and more lavish expenditure of life than ever. The missionaries under his government have been powerless to check this shedding of human blood. The number of slaves who annually perish in this way is estimated at several thousand. The King of Dahomey is, as is known, the most ferocious and powerful ruler in the whole region. During ten months of the year he makes incursions on the neighboring territories to catch as large a number of slaves as possible. He is chiefly assisted in this work by his two celebrated regiments of amazons. The prisoners made in these expeditions are divided into three classes ; one is sold to the slave merchant