

me. Yet I lived five years among them to admonish them. It seemed as if the Lord Jesus Himself lived within me and in my house, and yet He had not yet sent us masters from the city. And thus it happened that, for a long time, He was our only Master at Maripastoon. He Himself has taught us and opened our understanding. At last, however, He sent us missionaries."

Who was the author of these lines? A coal-black negro, a perfect *matuari*, born in 1830 at Paramaribo, from the third marriage of his mother Ademsi to a negro named Auka. In 1846 they settled at Maripastoon, where they lapsed into complete heathenism.

The bush negroes of Surinam are fetish worshipers in the fullest sense of the word, and they conceive their safety largely to depend on the number of beads, pieces of colored glass, strands of rope or buttons which they possess. No sacrifice is considered too great to escape the spell of a conjurer (*wintimken*), who is dreaded worse than death itself.

Under the influence of demoniacal possession (*winti*), the victim loses all self-consciousness and dances on glowing embers, grasps red hot irons, or swallows broken glass without any pain. The relatives of these unfortunates surround them, and cry out in the utmost distress: "Father, do not harm us! Mercy, O Father! We will give what thou mayest ask!"

Such was the environment of the early life of John King.

The children of Ademsi were held in great esteem at Maripastoon, and soon rose to a commanding position among the bush negroes. This may have aroused jealousy, for, when a pestilence swept the forests, the family was accused of sorcery. As the disease seemed to originate in the water, they were impoverished by compelled sacrifices of their household goods to the river god.

John King, however, seems, from his early boyhood, to have been a white raven among his relatives and daily associates. In vain efforts were made to bring him under the influence of the "*winti*." He was persecuted and tortured; for three months at a time he was manacled hand and foot, and rubbed with sharp, aromatic herbs—all to no purpose. At last the "*Gran-winti*" declared that he had no power over King, *because his heart belonged to the God of heaven*.

King had become a changed man, but how? It is almost impossible to conceive that in the astonishing experiences through which he passed there has not been a leaven of early, be it occult and inexplicable, influences.

He left Paramaribo as a mere boy, and there he had apparently never come under the power of Christianity. From his thirteenth year he had lived among the lowest type of heathenism; all his relatives were swept along by the current; he alone remained separate from the rest. He was converted by agencies which are wholly in line with those dominant characteristics of the negro race which are met with wherever the negro is found, whether before or after his conversion, in Africa, in America, in