

Knowing the extensive celebrity of this oracle, the implicit confidence placed in its predictions, and the high value of the fetishes, I was prepared to meet with something marvellous or imposing in the place itself, or the ceremonies of the priests. I had supposed at least, that there would be some slight of hand management or juggling in the affair, in a manner to deceive the senses. But there is no such thing. The whole farce falls infinitely short of our children's boo-peep or blind man's buffet. And how or wherefore it should maintain such extensive influence over the minds of the most intelligent tribes on the sea-coast to an extent of six hundred miles, is truly astonishing. However disgusted and disappointed I was, I professed to be much astonished at the supernatural growlings, and promised his invisible majesty that his big name should go back for long America, and set about clambering the rocks on my return. The excessive fatigue which I had undergone tempted me very strongly to slake my thirst in the pure stream, which came tumbling down upon me in my ascent, and which is said to prove fatal to all who presume to rob the grand devil of his own especial beverage. Being a little ahead of my train, I made bold to fish a few swallows, much to my own relief and the horror of one of my Cape Palmas boys who twigg'd me in the act. He, however, wisely held his peace until we had finished a pot of soup on our return, well knowing that when the honour of the grand devil was at stake, a little fetish, always at hand with these people, would probably have been dashed into my mess, and its effects been attributed to the sacred water.

ARRIVAL AT DENAH.

We left Haidee about three o'clock, P. M. of Saturday, and again bent our course up the river. About three miles from Haidee we passed the Bropann creek, the northern river boundary of our newly acquired territory, and entered the confines of Negapos. We soon hove in sight of Nopatea. I sent my head-man ashore with a dash of pipes and tobacco, as a shake-hand palaver. This would not answer, we must come on shore and stay all night. I objected; still they persisted, and I thought showed little more than friendly earnestness. I knew what would be the result if we went on shore. They had heard of the contract with the Yeabreh people, and of the splendid dashes which I had made them, and were determined to obtain the same themselves. But neither time nor funds would admit of opening a negotiation with the people at present. When I gave orders to put out, they became outrageous, and threatened to stop us on our return. Passing on, we soon arrived at Ne-he-ro, a town which had lately been burned by the Napateo people, with whom they were now at war. Here the old head-man received our pipes and tobacco with thanks and good wishes for a prosperous voyage. We passed Blurob, a small town on the western bank, and arrived at Denah near dark. The town of Denah is located on the apex of a rocky hill, something like one hundred and fifty or two hundred feet above the river. It contains about two hundred houses, and perhaps fifteen hundred inhabitants. The river here turns suddenly from north to east, forming opposite the town a beautiful water bound plain, covered with a luxuriant growth of our tropical vegetables. You have a full view of the river in the south as far as Nehero. This is really a splendid, charming situation. It was to the king of this place that I formerly despatched a messenger, inviting him to visit our settlement, that I might induce him to permit me to open a communication through his territory to the river. The messenger was also requested to invite the king of the Bush country, residing between this and Cape Palmas. With true African cunning the bush king told the messenger that he would inform the king of Denah and both come together. He sent a child to Neh, the Denah king, which was equivalent to mocking him; and came to the Cape alone, thinking by so doing to render himself more consequential and receive a larger dash. This management I had never learned until my arrival at Denah. Of course I was astonished to find king Neh ill-disposed towards me. On the evening of my arrival he gave my head-men to understand that we could not be allowed to proceed on our voyage. This was not the most pleasing intelligence, situated as we were in the midst of this large town, containing at least one hundred good musket men. Open opposition was useless. We had other sources, also, of disquiet, less important, but more immediately annoying, viz. a heavy charge from at least one thousand people, void of all restraint or decency, determined, at the hazard of broken pates and bloody noses, to gratify their curiosity: not a curiosity to see a white, but to watch his every action and gesture. The slightest movement of any kind, as spitting, eating, drinking, taking off one's hat, or even looking at one another, occasioned the most deafening and continued clamour. All this I endeavoured to endure with christian-like fortitude and resignation.

FEASTING IN AFRICA.

The house was finally cleared, and we were found alive in the morning, whose light revealed to us the cause of the annoyance of one of our senses, before inexplicable. Six days previous to our arrival they had killed a very large elephant about twenty miles distant, and had just succeeded in depositing the whole in and about the palaver house for division. This meat, when newly killed, has a peculiarly disagreeable and

very strong smell, enough to deter any delicate stomach from receiving a morsel; but now that it had been six days exposed to the sun by day and moon by night, and had become completely re-animated, it emitted a stench inconceivably horrible. Of this savoury melange of the quick and dead, the whole town of Denah had become fully saturated, so that no hope of exemption or momentary freedom from this all pervading deluge of putrefaction, remained. The breath and perspiration of the inhabitants exhaled it even more deadly than the disjointed carcase itself. This rendered my case hopeless, as the latter might have been shunned, but the former never. I had not supposed it possible for the human stomach to receive so revolting a substance, much less to relish it.

ADVANTAGES OF THE MEDICAL CHARACTER.

On the morning of Sunday, October 25, I had an interview with king Neh, but neither of us were disposed to touch upon the river palaver. He was much cast down in consequence of the sickness of one of his young wives. I offered to look at her, at which he appeared gratified. I found her labouring under severe inflammation of the whole contents of the abdomen, and in excruciating agony. I informed the king that but little hope remained of effecting a cure, but temporary relief could be produced. I applied a blister of an extremely acrid root of the country; gave a full dose of laudanum, and put her into a warm bath. Speedy relief from pain ensued, and the patient soon fell into a profound sleep. This effected a total change in the king; he called my head man, told him I must go when and where I pleased, had a bullock killed, and a large quantity of rice prepared for our journey. I gave him to understand that I duly appreciated his kindness, talked of the proposed road across the country, of the advantages that intercourse with the Americans would be to his people, &c. He said his country was large, and the people few; that he would be glad to make any arrangements relative to the possession of a part of it by the Americans, that I might propose. I promised to come to his country and set the palaver at some future time. This I shall endeavour to effect as soon as circumstances will permit, and I have little doubt but this man will become one of the most effective and useful allies to the colony. His territory is very extensive; in fact, unbounded on the north-west and east, that is, no boundaries have as yet been established, not having come in contact with his neighbours in their farming operations. Up the river his dominions extend at least eight miles on both sides. The river here, as you will perceive by my map, forms a very material curve, leaving this the most westerly point for some miles; of course the most desirable spot at which to intersect it with a road from Cape Palmas. Above this we could hardly expect to reach it, and no point below would be so desirable. You will, therefore, readily see the vast importance of the proposed arrangement with king Neh. I regret not having been better supplied with funds, that I might have secured Nopatea and Nehero, in my course up. In that case the whole of what is termed the half-bush country would have been unalterably ours.

SCENERY OF THE CAVALLY.

Picture to yourself a majestic deep river, moving smoothly onward, with an ever calm, untroubled surface, banks elevated from ten to forty feet above its level, indicating, by their frequent ruptures, an incredible depth of the richest soil that any combination of earthy matter is capable of forming. Fancy, as you glide down the stream, alternately on either side, the top of the bank, skirted with a heavy thick growth of impenetrable spear grass, the ready successor to a crop of vegetables or grain, or perhaps still teeming with its rich waving harvest of rice, interspersed with occasional clusters of the Indian corn. Occasionally, on the very edge of the bank, you are astonished to behold one of those huge trees from which the natives excavate their immense canoes, left, as if to declare to the inquiring passenger, we are the original possessors of the soil. On the opposite side you are no less charmed with nature in nature's own garb. The banks, not less elevated, are covered with all the varieties of the African forest trees, from the very tops of which a broad expanse of net-work descends and sweeps the passing current. Beyond this beautiful green drapery fancy alone can penetrate. It may be the abode of water nymphs or alligators, naiades or anacondas. Leaving them to themselves, just stretch your eye through the long vista formed by these variegated banks, 'till it rests on that slight elevation, in the distant curve of the river, which gives a brighter reflection of light than the surrounding deep-green forest. This, you will perceive on your approach, is the site of a native town. You soon see the conical hay-cock houses crowning its summit; for a little distance an either side you will soon distinguish the bright, short green grass, on which are feeding flocks of sheep and goats, with great numbers of sleek, black, fat beees. A nearer approach will introduce you to nothing more interesting; the din soon commences, which I will spare you and myself too. When you have seen thus much through the dull perspective of my pen, you will have a correct view of the Cavally from Denah to its mouth. Of the face of the country back from the river I know nothing from personal observation. I should think, however, from what I could learn, that it was neither elevated nor marshy, but a continued extensive arable

savanna, capable of yielding successive heavy crops of the most exhausting produce with comparatively little injury.

Before day, on Monday morning, Oct. 26, the loud wailing of the women gave me to understand that my poor little patient had taken her departure for a less palaverous sphere; and deeming it improper to trouble king Neh in his grief, I ordered all hands quietly to ship our baggage, and we were soon under way. The sun had not yet risen to dispel the damp, heavy fog, which proved exceedingly chilly and disagreeable to me, although it stimulated the hands to most vigorous exertion.

After passing up one or two miles from Denah, we saw no traces of cultivation, or of the labours of man. The land was much less elevated than what we had heretofore passed, occasionally shelving to the water's edge, and skirted with mangrove, although no indications of marshes were observed. The soil also appeared more sandy and rocky. Perhaps this may account for its not being tenanted. I could, however, perceive from Denah, that there appeared to be an elevated ridge back from the river. About seven miles up, we passed a beautifully elevated spot on the eastern bank, a curve of the river here forming a deep, spacious bay. I ordered the men to pull across; but no! I demanded the cause, and was told of a tradition that is current among them, and universally believed, viz.—that a big snake once inhabited this place, and subsisted entirely on the canoe-men who passed up and down; that so great was the dread of him, that the river was wholly abandoned, and a carrying place was opened on the opposite side. At length the head men of Enemo contrived to slay him in the following manner.

They heated a stone for some days in the fire, then killed a sheep, and quickly sewing the stone up in his abdomen, put the whole into a canoe, and pushed it into the stream. The snake (as in duty bound) swallowed the jest, and soon died in great agonies. Notwithstanding years have elapsed since this famous exploit, they affirm that no canoe has ever approached that bank, and this I verily believe; for neither threats nor entreaties could induce them to put me on shore, or even cross the stream.

About eight miles from Denah, we breakfasted on the Ai-wy-bil-yoo rock, which runs shelving into the stream. Never did cold, boiled bullock and rice meet with a more cordial reception; and river water was a prime article. From the one mile brings you to Enemo, on the eastern bank. The land becomes considerably more elevated than any yet passed.

Ea-don-ne-vous, a town at some distance from the river, on the west side, is situated on an elevation of three hundred feet. We had not a fair view of it until our descent. We this forenoon passed the towns you will notice on the map,—all of which are beautifully situated, and are generally about the size of Ploroh or Haidee,—as far as Loo.

At Loo the natives said we must, and should come on shore; we would not, nor could not; so the palaver stood for some minutes, amidst a tremendous shower of rain. But on we went, and having rounded a point a little past the town, hauled in shore to partake of our lunch or dinner. While here, my head-man informed me, that in consequence of our not stopping, the Loo people would make palaver for their traders, who might ascend the river hereafter, and he begged me to return and stay all night. Being rather weary, I yielded, and we turned back to be defamed and another to death by the barbarous kindness of these people. This was doubly provoking, as about ten o'clock, after passing Gadeo, I had been feasted with a most beautiful prospect of the Najiro mountain, and I longed to approach it: my heart was truly in the highlands. Having spent the early and happiest part of my life in the mountainous districts of Vermont and New Hampshire; intimate with the splendid scenery of the Green mountains and White hills; and now, after a confinement of near two years, to almost a single point, on the coast of Africa; the sea and land presenting, on either side, an almost equally regular horizon; now, amid the varied and delightful scenery around me, to have a sudden and unexpected view of this vast blue mountain in the distance, whose well-marked outline most strikingly resembled my favourite Acutney, whose evening shadow darkens the place of my birth—my own white cottage, and the scene where lie buried all my earthly hopes. This was too much for my easily excited feelings, and I gave way to them in such a child-like manner, as to excite the affected laughter, but real sympathy, of my favourite head-kroo-boy.

At Loo, I was much less annoyed by the natives than I expected. It is a beautiful place, and I spent a very agreeable afternoon in contemplating the variety of the surrounding scenery. After breakfasting the next morning, and talking a half hour's palaver, in which I was violently urged to stop another day, we departed on our voyage.

APPROACH TO THE MOUNTAINS AND ARRIVAL AT THE CATARACTS.

A few miles further up, we hove in sight of the Yapah mountains, on the east side of the river, considerably more elevated than my adopted Najiro. About four miles from Loo, we passed five small towns, on the east side of the river, scattered about on the peaks of little sugar-loaf hills. Their names you will see on the map. Some, as Dena and Uto, were considerably elevated—say from one to two hundred feet. On the west side, a little past these towns, we hove to a moment under the banks of the sweet little town of Nanya. I have never seen any town that could at all compare with it. The houses are externally plastered with a light yellow clay; they are located at a convenient distance from each other; the streets are perfectly clean and smooth, skirted with beautiful short green grass. Altogether the place was so charming, that I was for once urged by my kroomen to despatch. We here procured a canoe to conduct us through the rapids, which commence immediately on leaving the town. We had very strong pulling the rest of the way.

About two miles from Nanya we came to the falls; here the river is divided by an island. I did not particularly examine the eastern branch. We took the western, which, after a very dangerous passage, brought us immediately under the foam of the cataract, to Faye, a small beautifully located town, belonging to king — of Netea. From the best information I could obtain, I should judge that there were a succession of falls and rapids for some miles up the river. The lower one allows a fall of water of about ten feet—perhaps less, and forms one of the most perfect natural mill privileges I have ever seen. The soft rock on the western bank could be easily excavated as a flume, and the water supply a wheel perfectly free from any danger, from froshets or floods. The privileges for any kind of mills or machinery at this place must be innumerable, from the repeated succession of the falls, and the division of the river. That they will at no very distant period be occupied to some extent, I think we have great reason to hope.

After leaving our canoes and baggage at Faye, word came from the head king of the country, at Netea, that we must visit his town, said to be close at hand. Having concluded that neither funds, time, nor duty, would admit of my farther ascending the river, I determined to visit Netea. Leaving our swivel, ammunition, chest, and some heavy baggage, at Faye, car-

rying only our small arms, we set off for the bush town. It will be useless to attempt to describe the vexations of a jaunt of six miles, through a thick undergrowth of bush and brier, following a zigzag bush path, when you had only anticipated a distance of half a mile. My patience was completely exhausted; also my strength.

VISIT TO THE KING OF NETEA.

After ascending a mountain of from four to six hundred feet elevation, we arrived at the large town of Netea, which completely covers the apex of this perfect cone. The ascent was in some places extremely difficult, abrupt, and broken. Our foothold, however, was always good, as we followed the water course; or rather, the water from the heavy rains followed the beaten track, clearing the rocks completely of their shrubs and soil. We entered the town amid a mingled shower of rain and musketry, the increasing roar from thousands of extended jaws, and the deep heavy booming from their mighty palaver house drum. I have often endeavoured (although in vain) to give you an idea of the uproar and confusion caused by my entrance into a native town, therefore I shall not again attempt it. But suffice it to say, I never before saw the human countenance indicate astonishment, wonder, or admiration—I never before heard a full chorus of human voices. I felt that my whole life had been that of still monastic silence till the arrival of this hour.

The whole town is well secured by a high strong palisade of riven plank, on entering which we were conducted through a long narrow street, enclosed on both sides in the same manner, occasionally passing little openings or doors, which led to the separate enclosures of the different families belonging to the town, each enclosure containing from ten to twenty houses. The great palaver house is built on this main street, in the very centre of the town, and on the highest point of the mountain. They turned us into one of the enclosures, or pens, containing the king's houses and family. Here we suffered from the combined evils of fatigue, hunger, wet clothes, rain, and uproar, not to mention the extreme danger of suffocation. We were obliged to keep a breathing passage clear at the doors with bayonets. Finally, seeing that we would not really prick or injure them, this failed, and I was obliged to issue forth, cudgel in hand, and play upon their naked craniums: this I did so effectually, that the slightest movement from me would, afterwards, clear the passage.

SCENERY ABOUT NETEA.

I had an opportunity in the morning to view the extent of the town and the peculiarity of its location. As I before said, it occupies the entire summit of the mountain, is completely secured by palisades, is at least one mile in circumference, and as thickly studded with houses as the earth will possibly admit of, and contains at least three thousand inhabitants. The river, from either side, was romantic and beautiful beyond description. I have said so much of the scenery on the river, even from my first out-set in the deluge of rain to this place, and been so lavish in my terms of admiration, that I fear you will think it mere habit, or a desire to excite an undue interest in the matter; and I would here spare you, if I could in justice, but I cannot. There was a world of beauty, magnificence, and grandeur before me, such as I never before witnessed, the view of which abundantly repaid me for my yesterday's toil, vexation and confusion. On the south was my favourite Najiro, although far less interesting now, that it had so many competitors claiming my admiration. The whole western prospect to the distant horizon was chequered with hills and dales, the little patches of rice and green sward, surrounded by the dense dark forest. With the aid of my telescope, I could here and there detect one of the innumerable hills before me crowned with the sharp points of native houses, indicating that the whole wilderness was inhabited. The northern view differed from that of the west only, that in the distance, far as the eye could reach, I could trace the dim blue outline of an extensive, elevated range of mountains, apparently running parallel with the windward coast. But the eastern view was at this time peculiarly imposing. I have witnessed something similar when in the highlands of Vermont, bordering on the Connecticut, although hardly to be compared with that now before me. The whole valley of the river, from the falls southward, was covered with a dense well-defined fog or vapour, perfectly tranquil, and so strongly refracting the flood of light now breaking in the east, that no other assurance than the fact of having the day before passed through the valley, would have convinced me that I stood not on the margin of some romantic wood-bound lake, dotted with innumerable little circular green isles, with here and there a majestic forest tree, rising in solitary grandeur above the surrounding flood. I had hardly time, as I rounded the northern extremity of the town, to contemplate and enjoy the unparalleled beauty of this scene, ere the broad, bright sun appeared suddenly to heave himself above the highest peak of Mount Yapah, and poured down his rays with uncommon intensity,—soon the heretofore tranquil mass began to undulate: small portifons became detached, and ascending, soon became lost in the clear blue zenith. The distinct outline was no longer visible, the smooth bright surface was broken up, and the whole became but rolling masses of vapour, soon to melt and expand into ether. The illusion indeed vanished, but the reality remained. Yapah and Najiro, the little hills, and the dim distant ridges, the roaring cataract, and the murmuring brook, the smiling fields and the sable forest, remained: enough remained to render this one of the most enchanting spots ever formed by the beneficent hand of nature.

RETURN TO THE SEA-COAST.

After partaking of the bounties of king —, our kind host, I set about descending the mountain. With much fatigue, although more cheerfully endured than that of yesterday, I reached Faye. We left the falls about twelve at noon, the thermometer standing at about 73° Fah. After passing the dangerous rapids we put on all steam and swiftly descended the current. From every town the canoes were darting out to intercept our progress; but deterred by nothing, we made the best of our way for Denah, where we arrived about six in the evening. King Neh gave me truly a very kind reception, and would not hear a word to our proceeding down to Baphro's that night, as we intended. We found things here far more agreeable than on our passage up—the people were more civil and well-disposed, the grand carnival was ended, and but slight savour thereof remained. Word was brought us while at Faye, that the Nopotea people intended, forcibly, to stop us in our passage down. We accordingly made all things ready during the night at Denah, and with the first streak of morning light, were under way. I felt considerable anxiety on approaching Nopotea, fearing an ambuscade in the bushes lining the banks; but no indications of hostility appeared, and we proceeded on our course unmolested. I jumped on shore a moment at Haidee and Ploroh, and was really most cordially received, particularly at the former place. We arrived at Baphro's