

and gratitude, occurred; and this truly affecting incident we cannot avoid giving in his own simple language. On arriving at the village he was inhospitably driven from every door with marks of fear and astonishment. He passed the day without victuals, and was preparing to spend the night under a tree exposed to the rain and the fury of the wild beasts, which there greatly abounded, "when a woman, returning from the labours of the field, stopped to observe me, and perceiving me weary and dejected, inquired into my situation, which I briefly explained to her; whereupon, with looks of great compassion, she took up my saddle and bridle, and told me to follow her. Having conducted me into her hut she lighted up a lamp, spread a mat upon the floor, and told me I might remain there for the night. Finding that I was very hungry she said she would procure me something to eat; she accordingly went out, and returned in a short time with a very fine fish, which having caused to be broiled upon some embers, she gave me for supper. The rites of hospitality being thus performed towards a stranger in distress, my worthy benefactress (pointing to the mat and telling me I might sleep there without apprehension) called to the female part of her family, who had stood gazing on me all the while in fixed astonishment, to resume their task of spinning cotton, in which they continued to employ themselves great part of the night. They lightened their labour with songs, one of which was composed extempore, for I was myself the subject of it; it was sung by one of the young women, the rest joining in a chorus. The air was sweet and plaintive, and the words, literally translated, were these: 'The winds roared and the rains fell. The poor white man, faint and weary, came and sat under our tree—he has no mother to bring him milk, no wife to grind his corn.' Chorus—'Let us pity the white man; no mother has he!' &c. &c. Trifling as this recital may appear to the reader, to a person in my situation the circumstance was affecting in the highest degree. I was so oppressed by such unexpected kindness, that sleep fled before my eyes. In the morning I presented my compassionate landlady with two of the four brass buttons that remained on my waistcoat, the only recompense I could make her."

Mansong, the king, having ordered Park to leave the neighbourhood (sending him, however, a guide, and a present of 5000 cowries as some recompense for his involuntary inhospitality), our traveller proceeded down the Niger along the northern bank. On one occasion, while passing through the woods, he narrowly escaped being devoured by a large red lion, which he suddenly came upon crouching in a bush, but which did not attack him. He proceeded first to Sansanding, thence to Moodiboo, Moorzan, and finally to Silla. Here, worn out by fatigue and suffering of mind and body, destitute of all means either of subsistence or of prosecuting his journey—for even his horse had dropped down by the way—his resolution and energy, of which no man ever possessed a greater share, began to fail him. The rainy season had set in and he could only travel in a canoe, which he had no money to hire; and he was advancing farther and farther into the territories of the fanatical Moors, who looked upon him with loathing and detestation, and whose compassion he had no gifts to propitiate. It was with great anguish of mind that he was at last brought to the conviction of the necessity of returning; but no one who has read his own simple and manly statement of his actual situation, and of the prospect before him, together with his poignant sensations at his disappointment, can for a moment blame him for turning back. Pre-

paratory to doing so he collected all the information in his power respecting the future course of the Niger, and the various kingdoms through which it flowed; but subsequent discoveries have since proved how little credit could be attached to the accounts of the natives, either from their positive ignorance or their suspicious jealousy of strangers. Later and more fortunate travellers have solved the great problem, the honour of explaining which was denied to Park; and we now know that this great river, after flowing to a considerable distance eastward of Timbuctoo, makes a bend or elbow, like the Burampooter, and after pursuing a south-westerly course, falls into the Atlantic Ocean on the coast of Benin. The narrative of Mr. Park's return from the interior of Africa would be little else than a repetition of the various sufferings, adventures, and dangers he experienced on his way there, but only in a more aggravated form, in consequence both of his utterly destitute condition, and from the inundation of the level country, which compelled him to seek his way over chasms and precipices, without a guide, or any other means of shaping his course. He frequently waded for miles breast-deep in water. Once he was beset by banditti who stripped him of everything but two shirts, his hat, and a pair of trousers; and on arriving at Sibidooloo, he was attacked by fever, which stretched him on his back for many weeks. Here, however, he was fortunate enough to meet with a slave-merchant, named Karfa Taura, who treated him with great kindness and humanity—took him into his own house—nursed him until he was well—kept him as his guest for seven months without asking the smallest recompense—and finally conducted him in safety to Pisanian, with a cargo of his living merchandise. Our traveller immediately took his passage in an American vessel bound for the West Indies, whence he had no difficulty in getting to Britain, and landed at Falmouth on the 22d of December, 1797, after an absence of two years and seven months.

Mr. Park was received with distinguished honour by the African Association and almost all the other scientific bodies and eminent literary characters of the metropolis, and was for some time what is familiarly termed the *lion* of the town. Having made arrangements in London for the publication of his travels, he proceeded to Scotland in June, 1798, and spent the succeeding summer and autumn at his native place, Fowlshiels, among his relations and friends, his mother being the only parent then alive. His time, however, was far from being passed in idleness, or merely in social meetings with old friends and acquaintance, much as his company, as may readily be imagined, was sought after. He applied himself indefatigably to the compilation and composition of his travels, which he finished and carried back with him to London in the end of the year. In the following spring they were published, and it is needless to say how universally, or with what avidity, not to mention *incredulity* by many, they were read. For the latter contingency Mr. Park himself was prepared, and with a judicious caution, which few of his rivals in discovery, either before or since, have had the prudence or *self-denial*, as it may aptly be termed, to adopt, omitted the relation of many real incidents and adventures, which he feared might shake the probability of his narrative in the public estimation. This fact has been proved beyond doubt by the testimony of many of his intimate friends and relatives, to whom, although by no means of a communicative disposition, he freely mentioned many singular anecdotes and particulars which he scrupled to submit to the jealous eye of the