CHAPTER TWELVE

FURTHER ADVENTURES. RETURN TO EUROPE

During the entire rainy season the region of Grand Cape Mount where the Vey people live was repeatedly invaded by the thieving hordes of the Kosso. These, a war-like tribe from the hinterland of the Gallinas territory, had been hired by the Gallinas, who were at war with the Vey, in order to destroy that part of the Vey region which belonged to Liberia, and to decimate its inhabitants as much as possible.1 Obviously, all activities related

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1 ['Gallinas' is not a specific tribe as Büttikofer may imply here, but is the region of southeastern Sierra Leone.]
to this part of the interior were much affected by the resulting insecurity. Mr. Watson, the Liberian superintendent in Robertsport, did his best to restore law and order through negotiations, but as such negotiations were usually of a very protracted nature, a rapid improvement of the situation was most unlikely. A peace conference of several days' duration in Robertsport, called together by Mr. Watson and attended by representatives of the Gallinas as well as by those of the Vey kings Morana, Duamba Cumbo\(^2\) and Barlah, produced no results. When Morana Sando, against whom the war was primarily directed, wanted to return to Cobolia, he found several towns along the Mahfa River to be occupied by the enemy and his return route to Cobolia cut off. The Gallinas had set a high price on his head, and the Kosso therefore did their utmost to capture Morana alive or dead. He was forced to spend a full year in exile (from the summer of 1881 until the summer of 1882). During this period he usually lived in the Kroottown of Robertsport, together with his following of dignitaries and about 20 wives. However, I cannot state that he was overly depressed by this fate. He rather seemed to accept his misfortune with the greatest equanimity; after all, he did have a sufficient number of wives and servants around to provide him with the little he needed in order to survive. During this period he honoured me with a visit on several occasions, usually with a large retinue, and this caused my supplies of corn brandy and tobacco to suffer considerably. However, after he had treated me most nobly as my host in Cobolia, I could obviously do him no less when it came to hospitality. His residence of Cobolia was in the meantime being successfully defended against the repeated attacks of the Kosso by his son Davinda and the previously mentioned head-warrior.

By that time the Kosso had conquered the heavily fortified towns of Besseh and Glima in the Tehwah area, and had abducted as slaves all of their inhabitants who had been unable to flee in a timely manner. By adding further palisade fences, both towns were made impregnable according to the local concepts of defence, and now served the Kosso as operational bases for their raids, which gradually threatened the entire land of the Vey with insecurity. They had even advanced as far down as Fisherman Lake, and in nightly raids had plundered and set to fire defenceless native villages, carrying away their inhabitants in captivity to Besseh. From there, they were sent to the west and into slavery at the first opportunity. For quite a while, one could almost every night see a red glow in the sky from

\(^2\) More commonly known under the English name of Freeman.