

THE OBEAH-MAN.

A TALE OF ST. CHRISTOPHER'S.

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THE negroes, who are superstitious in the extreme, are the credulous dupes and tools of a few artful men, called Obeah-men, who pretend to regulate the dispositions, feelings, and actions of their fellow-creatures, and even cause their deaths at pleasure; and the profound belief in their supernatural powers operates strongly on the imaginations of the negroes: hence the practice of their art is full of mischief, and thence considered in the West Indian Islands a criminal offence. A negro guilty of it may be summoned before a slave-court, and, if found guilty, sentenced to transportation or death. The art is, notwithstanding, extensively practised, chiefly by a few cunning old negroes, who thereby acquire no small gains. The incidents in the following tale will be found slightly illustrative of this singular species of African sorcerism.

A few years ago there resided at St. Christopher's, upon Cashew Plantation, near Goat Hill, a couple of negroes, named Cumba and Cudjoe, who fell in love at the same time with a black girl, called Quasheba, to whom, in the end, Cumba was married. The morning after celebrating his nuptials upon the estate where his wife lived, Cumba, on returning to his proprietor's, found that his hut had, in the meanwhile, been broken open, and that he had been robbed of his bamboo jacket and trousers, his tin watch and brass seals, and his favourite pig and black tom-cat. As he knew his rival to be partial to the flesh of cats and pigs, he suspected him strongly of having made off with his property; so, the next time he met him, he accused him roundly of the theft.

“What you say for yourself, Mass’ Cudjoe?” he said. “You no enter my hut de oder night and no t’ief my t’ings? – You no t’ief my tom-cat and nyam him, eh? And my pig, and sell him, or nyam him, too? Now mind, before dis you hab my blessin’, now eber after you hab my t’ousand cusses.”

“Me no t’ief you tom-cat,” said Cudjoe. “Damn tom-cat.”

“Weder he damn tom-cat, or bera blessed tom-cat,” said Cumba, “you t’ief him, and, p’raps, you nyam him. Homsomeber,” he continued, “me’ll go dis afternoon to Jug Betty the forchinteller who lib on Fig-tree Bay; and me’ll get de old woman to cut de cards and tell me who t’ief my t’ings. P’raps de nigger who t’ief ’em no know de silber watch and de gool’ seals belong to my tata, and him been dead man lang time.”

Cudjoe, on hearing this, looked frightened; for a negro never steals anything which belongs to a dead person, as he is afraid of being haunted by his ghost. It was no wonder then that Cumba, on returning home, found lying on his father’s grave in his garden, his stolen articles, except his cat, which had been eaten, and his pig, which had been sold. Cudjoe, annoyed at not being able to steal his successful rival’s property, meditated revenge in another manner.

“Fine time o’ day dis,” he thought, “to go to Ben Soco de Obeah-
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Man, and buy him to do de charm of makin’ buddee and sissee hate one anoder. Is,” he continued, “me’ll go to Shafstone dis berra night. And me’ll tak’ old Ben Soco de money me sold buddee’s pig for t’oder day.”

Musing in this manner, he went to his hut, where, putting some dollars in his pocket, and taking with him a bunch of plaintains [sic], a pair of fowls, a turkey-cock, and a bottle of rum, he set out on his journey to Shafstone. As he was going through the works of that plantation he met the Obeah-man.

“Well, Mass Ben Soco,” said he, “me come to you of my own head to axe your exbice.”

“To axe my exbice, buddee? Wharra for de matter?”

“Buddee Cumba been tak’ for him wife sisse Quasheba, ’cos Cudjoe” (meaning himself) “lub him.”

“Well, buddee.”

“Well, tata, me gib you two dollar, dis bunch of plaintain, two fowl, dis turkey-cock, and dis bottle of rum, if you workee obeah charm to mak’ buddee and sissee hate one anoder – and hate one anoder such as nigger neber did see.”

“Me do ’um, buddee,” said Ben Soco, taking his fee, and placing the things carefully aside.

“Now, tata, mind and ’member well,” said Cudjoe, “dat you come to Cashew Plantation to-morrow ebening, and den begin to work your Obeah charm.”

“Me no forget me oat’ to come, buddee, and me’ll take bera good care dat both de two blessed black niggers hate one anoder ’fore sunrise de next morning.”

According to his promise, Ben Soco went to Cashew Plantation the next day at a late hour in the afternoon. The negroes were going home from their work, and Cumba, Cudjoe, and others, who were standing round the mill, saw the old man coming along the road in his patched pea-jacket and trousers, and having, hanging from a leathern girdle, buckled round his waist, a canvas bag filled with parrots’ feathers, cats’ claws, the skins of snakes and lizards, rusty nails, broken glass, piece of sun-baked clay, with sundry other cabalistic accompaniments of an Obeah-man.

“What dat cussed old Obeah *raskel* do here?” inquired Cumba, as he observed Ben Soco, with his back bent with old age, and leaning on a bamboo stick, coming toward the mill.

“Tak’ me exbice, Massa Cumba,” said Cudjoe, “and mind dat ugly old fellow no catch you – dat all. How day, Massa Ben Soco, and a’ hopes him hab good sleep.”

“How day, Massa Cudjoe. It lang time since we las’ see one anoder. Come, chillren, lose no time, trow down your bundles, and come home, and me’ll tak’ pot luck wad buddee Cumba.”

Ben Soco, as he spoke, fixed his eye steadily on Cumba, who, as if under some fascinating influence, trembled and looked timid, and Ben Soco’s eyes glared wilder, and gloated with savage exultation, while poor Cumba fancied that the glance cut through his skin, till it almost pierced his heart.

“Buddee,” he whispered to a negro, as the company walked toward the negro village, “the eye of Ben Soco cut my ’kin; t’ink you nigger no feel de eye of a damn old Obeah *raskel*.”

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While he was speaking, they entered his hut. The company sat down to partake of a meal, but he tasted nothing. He was thoughtful and dejected.

“Why you no nyam, buddee?” said Ben Soco to him, “why you no nyam, eh? Wharra for de matter? You Massa no going cob you, or you no sick?”

“So, so, buddee. What you got in dat bottle dere?”

“Oh! Nuttin’, only dead lizard and some dough to make bread, dat all. You no ’spec’ nuttin’ wrong. If so. See, me gie ’um to buddee Cudjoe, and he go bury ’um jus’ now ’fore you door.”

Cumba would fain have raised an objection to this proposal, but he dared not. With dread and awe prevailing in his mind, he saw the bottle of green lizards buried before his door; and when his company left him, he was so uneasy in mind that he suffered the greater part of the night to elapse without retiring to his bed. He was keeping his eye fixed on the door, expecting every moment to see the green lizards creep into his hut in the shape of jumbees, when his wife Quasheba entered, singing with much gusto, the negro song of

“Auntee Nanny, open do door,
Peter want da somsop soup, &c.”

“Ki, gal! him’s come.”

“Whom’s come, buddee?”

“De Obeah-man. Him been come here dis night, and been try work obeah. Mind where you walk, gal. Dere him place de bottle wad de green lizard. Take care where you sit, sissee. Bery well. You sit dere; dere him sit too. I guess you no lib lang.”

“Cha! Buddee, no shake you head so. It bery true, Ben Soco do bery bad to come here and make buddee keep bad heart, till buddee t’ink de jumbee in him, and buddee heart brun ’gainst Obeah-man, and Obeah-man heart brun ’gainst buddee. But, neber mind, boy, hang two, t’ree, four bottle ’bout you house and you ground, and dat drive ’way de obeah and de jumbee, and all and eberty’ing.”

This was accordingly done. On going to the hut next morning, Cudjoe expecting to find Cumba and Quasheba furious and passionate, kicking, biting, and pinching, spitting and flying at each other in the true negro fashion, saw them, to his great astonishment, sitting in the centre of the floor as quiet as mice, and eating their breakfast of cold boiled yams and cocoas. For this extraordinary conduct he immediately accounted in seeing the empty bottles, which were hanging about the hut and from the trees in the garden.

“Lor Gor Awmighty! what dis?” he exclaimed with astonishment. “Dere’s one sight! by gum! Now dese two niggers neber jealous one anoder. Ben Soco, dough him clebber old fellur, do nuttin’ wad him lizard bottle dis time. Homsomeber, notwithstanding, me go to him ’gain; and get him work Obeah twice more. Me’ll go to him jus’ now, widout loss o’ time. Me want to be rebenged ’pon deses same two nassy black niggers.”

Supplying himself, as before, with dollars, plaintains, fowles, a turkey-cock and a bottle of rum, he started for Shafstone. Midway between that estate and Cashew he met the Obeah-man, to whom, making a low bow, he observed,

“Massa Ben Soco, me t’ank you bera much for de great service you hab done me; but de bottle wid de green lizard, tata, one bera differ t’ing to what you t’ink him. Tata, me axe pardon,” he continued, making another low bow; “but Massa Cumba laugh in him sleeve at you, and gie heself too much imperece; for him know bera well dat you been obeah him; so him hang bottle ’bout him house and him ground, and him jus’ as happy dis morning as him was to-morrow.”

“Him jus’ as happy, buddee?”

“Him one bera clebber nigger, tata, and know too well you do bad to him; so him heart burn ’gainst you, and him ’buse and cuss you! By Gole and Jinkey, how him jus’ ’buse and cuss you! – him say, Ben Soco damn old Obeah raskel.”

“Maybe, Buddee, I’ll gie him some day a death’s dose,” said Ben Soco, winking his eyes very fast. “De next time I come to Cashew, buddee, I no bring lizard bottle wad me, but I’ll gie him somet’ing to nyam, or, p’raps, I’ll gie him somet’ing better dan dat neider; and den let him dance for joy if him get ’way from jumbee. Him cuss me, he? Bera well. Him call me hard names, eh? Bera well. Him use me

bad, eh? Bera well.” – And Ben Soco walked away, muttering to himself, as a negro always does when he is offended at something. That night, shortly after the early moon had risen, Ben Soco was seated on his hams in the centre of the grassplot before his hut, boiling some whangra-root in an iron pot, that was fizzling over some burning leaves and dry chips of wood. Taking out a piece of whangra-root, he placed it on the ground before him, observing to it: “Buddee, you lie dere, and you name Sambo.” Then taking out a second piece, he said, “Buddee, you lie dere, and you name Mingo.” And to a third he added, “You lie dere, buddee, and you name Willum. – Well, all dat bera good. Now, ’fore we go we must drink some of Massa Cudjoe’s rum. Him damn good rum dat nigger t’ief from him massa. Drink ’gain, buddee,” he said to himself; “and drink dat, Massa Cumba, die all at once.” Then looking at the piece of whangra-root which he had christened Mingo, he said to it: “Buddee, when Massa Cumba hear dat you bury on Brimstone Hill, where de cane trash brun all last night, dough him one bold and ’trong nigger, won’t him jus’ trimmel and ’fraid!”

Old Ben Soco that night was trudging, with his shuffling gait, along the yellow beach at Sandy Point Bay, with a bottle of rum dangling at his side and his tuckewhee or rushbag slung on his left arm, and holding the pieces of whangra-root that he was going to bury on Brimstone Hill, which stood right before him. He was met on the road by Punch, the head-driver at Cashew, whom he did not notice, though Punch was singing as loud as his lungs would allow him, the negro-song of –

“Pull away, my jolly boys,
 Fine time o’ day.
Pull away to Basseterre, boys,
 Fine time o’ day.
For Basseterre hab de fine gals,
 Fine time o’ day.
Nancy Gibbs and Betsy Braid,
 Fine time o’ day.”

Punch, on seeing Ben Soco, ceased singing, and getting behind some trumpet-trees and bamboos of great size, which grew along the beach, he watched the Obeah-man pass by. Then following him, and ascer-

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taining his business, he hastened to Cashew. There entering Cumba's hut, he cried out,

“Fine time o' day, Massa Cumba, and news for you, buddee. Jus' now, as me was going by de old road, near Charles Fort, close by Gordon's gut, me see Ben Soco warlkin' fas, fas' tow'd' Brimstone Hill, and dough me been singing one bera elegant song, he no hear me, 'cas he tarlk to heself. Me follow him tidder, and dere me see him grub in de ground; grub, grub, wid him heel and him hand, when— bo! What dere?”

A long-continued grumbling buzzing sound heard outside the hut caused both the negroes to look round. The latch of the door then clicked; and the next moment in peeped the frizzly head of Ben Soco, with his lips protruded nearly a quarter of a foot, as he was making a buzzing noise to frighten the inmates of the hut.

“Old Obeah-man come back, buddee,” he said; “old Obeah-man come back. He been come from Brimstone Hill, where he been bury de piece of whangra-root and say de santee-santee ober Massa Mingo, and pray dat ebery nigger who call Ben Soco damn old Obeah raskel peris' like de whangra-root, peris' under ground'.” Then, pausing for a second or two, he scowled angrily, and continued, in a sharper tone of voice: “Wharra for you cuss and call me names, buddee? Wharra for you cuss me, eh? Trouble nebber mak' heself, but now look for trouble, and you find him come.”

“Me no cuss and call you names,” commenced Cumba, in his vindication. But here, as he was proceeding he was suddenly struck speechless with fright on seeing that Ben Soco had on his jumbee dress, that is, the dress which an Obeah-man wears when he has vowed death against his victim. This formidable dress was a watchman's old blue coat, cut up and patched with scraps of scarlet cloth, manufactured into shapes representing the human face and other figures. As soon as Cumba saw this dress he sprang, without saying a word, from his seat, and disappeared from the hut, nor stopped running till he reached some high brushwood and thick matted vines, under which he crept and hid himself, nor till long after midnight did he dare to venture again within sight of his hut.

There he sat, trembling at every sound, with his heart beating as if it would leap from his bosom, and feeling to a certainty that he was doomed to death. A few days after, Punch, the head-driver, went to Tower Hill, the principal governor.

“Massa tower Hill, buddee Cumba like to be bera sick; so me t’ink it be’ put him ’way in de hospital at once, and get some oder nigger to do him work.”

“A we no like to be measured for our coffin afore we be dead,” said Tower Hill, with the solemnity that became a principal governor. “What de matter wad buddee Cumba, dat him mus’ put ’way in de hospital?”

“Him belly cut him, and him head bang him, Massa Tower Hill.”

“Bera well; me no see um in da field neider dis whole day nor yesserday, nor yet to-morrow neider. Him say him sick. Bera good. Me go tell-a de aboshee.”

Arrived at the overseer’s house, Tower Hill knocked at the door of Donald’s apartment.

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“Come in,” said Donald. The door opened, and enters, very politely, with a low bow and hat in hand, Tower Hill.

“How you do, sir. I hope you bera well. Massa Punch, de headdriver jus’ now bring a ’strawdinary piece of news of a regular working nigger, Massa Cumba, a bera nice nigger, eberybody like him; him wife too, eberybody like him. But him no been in da field neider yesserday nor to-morrow.”

“If he is sick,” said the overseer, “he had better be conveyed to the hospital at once; and see, Tower Hill, that he takes the proper medicines prescribed to him by the doctor.”

“Iss, massa.”

Mr. Gillies M’Carty, the proprietor of Cashew, riding through his plantation a few days after, saw his gang of negroes at work, and Cumba, who was a young and strong negro, not among them, so he inquired after him. Tower Hill came forward.

“How you do, sir? I hope you bera well. Massa Cumba been sick dese two, tree, four days, sir. I think him die bera fast. De buckra doctor see him bot’ to-day, to-morrow, and yesserday, and say, he do

nuttin' for him. He bera 'fraid dat somet'ing wrong on he mind, and he bera sure dat physic no do him good."

"Why not?"

"Oh! Sir, dere hab been a quarrel between him and buddee Cudjoe. At one time, sir, dey hab no dissensions, no jealousies, no t'iefings, no plottings, no obeahings. When de labour of de day ober, day go to de village, and, in de ebening, dey hab de song and de dance, and den go to deir beds wid deir hearts full of love for one anoder. But now de times change. Massa Cudjoe hab been to Ben Soco, to mak' de old man work obeah for him buddee."

"Work obeah for him! Pshaw!"

"Oh! massa, dere been no 'pshaw' in dis case. If massa no b'lieb in obeah, he no b'lieb in de great Massa who lib abob de clouds. Ben Soco been rale Obeah-man, and he damn Obeah-man. De oder day he bury piece o' whangra-root on Brimstone Hill; de oder day, 'gain, he bury glass bottle; de oder day, 'gain, he bury rusty nails: so buddee Cumba go sick and go dead."

"Ben Soco is a very great old rogue," said Mr. Gillies M'Carty, with emphatic slowness. "The next time he comes here, send him to me."

"Iss, massa."

Seven days after this transaction, Ben Soco came to Cashew; he was sent to Mr. Gillies M'Carty.

"How do you do, Ben?"

"How you do, sir?"

"If you will carry a letter for me to your master, Ben, I will gie you half a dollar."

"Tank you, sir; me do um and wid pleasure."

Mr. Gillies M'Carty sat down and wrote a letter to Ben Soco's master, begging him to take and give the bearer a sound whipping. With this letter Ben Soco set out on his journey, but had not gone far, before he suspected all was not right; so he drew the letter from his pocket and peeped into the corner, but not knowing how to read, he could not, of course, make out a syllable. In spite of his ignorance, his good-fortune did not desert him. Just then seeing a lusty negro be-

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longing to Mr. Gillies M'Carty going along a byway, he called out to him –

“Hoday! Nigger, hoday!” The negro stopped and looked around. “Hello, nigger! Dis way. – Now, nigger, your massa hab jus’ send me to meet you, and bid you carry dat letter to Shafstone, and return as soon as you can.”

“Iss, buddee, me do what massa tell-a me,” said the negro; and, believing Ben Soco, he carried the letter to Shafstone, where he received a sound whipping for his pains. When this news was brought to Ben Soco, he was whetting his knife on a grinding-stone at Shafstone. Without leaving off his occupation, he observed, in a quiet manner, to some negroes standing round him.

“Well, good chillern and buddees, you see how de ’perit of Ben Soco sabby eberyt’ing; and hab him here, dere, and eberwhere at one and the same time, and all at once; and hab him *know* wrong doings when oder people only ’*spec* ’em. Massa buckra no try serve me such a trick again, when him hear dat him own nigger get de fum-fum. Cha! cha! cha!” and the old man laughed with much glee and with a great expansion of jaw. “Humph!” he thought when alone, and frowning, “so buddee Cumba been tell he massa, I s’pose, I been practise ’gain him life. Dat not so good he ’peak ’bout dat. He mus’ trimmel and be vera afraid of Obeah-man, and swear on the nigger grave dirt dat him nebber tell tales of Ben Soco, de great Obeah-man of St. Kitt’stopher’s.”

Scraping some dirt off his father’s grave, and putting this in a calabash, Ben Soco trudged away with it to Cashew. Meanwhile, as he was journeying thither, Quasheba, weeping and wringing her hands, went to her master, and, with the usual loquacity of a negro, burst out into,

“Oh! massa – God bless you, massa! you nigger come ask a faber, massa! Me know me massa lub me, and me lub me massa, and me massa bera good, so we quite happy wid him, till buddee Cumba fall sick. Den we hab sore heart, and we pray to de great Massa who lib abob de clouds to cure buddee, but God Almighty shake he head and say no, and buddee go dead; and it bera certain de buckra doctor no do buddee good, and so he now want to go to de black doctor Crab who b’long to de buckra Mass’ Ghumbs.”

“If the black doctor,” said Mr. Gillies M’Carty, “understands the illness of your husband better than the white one, Quasheba, Cumba shall go to him; but Crab must not attempt to cure him by charms or spells or anything but medicine.”

“Oh! lard, no, massa; dere been no trick in Crab. Him no Obeahman. Him good too much. Him better far dan white man, for him come from Africa, and Africa been good place.”

Quasheba and her friends then got Mr. Gillies M’Carty’s leave to carry Cumba to the black doctor. They started with him almost immediately for the beautiful part of the country where Crab lived. It was toward the close of the afternoon when they came in sight of the grove of cocoa-nut, palmetto, and bread-fruit trees, by which Plaintain Garden River was surrounded. Going up the single street of houses by a road shaded on each side with trees, and strewn, as if with dust, by the beautiful small crimson blossoms of the Tahitian apple, they came to Crab’s dwelling. Crab was at home taking care,

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with the old women, of the children; for he was excused from work on account of his old age and feebleness; and he was playing on the fiddle when Cumba was brought into his hut in a kind of litter between two bamboo poles.

“How old Massa Crab?” said Cumba; “I see him dis once, and nebber again. Me go dead soon now. God bless Massa Crab; him always good to nigger.”

“I gie you welcome to Plaintain Garden River, buddee. I been bera glad to see you and to hab you.”

“Tank you, Massa Crab. I been come to you, howsomeber, to lie down and go dead.”

“No say dat, buddee. I know eberyt’ing, and can do eberyt’in. I can tend you, and can cure you too.”

But Crab was a wicked Obeah-man; and as Obeah-men always act upon the principle of affording each other mutual assistance, he was in league with Ben Soco, and though nothing could be more cordial than his reception of Cumba, he went on to Shafstone that safternoon to apprise Ben that Cumba was in his power.

“Den him die ‘fore to-morrow sunrise,” said Ben Soco: “look, buddee,” and the old rogue showed his back marked with recent lashes. “Cumba’s Massa do dis. He see me in him nigger-yard dis morning, looking for buddee Cumba, wid he nigger grave-dirt in de calabash, and him send me wid two of him niggers back to de aboshee, and mak’ ’em gie me, dis bera afternoon, a blessed good fum-fum-ing. But nigger Cumba, who been tell tales of me, s’ all peris’ dis bera night for dis.”

Muttering curses against Cumba, he set out with Crab for Plaintain Garden River, which he reached some time after the sun had gone down. Cumba was sitting over a blazing fire with a couple of blankets on his shoulders, when the door opened, and Crab, leading the way, entered.

“Old Massa Crab too good,” said Cumba, “him come see a we again. Lard o’ mercy!” This last exclamation of surprise was made on Cumba seeing the frizzly head of Ben Soco peeping over Crab’s shoulder.

“How day, Massa Cumba?” said Ben Soco; “I bring you cole guinea-fowl and ham, buddee. A we been frien’s at last; and as dis been fi’ sing day, I bring you some crawfis’ and some eggs for you supper.[”]

The faint gleam of twilight entering through the window, gave brightness to the drops of perspiration which hung on Cumba’s brow. He made no reply, and such deep silence followed this speech of Ben Soco, that the tambourine and banjar could be distinctly heard from the other end of the village and the obtuse sound of naked feet stamping on boards; for the negroes were dancing the John-John.

“Massa Cumba sick, buddee,” said Crab in a low voice, “let he be. Gie me de crawfis’, buddee, and me put him in de warter. By Gole! he look fres’.”

“Flop” went the fish into the water: the wood crackled, the fire burned, the water bubbled, and the cray-fish soon began tumbling over each other, and diving from one end of the pot to the other, assuring Crab, who had his nose over the kettle, that they were beginning to boil very fast. Cumba hung dejected over the log of wood on which he sat;

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And Ben Soco went hunting over the hut for a calabash and water to make rum bombo for the sick man. The nature of this beverage was well known to Cumba. He smacked his lips as he saw the liberal quantity of rum that Ben Soco poured from his capacious bottle into the pure and milky amalgamation of water and lime-juice; and though he had made up his mind not to take anything to eat or drink compounded by Ben Soco, he could not resist rum bombo. This was truly lamentable. For Ben Soco, having resolved to kill “de damn nigger dat bera day at las’,” dropped, unobserved, into the liquor that deadly poison, the worm of the cassava root, which he had brought with him under his thumb-nail. He offered this drink to Cumba, who took and tippled it off, and smacked his lips, afterwards exclaiming, “Ah! him damn good rum dat! I guess him pure old St. Kitt’stopher’s rum.”

But though no one in the hut had observed Ben Soco drop the cassava worm into the drink, there were two outside who had seen him distinctly enough. These were Punch and Tower Hill, who, on their way back to Cashew from Shafstone, stopped at Plaintain Garden River, when the shades of evening had set in; and, seeing a light twinkling through the trees from Crab’s hut, they struck off into a side path which wound round the hut, and, gaining the back of it, they observed through the knot-holes and the open joints of the hanging window-shutters everything passing inside. It was then that, by the light of a candle burning on a deal table, they saw Ben Soco, with his back turned to Cumba, drop the worm into the drink which he afterward offered to his victim. As upon such occasions a negro never interferes, but views with the utmost indifference a fellows-creature put to death, Punch and Tower Hill walked quietly away, only observing to each other that they would tell “deir Massa what Ben Soco do.” The next day, the manager on Plaintain Garden River, on going to Crab’s hut, saw the dead body of Cumba exhibiting strong symptoms of having been poisoned. This he made known to Mr. Gillies M’Carty, who, from that communication and what he heard from Punch and Tower Hill, sent those two negroes with some constables to Shafstone to take Ben Soco into custody to stand his trial for Obeahism and murder. He was carried that night to Basseterre, to a building which had formerly been an old fortification. There he was confined in a solitary cell, about eight feet long, six high, and four wide, with a shelf for him to lie

on, and but the bare earth for the floor. What occurred subsequently may be learnt from the following observations.

“Hey, buddeee,” said one negro to another, as they met in a gallery in Mount Misery, “you hear de news jus’ now? Old Ben Soco was catched de oder day and tried at Basseterre by the judge and sebben niggers in de box. Yesserday in the afternoon dey hang de old rebel: he hab a grin on him face all de time dey sun-dry him; and when me t’ink upon him hangin’ from de gallus, by grim! don’t it jus’ mak’ me trimmel and ’fraid!”