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(Slave Trade.)

EXTRACTS FROM THE

REPORT of the Commissioners appointed for investigating the State of the Settlements and Governments on the Coast of AFRICA.

SLAVE TRADE.

1.

THE death of one of the Commissioners early in the execution of our duty, and the long sickness and consequent debility of another, prevent our going so much into detail as might have been originally intended, and compel us to confine our Report to a more general view of the subject.

2. A general view will however be amply sufficient in the present state of things, until the entire and effectual Abolition of the Slave Trade shall have afforded to the Natives of Africa a fair opportunity of shewing, whether personal security will stimulate them to any exertion for the improvement of their condition; or, whether they will persist in submitting to no labour, further than to that small portion necessary for the cultivation of the lowest articles of human sustenance.

3. This question we are sorry to say is still far from being fairly at issue, notwithstanding the enactments of the British and American Legislatures, and the benevolent interferences of the Executive Government, and of numerous individuals in the former country. The Slave Trade is at present carried on to a vast extent; and as the continuation or suppression of this inhuman traffic appears to be the great hinge on which the future welfare of Africa turns, we shall begin with stating its present condition, and the obstacles which prevent, and probably will long prevent, its being put an end to.

4. This Trade having been carried on principally by the English before the Abolition took place, a vast diminution of the usual number of ships thus employed immediately followed the passing of the laws for that purpose; and as America had passed some severe laws to the same effect, it was reasonably hoped, both in England and Africa, that a mortal blow had been struck against this Traffic, as the only two great maritime people who could effectually carry it on, had now, according to all appearance, willingly abandoned it.

5. The Natives themselves began to entertain the same opinion; the Slaves which were brought down from the interior remained unsold, and were either sent back to the interior, or gradually dispersed as domestic Slaves. As far as our enquiries have been able to discover, none of them were murdered in this part of Africa*.

6. A cessation

* It is said, that since the Abolition of the Slave Trade in the Interior, they massacre great numbers which they take in war, having no other mode of disposing of them.

Dawton (Accra) Anf. 53.

The Abolition has tranquillized the Natives in some degree, and has given them a turn for agriculture.

Meredith (Winnebah) Anf. 53.

The Abolition has rendered the Natives more industrious, and less disposed to seek occasions for disputes.

White (Cape Coast) Answer—

The Abolition has, I believe, produced no serious effect.

Fountain (Apollonia) Anf. 53.

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6. A cessation of the Trade did indeed take place for several months; but this space was much too short to afford any criterion whereby to judge of the future indolence or exertions of the Africans, in the event of the Slave Trade being effectually done away.

7. The great advantages to be derived from occupying the openings thus left on the Coast of Africa, by the retreat of the English, were soon perceived by the Americans, particularly those of the Southern States, who, setting the laws of their country at defiance, have boldly engaged to an immense extent in this Trade, covering their vessels by a fictitious sale at the Havannah, Teneriffe, or any other of the Spanish Colonies, where they are easily furnished with false papers. Lately this scheme has been extended in a small degree to Madeira, and the Azores; the paltry island of St. Bartholomew also prostitutes the Swedish flag to similar purposes.

8. But the Spanish flag is generally preferred, and covers not only Americans, but also (there is great reason to believe) a considerable number of vessels actually British property. The American master and crew generally continue on board after the nominal transfer, and two foreigners under the denomination of Captain and Super-cargo are added to the ship. It frequently happens this nominal captain is some poor lad who has never been at sea before, but whose services to carry the papers can be had cheap.

9. The object of these Spanish Americans is to fill Cuba, Florida, Louisiana, and the Southern parts of North America with Slaves. An extent of evil, compared with which the former supply of our West India Settlements, sinks into a trifle; a vast field is also opening to them in South America, which will not be neglected. A Letter (taken in one of the vessels lately condemned at Sierra Leone) from a principal merchant at Buenos Ayres*, to his correspondent at Philadelphia, expresses his astonishment at the supineness of the Americans in not carrying thither cargoes of Slaves, seeing how much they are wanted.—Mercantile avarice will soon supply this want, and the demand for Africans be greater than ever; as the Spanish Creoles do not appear by any means to be blind to the advantage to be derived from the cultivation of their country, although hitherto restrained by the police of Old Spain.

10. By the Autumn of 1809 the coast of Africa swarmed with vessels thus equipped and documented; and it was not until the arrival of a small squadron of His Majesty's vessels early in the next year, that any interruption could be given to their proceedings.

11. Even then many doubts arose as to the legality of their detentions; but the officer commanding the squadron being resolved to put the business to the test, several of them were seized and condemned in the Court of Vice Admiralty at Sierra Leone; since which, the decision of the Privy Council, in the case of the *Amedie* (delivered by Sir William Grant) seems to leave little doubt as to the legality of these sentences.

12. Most of these captures have been made on the coast and rivers adjacent to Sierra Leone; it being judged to be an object of primary importance to remove (if possible) such an obstacle to improvement from the neighbourhood of that Settlement.

13. Some of these vessels had not yet received their Slaves on board; but their capture had nevertheless deprived the Slave dealers of the means of carrying off about 2,800 Africans; and out of other captures, 471 men, 196 women and 421 children

The Abolition at first distressed the Natives very much; they have now taken to agriculture, and appear to be considerably improved in their circumstances. Adamson (*Dixcove*) 53.

D°; - - - the Natives having no sale for their prisoners, they are consequently more indolent. Smith (*Commenda*) 53.

D°; - - - has not had any effect at this particular place; but I am led to believe that the change is very visible on other parts of the coast. Mollan (*Succondee*) 53.

D°; - - - the effects of the Abolition are not yet visible.

Richardson (*Annamaboe*) 53.

* But this Trade appears to have been long established, although the restrictive laws of Old Spain would prevent its being carried on to any great extent. In the *Abrid. Evid. on the Slave Trade*, II. 220. is an account of three English ships carrying Slaves to the River of Plate in 1788, under Spanish colours. The number of Slaves carried in these ships were 1,462; of these 431 died on the voyage, and 220 of the small-pox soon after they landed.

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children have been released from slavery. A considerable number of the nearest and dearest kindred, husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, who had been kidnapped or stolen at various times, and put on board different vessels, have been thus unexpectedly restored to each other at Sierra Leone; and whenever any of them have desired to return to their own country, and such return has been deemed practicable, they have been allowed to do so; being first provided with a Paper under the hand and seal of the Governor, certifying that they are to be considered as his people and under his protection, which is looked upon according to the customs and law of Africa, to be a sufficient security against further molestation.

14. All the people thus returning home, must naturally be more than ever the enemies of Slavery, as they cannot fail, in the last four eventful months of suffering and liberation, to have acquired some new ideas of freedom, which will of course be gradually diffused amongst their friends; and seeing that all white men are not their enemies, but that one European Nation considers the Slave Trade as unlawful, and is determined, if possible, to put an end to it, the natives may by degrees feel some encouragement to liberate themselves from this horrible thralldom.

15. The right of making Slaves seems formerly to have been confined to the Kings or Chiefs; but on the West Coast of Africa, where power is so diffused that it is difficult to say with whom any tolerable share rests, the constant practice at present is, for the people in general to kidnap each other, wherever one party is personally stronger than the other, and has connexions sufficiently numerous to secure his victim.

16. The interruptions and annoyance which the Slave Trade has lately met with between Goree and Sierra Leone, has given it a considerable blow; as long as it is carried on by vessels liable to seizure (such as the Spanish Americans) the coast from the latter place to the River Nunez, would be nearly free from this evil, were it not for the Portuguese Settlement of Bissão, which, instead of furnishing as formerly, a small number of Slaves annually to Brazil, is now becoming the emporium of the Slave Trade in this part of Africa. There the ships lay secure from seizure, and thither the Slaves are safely conveyed along the shore in canoes and small craft from the Scarcies, Pongas, Nunez, and other rivers in this neighbourhood. No good remedy seems applicable to this evil, but the direct interference of the Portuguese Government. The cession of Bissão to the Crown of Great Britain (even were the Portuguese ready to consent) is not without serious objections, as well on account of the expense, as on account of the loss of men which every establishment in Africa must occasion.

17. But the great scene of the Slave Trade is on the Coast of Whydah, the Bight of Benin, Gaboon, and the Portuguese Settlements in Congo and Angola. We have no means here of ascertaining the extent to which it is carried on; but according to the general opinion of the best informed Spaniards and Portuguese who have been brought into this port, the annual importation was (in the beginning of 1810) considered at a moderate computation to be 40,000 for Brazil, 40,000 for the Havannah and Cuba. The Portuguese part of this trade is carried on almost entirely in ships and vessels actually Portuguese. Some British Merchants are supposed to be the real owners of a few; and the Americans of a few more. Very few real Spanish ships are employed; the great mass of vessels under the Spanish flag on the Coast of Africa, are actually Americans; several are supposed to belong to British Merchants.

18. The opposition to this extensive traffic consists, in some prohibitory laws of America, which the government of that country is totally unable to enforce; the British Abolition Act, and the vigilance of the British cruizers to enforce that law, and also to restrain foreigners where the law of nations gives Great Britain a right to interfere. The cases where British property is concerned are so artfully managed, that it is scarcely possible to detect them. No hope can be entertained of our cruizers being able, under the present laws and regulations, to do any thing effectual for the suppression of these well-conducted frauds.

19. The Slave vessels which are by far the most numerous, and of course most obvious to the examination of our cruizers, are Americans, commonly under Spanish, but in some few instances under other false colours. The decision of the Privy Council, on a case of appeal, has determined that vessels so circumstanced are liable to confiscation. But the difficulty of producing the necessary proofs, renders their detention generally hazardous; and the encreasing experience of those Traders rendering detec-

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tion more and more difficult every day, nothing is to be expected from our cruizers in any degree commensurate to the extent of the evil; more especially as it seems very doubtful whether any bounties are due to the captors for Slaves liberated from ships under these circumstances. This uncertainty must naturally deter our cruizers from detaining these vessels; for on the one hand, if proof should luckily be obtained sufficient for their condemnation, the captors gain nothing but the hull of an old ship, scarcely saleable in our Colonies; and on the other hand, the Captain runs the risk of a long appeal, the expenses of which may far exceed the produce of the prize; he may incur the ruinous cost of demurrage, and may also be called upon to repay the enormous pecuniary value of the Slaves; for it has not yet been decided whether or not in such a case of restoration, the owner still retains his original title to the Slaves, as property: if he do, then it is evident that the Captain of the cruizer will have to repay the value of this property, which, taken in the most favourable point, in the event of condemnation, could never have procured him one farthing*.

20. But allowing that no vessel be permitted to pass which is liable to good ground of suspicion, still, it is to be feared, that without some great restriction by Spain and her Colonies, and some further limitation on the part of Portugal, no effectual means are in the power of Great Britain to stop such an extensive and lucrative trade. It is also extremely difficult even to catch the vessels which are supposed contraband, most of them sail extremely well, are perfectly on their guard, and have the advantage of directing their voyages to too many distant ports across the Atlantic, to allow of any important molestation from our cruizers. Even when caught, not above one in ten may be liable to detention. This liability seems at present applicable chiefly to the Spanish flag; but it will decrease daily, for as the Spanish Colonies seem † determined to prosecute this trade, they will, in order to carry it on in safety, send vessels bona fide Spanish; and these evidently cannot be molested. Even if Old Spain should extricate herself from her present difficulties, and should declare the Slave Trade unlawful, it might be still a question whether her Colonies, after having gone the lengths which they have done, would submit to this decision: even if they did acquiesce in the orders of the mother Country, the obedience would probably be of too lukewarm a nature to prevent the smuggling of Slaves to any extent which the Colonists might require. The pecuniary advantage is so enormous as to encourage much greater risk.

22. The cruizers present on this station have lately made four distinct sweeps along the Coast down to Prince's Island. Out of many Slave Ships which were boarded, only one has been caught under circumstances which would admit her being brought up for adjudication.

23. Upon a careful review of the whole case, it would seem that the following conclusions may fairly be drawn:—

24. That we have not sufficient means to prevent the Slave Trade in general from being carried on; but if instead of opposing it generally, we confine ourselves for the present to some one branch of it, there is a great probability of our success there, and of a consequent gradual extension of that success at a more remote period.

25. No difficulty can occur in choosing the particular part to which we should confine our exertions. The Leeward Coast, all that part which is generally called the Bight of Benin, is too unhealthy to admit much cruising, or the formation of a new establishment on some of the Islands, if Portugal would cede one of them for that purpose. As to the Gold Coast, we have already as many forts as can be desired there; but little benefit is to be expected from their co-operation in the extinction of the Slave Trade, as they do not possess authority or influence enough to prevent its being carried on, even under their guns.

* The difficulty which has arisen respecting the payment of the bounties, appears to proceed from a doubt how to class the vessels taken under the foregoing circumstances. The Abolition Act classes the vessels for whose Slaves bounties are to be paid, as prizes of War, or as forfeitures to the King, on account of fitting in British Ports, or having some connection with British subjects; now it is evident, that these Spanish Americans are not forfeitures to the King under the above description, nor are they prizes of War; they are nevertheless prizes, and the King's Order in Council, March 16th 1808, clause the 2d, in assigning the bounties, expressly says *Prize*, and repeats the word in the 3d clause, without any addition respecting War.

† The Caraccas is an honourable exception.

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26. We must therefore turn our views to Sierra Leone, from whence will probably emanate any degree of civilization which may be attained by the adjacent parts of Africa in the south-east quarter. But no progress worth speaking of can be made until the Slave Trade shall be so completely prevented, that the trading Chiefs and other natives no longer entertaining any hopes of its restoration, shall feel the necessity of raising produce sufficient to purchase those European commodities, which the sale of their Slaves at present furnishes to them. For this purpose our cruisers in Africa should be generally limited to the coast between Goree and the Kroo-Country; paying a more decided attention to the coast from the River Nunez to the Sherbro. This unceasing interruption would compel the traders to withdraw from this part of the coast; but finding little or no molestation to the eastward of the Gold Coast, they would naturally direct their voyages thither, and leave western Africa at rest, and with a fair opportunity of bettering its condition*.

27. By adhering to this limitation, France might possibly, in the event of peace, be induced to forego her former Slave Trade upon the West Coast of Africa; and other Powers might be induced equally to abstain, seeing that if they chose to carry on this traffic, the coast of Whydah, Benin, the Camaroens, &c. were still open to them, where it is carried on much more advantageously. It will be absolutely necessary to obtain speedily from the Court of Brazil a strict prohibition of the Slave Trade of Bissao and its dependencies, whether in Portuguese or other bottoms; and if it be possible, a treaty from Spain and her Colonies forbidding their subjects from trading in Slaves any where to the westward of Whydah.

SIERRA LEONE.

THE situation of Sierra Leone has been extremely well chosen; and although in common with every other part of this Coast, its climate is very inimical to an European constitution, yet it may be safely asserted, that it is far less so than any other place in the whole of this long range from Senegal to Benin, with the sole exception of Goree and the vicinity of Cape Verd. But the country any where about Goree, besides other objections, placed as it is in a remote corner of the extensive regions with which a more immediate communication was necessary in order to effect any good, could never answer in the least the benevolent purposes for which Sierra Leone was principally founded. More fertile spots could indeed have been easily found; but so low (where otherwise eligible) that it would have been an hazardous experiment to place an European Colony on any of them. Bulama may be an exception; for as to the unhappy conclusion of that undertaking, the same sort of people, idle, unruly, and utterly unfit for such an arduous enterprise, would have perished equally at Sierra Leone, and even under much more favourable circumstances, would have baffled all the astonishing exertions of their leader Captain Beaver for their welfare and preservation.

The peculiar and very oppressive difficulties with which this Colony has had to contend, combined with the nature of the soil, and the scantiness and indolence of the population, have hitherto greatly retarded the progress of cultivation; but the late reduction of the public expenditure having convinced the inhabitants that they must depend entirely on their own exertions, much more land has been put into tillage, and with the assistance which the captured Negroes afford, the country is assuming a more favourable aspect; the whole quantity of land in cultivation or cleared, amounts now to 448 acres; of which about half has been cleared within these last thirteen months. On examination, the land about two or three miles to the westward is found to be very good, and a Plantation is accordingly forming there upon a large scale and a skilful plan, by a West Indian Planter; he has already made such progress, that the most beneficial results may be expected, if his life should be spared through the rains. As such an instance of large and successful cultivation would produce great good to the Colony, and might be of incalculable benefit as an example to the neighbour-

* The country on the North and North-east of Sierra Leone is inhabited by the Mandingoes and Foulahs, who are already so far advanced in civilization, that it will, according to all appearance, require some centuries, and all our exertions, to place the savage tribes who inhabit the South-east quarter on the present level with the Mandingoes.

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quently happen on this coast*, and pass without animadversion; the foundation of such a Colony must surely be considered as a matter worthy of very great attention; and there is no place on the whole Coast which could in any degree be rendered so efficient for this most desirable purpose as Sierra Leone.

Neither has the public money (considered merely as a matter of account) by any means been expended upon this Colony, without a return, which deserves a much greater consideration than is generally given to it; namely, the asylum which it has afforded to the Nova Scotians and the Maroons, so that they are no longer a burthen upon the British Treasury.

The necessity of having the Colony well governed, without exposing the Europeans to exertions which cannot be long supported, occasions the following remarks to be made on some parts of the Civil Establishment:—

The present establishment is indeed on a very liberal footing, and to any one unacquainted with the peculiar circumstances of Sierra Leone, must appear unnecessarily large. The fact is, however, quite otherwise. It is to be observed, in the first place, that however small this Settlement may be, it is requisite to go through the same multiplicity of forms for keeping the public Accounts, and for the performance of other duties, as would be required for the most extensive Colony; and it is highly probable, that as the nature of Sierra Leone renders it wholly dependent on Great Britain for support, the very various incidental expenses may occasion a longer train of Accounts than is necessary for old and wealthy Colonies†.

In the next place, the whole system of British law with which this Colony is incumbered, must be administered by the gentlemen of the establishment, as there are not sufficient Europeans without them; and as the courts here seem bound to make an attempt to conduct their proceedings with all the forms (as far as their knowledge goes) of Westminster Hall; and as the inhabitants are uncommonly litigious, and the number of causes almost incredible, it may easily be imagined how much unavoidable but unproductive business is hereby occasioned. Between February 12th and July 6th, 1810, the number of people tried at the Quarter Sessions, amounted to 42, besides numerous convictions before magistrates for trifling offences. During this period, the Mayor's Court, the Court of Requests, and Police Court (all of which sat once a week) were as usual fully occupied with innumerable civil actions, generally of the most frivolous yet troublesome nature: of appeals to the Governor and Council there has been a due proportion. Upon the most moderate average, the officers of the civil establishment were obliged to give two days, or at least two long mornings in the week, to the administration of law, for a population not exceeding 3,000 souls.

Thirdly. The business of the Admiralty Court is now become considerable; and the great quantity of writing which its proceedings require, would of itself occupy two Clerks besides the Registrar.

Fourthly. The captured Negroes constitute another branch of public business, demanding a degree of attention which can only with great difficulty be afforded. The strength of the establishment must not therefore be measured by comparing its numbers with the scantiness of the population over which it presides, but by the quantity of official duty done in it. In addition to the above circumstances, we must always compute a considerable loss of labour arising from sickness, and from the occasional languor which is inseparable from the European habit in tropical climates. During the dry season we do tolerably well, but in the rains, our duties are left greatly in arrear. In this case we may add the diminution of natural energy, arising from the prospect which offers itself to the body of these young men of returning to Europe with injured constitutions; and without having the power of saving any thing out of their salaries, whereby to make a trifling compensation for the loss of some of their best years. Some remedy for this evil will be pointed out hereafter.

The Governor has found it necessary, as a temporary expedient, to give in some instances two offices to one person, in order to afford an equivalent remuneration for the

* Committed by White People.

† The Governor of Sierra Leone has also the peculiar embarrassment of being responsible for a large circulation of paper money, with which (for want of coin) he is obliged to supply the Colony.

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the duties performed; but this is an ineffectual remedy, as it lessens the number of the gentlemen on the establishment. Some of them have engaged in a little trade, which, however improper upon a general principle, yet under these circumstances, it would be very harsh to prohibit. But although trade may be allowed to the inferior officers, it ought to be strictly prohibited to the Governor, the Judge, and the members of Council, as utterly incongruous to their stations, and degrading in the eyes of the Natives. None of the subordinate officers (even the members of Council) have salaries more than sufficient for a most economical daily maintenance here; so very dear is every article, whether Native or European.

It is very certain that without some effectual alteration, whatever may be the fate of other officers, yet one of the most important departments in the Colony, namely, the Medical, never will be efficiently, perhaps not tolerably, filled, and not even filled at all.

HOUSES and POPULATION within the Walls of SIERRA LEONE, taken by Order of Governor COLUMBINE, April 1811.

STREET.	NAME.	Side of Street.	HOUSES.			ROOF.			POPULATION.											
			BODY of the HOUSE.			ROOF.		Probable Value when built	MEN.				WOMEN.				CHILDREN.			
			Wattled.	Wood.	Stone.	Thatched.	Shingled.		Europeans.	Nova Scotians.	Maroons.	Africans.	Europeans.	Nova Scotians.	Maroons.	Africans.	Europeans.	Nova Scotians.	Maroons.	Africans.
Granville Corner	-	-	5	1	1	5	2	£. 1,365	1	4	-	9	1	7	-	9	1	4	-	9
East Row	-	-	6	4	-	9	1	467	-	5	2	-	-	8	3	-	-	22	8	-
East Street	}	E.	3	7	-	15	-	316	-	5	6	1	-	13	5	1	-	18	15	2
		W.	10	8	-	18	-	281	-	14	2	-	-	22	-	-	-	30	-	-
Wilberforce Street	}	E.	4	17	-	19	2	1,458	-	23	1	-	-	34	1	-	-	61	2	-
		W.	6	13	-	17	2	1,139	-	12	5	-	-	20	7	-	-	38	16	-
Rawdon Street	}	E.	7	14	-	18	3	1,455	-	17	3	-	-	25	6	25	-	41	8	4
		W.	9	11	-	14	6	2,292	2	17	7	-	-	21	5	-	-	39	10	-
Howe Street	}	E.	5	14	1	19	1	1,041	1	23	1	-	-	27	5	-	-	40	7	1
		W.	6	12	-	14	4	1,439	-	14	10	-	-	18	13	-	-	40	10	-
Charlotte Street	}	E.	8	11	-	16	3	1,222	1	13	5	1	-	24	3	3	-	44	9	2
		W.	4	13	-	15	2	655	-	10	2	-	-	14	3	-	-	28	6	-
Gloucester Street	}	E.	4	14	-	11	7	1,052	3	6	11	-	-	12	9	-	-	21	25	-
		W.	2	7	Court House Canvas.	6	4	680	-	1	12	-	-	2	10	-	-	4	28	-
George Street	}	E.	1	13	-	9	5	1,734	3	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
		W.	2	9	-	8	3	1,576	1	-	10	1	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	38
Trelawney Street	}	E.	4	10	-	11	3	674	1	-	-	11	-	2	-	16	-	-	-	42
		W.	8	7	-	12	3	1,165	1	3	12	-	-	5	16	-	-	-	-	11
Walpole Street	}	E.	1	10	-	10	1	627	-	2	13	-	-	3	13	-	-	6	33	-
		W.	6	4	-	9	1	245	-	1	7	-	-	5	8	-	-	2	22	-
Westmorland	}	-	13	10	-	22	1	505	-	-	24	-	-	-	27	-	-	-	58	-
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Water Street	}	N.	1	12	1	5	9	3,043	6	2	3	7	-	9	5	4	-	10	11	14
		S.	2	9	-	9	2	971	2	5	2	1	1	8	4	1	1	17	3	2
Cross Street	}	N.	3	4	-	5	2	554	-	1	1	-	-	5	3	-	-	7	2	-
		S.	5	4	-	8	1	183	-	6	2	-	-	7	4	-	-	9	11	-
Church Street	}	N.	3	1	-	3	1	266	-	2	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	6	-	-
		S.	3	2	-	4	1	184	-	2	1	-	-	3	2	-	-	1	4	-
			136	241	C ^o Ho. Canvas, &c. 3	311	70	£. 26,589	22	188	165	20	4	295	195	43	2	499	447	37

TOTAL - - - - - 1,917.

INVESTIGATING STATE OF SETTLEMENTS IN AFRICA

BANCE ISLAND.

BANCE Island lays about 16 miles further up the river than the town at Sierra Leone. It is half a mile long, and its common width a furlong. Its general elevations may be 20 yards above the sea.

The situation is extremely beautiful in a large opening of the river, surrounded with other islands; the ill effects of whose uncleared shores do not materially affect Bance Island, the nearest part of them being a mile distant. The common sea breeze, instead of being diminished by the intervening land, is full as strong as at Sierra Leone.

At the north end of the island is a walled fort, which includes a battery of 13 guns, very large warehouses, a noble mansion, and a neat house for the agent; the whole composing a scene of convenience and magnificence far superior to any other European settlement in western Africa.

Most of the surrounding islands belong to the proprietors of Bance Island. The quantity of land is not well known, but it must amount to many thousands of acres.

A great part of Taffo, one of the islands, is in cultivation, and the present indefatigable agent, Mr. Anderson, has begun two new plantations on other spots; and the whole are expected to produce this year thirty bales of cotton*.

The remainder of this extensive property remains uncleared and uncultivated, although supposed to be extremely fertile.

The customs of Africa, and the necessity of having a great number of servants to assist in carrying on the great Slave Trade of Bance Island, has produced a very expensive establishment of upwards of 1,000 Grumettas, or domestic Slaves. About half of these people lead a most useless life on Bance Island. The remainder are employed in cultivating cotton upon the neighbouring islands.

It would be extremely desirable that this Settlement should be under the direction of Government, and be held as a dependence of Sierra Leone. It produces nothing, and can only be held as a post or station facilitating our communications with the interior. The proprietors might therefore be induced to part with it on moderate terms; the neighbouring islands, and the Grumettas upon them, being still left in their possession. A stipulation should be entered into for the freedom of all the children of these Grumettas, on their arriving at the age of twenty-five years.

In the purchase of the Island nothing should be paid for but what may be really useful. The magnificent large house can be of little use, and therefore ought not to be taken into the account. The whole of its vast roof must be replaced, and this would of itself impose a considerable expense on the purchaser.

The whole concern seems to be abandoned by the proprietors. No supplies, no articles of trade have been sent to it for a considerable time; and, in consequence, the situation of the Agent and the European Clerks there, is the most wretched that can be. An application is daily expected by the Governor of Sierra Leone, even for that common and necessary article, rice, to feed the numerous Grumettas. Under these circumstances, it is imagined that the proprietors may not be unwilling to part with this island upon moderate terms. It should also be considered, that public grants of money have been made for the fortifying Bance Island, which would seem to give Government a prior right to the purchase of it, in preference to any individual.

CAPE

* It is expected the produce next year will be 100 bales.

10 EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS FOR

CAPE MESURADO.

THE flattering description of Cape Mesurado given by the French, who proposed forming a Settlement on it, made it necessary to examine this spot more carefully than otherwise would have been done, and the following is the result :

Cape Mesurado is formed by a hill about 400 feet high, steep on the west and north west sides, but declining gradually in other directions. The French formerly projected a Settlement here; and it is certainly one of the strongest situations for a fort that can be found on the Windward Coast: but there is little other inducement for a Settlement here than the natural strength of the position. The productions of the country round it are very trifling; the river itself is contemptible; and the bay, of which the Cape forms the southern extremity, lies entirely open to the winds which are reported to be most hazardous, viz. the N. W. in the Tornado Seasons, and the S. W. in the Rains.

The River Mesurado (or Rio Duro) in its natural course would fall into the Sea close to the Cape itself, but a spit of sand runs from the latter in a N. N. E. direction athwart the stream, and turns it along shore for about half a mile. A bar of hard sand even then extends itself before the river's mouth; Lieutenant Cririe founded it carefully in every part, and found not more than four feet upon it at low water. The breakers upon the bar are indeed by no means dangerous, the least so it is said, of any bar upon the Coast; but, having crossed it, the river was found full of banks, and the deepest water in any part only eight feet: the breadth of the river at its mouth may be 100 or 120 yards. Just before the current is turned by the spit of sand above mentioned, are two or three small Islands. The westernmost is occupied by a factory lately kept by a Mr. Joseph Dennison, now by Mr. Smalley*: a small distance to the eastward is another factory, kept by a Mulatto woman. The space between these two is nearly dry at low water. East of the former, and scarcely a quarter of a mile from the Sea-side, a considerable branch of the River Mesurado strikes off in a N. E. direction, and joins the River St. Paul's about six miles above its mouth. It has been reported that a similar communication existed S. E. with the Rivers Junk and Sesters, but the fact seems otherwise; for the Natives report only, that the heads of the Junk and Mesurado are not above an hour or two's walk from each other. According to Mr. Smalley's information, Europeans have gone about 40 miles up the Mesurado; but it was so shallow for a considerable part, even of this small distance, that nothing larger than a jolly boat could ascend it; not much further upon it were falls which prevented navigation altogether. The River St. Paul's he spoke of as more considerable, and as navigable for boats to a somewhat greater distance; but its channel was full of rocks, and, (like as in the former river) falls impeded the passage about sixty miles from the Sea.

The natural productions of the country seemed to be very few. Rice is raised in very small quantities; cassada, which requires far less attention and labour, forms the chief food of the inhabitants. The plantain and banana trees round the King's Town, (which is at the foot of the mountain) were much fewer than those in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone and Sherbro. There was not a single pine apple; one lime tree was seen, and one tree which was supposed to be an orange tree.

Neither vegetables nor live stock of any kind could be obtained for the ship; a little camwood, but of an inferior species, comes down the river; and some ivory is brought along the coast, from places where no factories are established. Nevertheless the country does not appear less fertile than the Coast in general. The soil seemed the same as that of the low lands more to the northward; and the hill, as far as could be judged, resembled the hills of Sierra Leone.

The King of the country had very lately begun to keep cattle with a view to profit; he had obtained six of the small short horned-breed, which exists to the southward, they had produced him three calves, and seemed in excellent order: Mr. Smalley said he believed the king had adopted this plan in consequence of his suggestions

* He died a few months afterwards.

INVESTIGATING STATE OF SETTLEMENTS IN AFRICA. 11

suggestions. He told us also that he had some reason to think the Natives were preparing the ground for more rice than usual this year, as so many vessels had been on the Coast for that article lately.

While the Slave Trade existed the commerce of this place was more considerable, but it never supported more than one or two factories.

A smuggling trade is still carried on here, but to what extent could not be learnt. A sloop known to be for Slaves left the Cape about three days ago, having heard doubtless of the Crocodile's approach. What Slaves she had purchased were understood to have been landed again and concealed in the woods.

GOLD COAST.

THIS Coast has been so repeatedly and thoroughly described as to its soil, productions, and inhabitants, that it would be a mere waste of time to enter again into a long detail on the subject. The only points of importance which remain open to discussion, are, the European forts, and the influence which they may have towards the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

The number of European forts here is very considerable, compared with the extent of coast which they occupy. From Apollonia to Akra, a distance of about 64 leagues, there are no less than 27*, five others are scattered over 72 leagues of coast down to Whydah; and by the annexed list it will be seen, that the forts of the different nations intersect each other throughout.

It must be evident from the number of them, that they are in general very trifling, unproductive concerns; and indeed it would appear that most of them have been erected more for the purpose of excluding a naval nation, and at the certainty of loss, rather than from the expectation of any positive good to be derived from a commerce which has never been found sufficient to defray the expenses of the Companies engaged in it.

The expense attending the British Settlements is understood to be about £. 24,000. or £. 25,000. annually; and whether the expenditure of such a sum of the public money produces an adequate return or not, may be worth consideration.

Most of the out forts having their little trade exclusively in the hands of the Chief (or Governor,) cannot be considered in any other light than as small private factories supported at the public expense, for the sole benefit of the individuals who happen in rotation to succeed to the charge of them †.

As to their trade, various causes give to these persons the entire and exclusive command of all that can be had in their vicinity. Being on the spot, and having a perfect knowledge of business, they can take advantage of times, scarcities, &c.; and as the Natives round the fort are considered under its protection, they are expected in return to carry their trade there in preference to any other market. A ship can have none of these benefits; she must therefore enter the market at a great disadvantage, and find the presence of the British fort more injurious than beneficial; and on the other hand, putting trade out of the question, ships could derive no benefit from these forts, as they could afford no protection.

Neither is the gain to the Individual so great, as to make the support of such places worth while to Great Britain, in order ultimately to secure the national benefit arising from large commercial returns. It is impossible to ascertain what these returns amount to, but the general profit to the Chief, seems to be from £. 800. to £. 1,200. a year, exclusive of his salary; and to obtain this benefit for the individual, the Public
 expend

* This includes (following Mr. Cock's enumeration) two Dutch forts, Hollandia and Commenda, which are abandoned.

† This remark does not include Cape Coast, either as it applies to exclusive privilege of the Governor, or as it applies to the absence of all European Merchants; there being at present a great trade carried on by people residing close to the Castle, and in particular by an Agent of a House at Liverpool.

12 EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS FOR

expend a greater sum, the average expense being about £.1,400. or £.1,500. Were any of the Forts to be relinquished, it by no means follows that even the small returns which they now produce, would be lost to our commerce, there being little doubt that they would be fully collected by occasional ships. It is therefore recommended, that the following Forts be given up, for the reasons above-stated, to which may be added their great want of repairs.

Succondee,
Commenda,
Tantumquerry,
Winnebah,
Pram Pram,
Whydah*.

As some British merchants might possibly be inclined to hire them as factories, they should, in the event of their being given up by the Government, be let out by lease; and could this be effected, not the smallest doubt could exist of the propriety of the change, as it would produce some small revenue.

Should they thus fall into the possession of our merchants, the spirit of enterprize and the command of capital may encrease the present trade; which probably may not have been pushed to the full extent of which it is capable by the present system, owing to the want of sufficient means.

Care should of course be taken, that the Parties purchasing or hiring these places should never transfer their right to any foreigner; and that the person having the charge of them should be actually a British-born subject.

But whether this entire reduction be adopted or not, the establishment at Whydah ought unquestionably to be given up. It is totally useless, being without any trade; and the ferocious King of Dahomey, in whose territories it is situated, so tyrannizes over the Governor and the few people about him, as to render such subjection utterly disgraceful to the British flag. Some difficulty may occur in withdrawing the little garrison from the place; it certainly cannot be done without the consent of the King; and his capricious disposition may prompt him to refuse, as he never permits one Governor to depart until he is relieved by another. But it would be well to pay the amount of even two or three years annual expense of the fort †, by way of ransom, and thereby get rid of this discreditable concern for ever.

The Forts of

Appolonia,
Dixcove,
Cape Coast,
Annamaboo, and
Accra,

are sufficient to ensure as much influence to the British name, as can be turned to any advantageous account; a part, or perhaps the whole of the first years saving which would accrue from the reduction above recommended, might be well applied to the effectual repair of these forts, and to the furnishing them with new ordnance and carriages.

Considered as a means of checking the Slave Trade, our forts on the Gold Coast do not appear to be of any further use than merely to prevent its being carried on within their own walls. Outside of that small range they either have not or do not exercise any jurisdiction.

March 1st, 1810, the Anna, a brig from the Havannah, under Spanish colours, anchored in the road off Cape Coast, where she took in a cargo of Slaves, and from whence she sailed on the 14th day of May for the Havannah ‡. She received her
Slaves

* If any of these six should be retained, Winnebah might have the preference, as it occupies a central station between Annamaboo and Accra.

† The annual expense of Whydah is upwards of £.800.

‡ "Fondeamos en la ensenada del Castillo de Cabo Corso, en dicho fondeadero abemos permanecido desde 1^{mo} Marzo, hasta al 14 de Mayo del mismo ano."

INVESTIGATING STATE OF SETTLEMENTS IN AFRICA. 15

AVERAGE CHARGE at each FORT for One Year.

APPOLONIA FORT.

	£.	s.	d.
Fort Repairs, &c.	97	17	8½
Black Men's Pay	174	18	6
Cattle Slaves	54	5	5
Miscellaneous	315	3	3
	<hr/>		
	£. 642	4	10½
	<hr/>		

DIXCOVE FORT.

	£.	s.	d.
Fort Repairs, &c.	132	12	2
Black Men's Pay	74	3	9
Cattle Slaves	185	1	7½
Miscellaneous	297	1	10½
	<hr/>		
	£. 688	19	5
	<hr/>		

SUCCONDEE SETTLEMENT.

	£.	s.	d.
Fort Repairs, &c.	49	13	5½
Black Men's Pay	56	16	10½
Cattle Slaves	29	13	11
Miscellaneous	199	10	2½
	<hr/>		
	£. 335	14	5½
	<hr/>		

COMMENDA FORT.

	£.	s.	d.
Forts Repairs, &c.	111	8	8½
Black Men's Pay	83	1	4½
Cattle Slaves	63	10	—¼
Miscellaneous	346	19	2½
	<hr/>		
	£. 604	19	3½
	<hr/>		

CAPE COAST CASTLE.

	£.	s.	d.
Forts Repairs, &c.	556	4	8
Black Men's Pay	179	3	9½
Cattle Slaves	990	6	10
Miscellaneous	1,551	17	9½
	<hr/>		
	£. 3,277	13	1½
	<hr/>		

ANNAMABOE FORT.

	£.	s.	d.
Fort Repairs, &c.	148	17	8½
Black Men's Pay	211	10	—
Cattle Slaves	73	9	10
Miscellaneous	818	8	9½
	<hr/>		
	£. 1,252	6	3½
	<hr/>		

TANTUMQUERY

EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS FOR

TANTUMQUERY FORT.

	£.	s.	d.
Fort Repairs, &c.	77	9	11
Black Men's Pay	92	—	9
Castle Slaves	31	—	1½
Miscellaneous	292	3	9
	<hr/>		
	£.492	14	6½
	<hr/>		

WINNEBAH FORT.

	£.	s.	d.
Fort Repairs, &c.	75	2	9½
Black Men's Pay	114	8	0
Castle Slaves	56	13	7½
Miscellaneous	293	1	—
	<hr/>		
	£.539	5	11
	<hr/>		

JAMES FORT, ACCRA.

	£.	s.	d.
Fort Repairs, &c.	199	18	2½
Black Men's Pay	152	11	—
Castle Slaves	162	15	1½
Miscellaneous	480	3	7½
	<hr/>		
	£.995	8	—
	<hr/>		

WILLIAM'S FORT, WHYDAH.

	£.	s.	d.
Fort Repairs, &c.	60	8	7½
Black Men's Pay	8	3	2½
Castle Slaves	189	17	8
Miscellaneous	292	17	1
	<hr/>		
	£.551	16	6½
	<hr/>		

Annual Military Charges at each Fort.

	£.	s.	d.
Appollonia	237	3	—
Dixcove	237	3	—
Succondee Settlement	93	9	—
Commenda	237	3	—
Cape Coast Castle	1,490	16	—
Annamaboe	633	6	—
Tantum	279	3	—
Winnebah	237	3	—
Accra	332	13	—
Whydah	36	—	—
	<hr/>		
	£.3,813	19	—
	<hr/>		

(Signed)

Edw^d W^m White.

Cape Coast Castle,
Nov' 15th, 1810.

INVESTIGATING STATE OF SETTLEMENTS IN AFRICA. 17

RANK LIST, 15th November 1810.

Nos.	NAMES.	Date of Commission.	Salary.	STATIONS.
1.	Edw ^d W. White -	12 Sept. 1809	Company's Pay. £. 1,600	Governor in Chief, President of Council, &c.
2.	Jo ^s Dawfon - -	28 July —	300	———— of James Fort, Accra, and H. N. P.
3.	Geo. Richardson -	26 Sept. 1798	900	———— Annamaboe, and N. P. C.
4.	Henry Meredith -	7 Aug. 1799	300	———— Winnebah Fort, and M. C.
5.	J. H. Smith - -	5 June 1800	300	———— Tantum Fort, and M. C.
6.	Fred ^t James - -	8 Oct. —	250	———— William's Fort Whydah.
7.	H. A. Adamfon -	23 Sept. 1801	200	———— Dixcove Fort.
8.	John Fountaine -	16 June 1802	200	———— Appolonia Fort.
9.	W ^m Mollan - -	26 Sept. 1804	200	———— Commenda Fort, and Accomptant.
10.	Diggles Bayley -	26 Sept. —		———— Waiting for a vacant Fort.
11.	W. H. Bleukeine -	31 Oct. —	200	———— Succondee Settlement.
12.	Philip Quaue -	29 Oct. 1765	300	Chaplain.
13.	Matthias Woolbert	17 Feb. 1805	260	D ^y Accomptant.
14.	Tho ^s M ^c Keirman -	19 Mar. 1806	250	Ass ^t Surgeon at Whydah.
15.	Ja ^s Mollan - -	5 Mar. 1807	272	D ^y Warehouse keeper and Gunner.
16.	Tho ^s Gabel - -	30 Oct. —	300	Chief Surgeon.
17.	Jona ⁿ Scott - -	11 May 1808	200	Factor at Pram Pram.
18.	Henry Branham -	15 June —	200	Factor at Cape Coast Castle.
19.	John Wilkinfon -	1 Aug. —	260	Officer of the Guard at Annamaboe.
20.	W. B. Sewell -	7 Sept. —	300	Surveyor Cape Coast Castle.
21.	John Williams -	13 Feb. 1809	260	Deputy Secretary.
22.	John Heathen -	14 D ^o —	200	Factor, and acting officer of the Guard, &c. &c.
23.	Tho ^s W ^m Newton -	25 D ^o —	200	Register.
24.	Geo. Hutton -	31 D ^o —	200	Factor.
25.	B. D. Adamfon -	21 June —	300	Secretary.
26.	W ^m Harris - -	25 D ^o —	200	Factor at Annamaboe.
27.	M. C. Watts - -	1 D ^o —	200	Deputy Surveyor.
28.	Rich ^d Graves -	5 Sept. 1794	60 each	} Clerks.
29.	David Graves -			

18 EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF COMMISSIONERS FOR

From the preceding Statement by Governor White, we may draw the following inferences, which will afford (pretty nearly) a general view of the appropriation of the Public Money:—

		£.	s.	d.
Expenses of all the Forts for Repairs, Black Men's Pay, Castle Slaves, and Miscellaneous		9,381	2	5½
Expenses of all the Forts for Military		3,813	19	—
Salaries of Officers on the Coast, Nov. 1810		8,472	—	—
		<u>£. 21,667</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5½</u>
Vacant Nov. 1810	Four Assistant Surgeons at £. 250. each	£. 1,000	—	—
	Officer of the Guard; the Salary for Annamaboe is stated at £. 260.	260	—	—
	Two Factors	400	—	—
	Ten Writers at £. 200. each	2,000	—	—
		<u>3,660</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
		<u>£. 25,327</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5½</u>

To which is to be added the expense of the House Establishment, and the freight and insurance of an annual ship to Africa.

PRINCIPAL EXPENSES of CAPE COAST CASTLE.

		£.	s.	d.
Repairs, Black Men's Pay, Castle Slaves, and Miscellaneous		3,277	13	1½
D° - - - D° - - Military		1,490	16	—
D° - - - D° - - Salary of Governor		1,600	—	—
		<u>£. 6,368</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1½</u>
		<u>£.</u>	<u>s.</u>	<u>d.</u>
Total of all the Officers Salaries on the Gold Coast		12,132	—	—
Total of all the Governors Salaries		4,450	—	—
Salaries of all the Officers, exclusive of the Governor's		<u>£. 7,682</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
		<u>£.</u>	<u>s.</u>	<u>d.</u>
Allow that only half of these Officers are attached to Cape Coast		3,841	—	—
Other Expenses of Cape Coast		6,368	—	—
Total of Cape Coast		<u>£. 10,209</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
		<u>£.</u>	<u>s.</u>	<u>d.</u>
But if two-thirds of these Officers are attached to Cape Coast (as seems most probable)		5,120	—	—
		6,368	—	—
Then Cape Coast would cost		<u>£. 11,488</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>

INVESTIGATING STATE OF SETTLEMENTS IN AFRICA. 19

PROBABLE AVERAGE EXPENSES of all the OUT FORTS.

	£.	s.	d.
Repairs, Black Men's Pay, Company's Slaves, and Miscellaneous -	6,103	9	4½
Military Expenses - - - - -	2,323	3	—
Salaries of Governors - - - - -	2,850	—	—
	<hr/>		
	£. 11,276	12	4½
Suppose that half of the other Officers upon the Establishment } belong to the Out Forts, their Salaries will be - - - }	3,841	—	—
	<hr/>		
Total of Out Forts - -	£. 15,117	12	4½
	<hr/> <hr/>		
	£.	s.	d.
But if one-third of these Officers belong to the Out Forts, their } Salaries will be - - - - - }	2,560	—	—
Other Expenses of Out Forts - - - - -	11,276	12	4½
	<hr/>		
Then the Out Forts would cost - -	£. 13,836	12	4½
	<hr/> <hr/>		

(Slave Trade.)

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS

APPOINTED FOR

**Investigating the State of the Settlements and
Governments on the Coast of AFRICA.**

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be printed,
9 March 1812.*
