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P A P E R S
RELATING TO THE SLAVE TRADE.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 7 July 1817.

Admiralty Office, 7th July 1817.

A SCHEDULE OF PAPERS presented to the House of Commons, in pursuance of a Precept, dated the 5th July instant, ordering that there be laid before that House,—Copy of a Letter from Sir *James Yeo* to the Admiralty, dated November 1816; together with Copies of any subsequent Dispatches received from him; and Copies of any Dispatches from Captain *Fisher*, of His Majesty's Ship *Cherub*;—relative to the state of the SLAVE TRADE.

—A.—

- N^o 1.—Copy of a Letter from Sir *James Yeo*, dated 7 November 1816.
 N^o 2.—Copy of a Letter from Sir *James Yeo*, dated 12 March 1817.
 N^o 3.—Extract of a Letter from Sir *James Yeo*, dated 12 May 1817.
 N^o 4.—Extract of a Letter from Sir *James Yeo*, dated 29 May 1817.

—B.—

- N^o 1.—Copy of a Letter from Captain *Fisher*, dated 21 April 1816.
 N^o 2.—Extract of a Letter from Captain *Fisher*, dated 4 July 1816.
 N^o 3.—Extract of a Letter from Captain *Fisher*; with an Enclosure; dated 4th February 1817.

A. N^o 1.—Copy of a Letter from Captain Sir *James Lucas Yeo*, to *John Wilson Croker*, Esquire; dated London, the 7th November 1816.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to lay before you, for the information of their Lordships, such observations and remarks as I have considered it my duty to make on the present state of Africa.

To His Majesty's Government, and those humane and benevolent persons who for years past have been exerting their interest and wealth in the cause of Africa, it must be painful to hear that all their efforts towards obtaining the real abolition of slavery, have been of little or no avail; for though fewer negroes may have been enslaved since the Abolition Acts took place, with respect to this country, yet the cruelty to those now taken away by the Spaniards and Portuguese, has increased quadruple; and those Acts appear to have had no other effect than that of transferring the Slave Trade to Spain and Portugal, whose inhuman traffic has since wonderfully increased; and there is every reason to suppose that it will still further increase, as the fear of a termination to the trade in a few years, will induce them to pursue it with much greater activity. They now fill their ships beyond any former precedent;

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as a proof of which, His Majesty's ship *Bann*, commanded by Captain Fisher, captured the Portuguese brig *San Antonio*, only 120 tons, with 600 slaves. In a passage of 80 leagues, more than 30 died, and as many more appeared irrecoverably gone; in the midst of the sick lay a putrid corpse, and such a horrid stench, that Captain Fisher was apprehensive of a plague, and was obliged to take not only the crew but 150 slaves on board the *Bann*, and make the best of his way to Sierra Leone. And these powers consider themselves so safe in the trade, and are in such perfect good understanding with the native chiefs, that on the *Bann's* capturing the Portuguese brig *Temeraire* off Whydah, which vessel had purchased 600 slaves, but had not time to load them, the chief assured the Portuguese master, who is on shore there, that he would feed the slaves until another vessel could arrive for them, on its bringing him some tobacco as a remuneration; the master is now at Whydah, in daily expectation of a vessel, when there is little doubt but he will succeed in taking off his cargo.

One of the Portuguese masters I captured, had made 22 trips to the coast for slaves, and only once been captured. The profits they make is enormous. One of the schooners captured by the *Inconstant* off the river Logas, having arrived but a few days on the coast, had only purchased ten slaves, for which the master gave 92 rolls of tobacco, each roll worth in the Brazils 2,000 milreas, about 12*s.* sterling, making the cost of each slave to the Portuguese merchant 5*l.* 10*s.*, for which he would receive 400 dollars. These facts will show, that neither mountains, rivers or deserts, will prove barriers to the Slave Trade, as the black chiefs will bring their slaves from every extremity of Africa, as long as there is a nation that will afford them a slave market; and these circumstances will, I presume, clearly show, that the partial abolition of the Slave Trade is of little or no benefit, but that, on the contrary, the wretchedness of the natives is frequently increased by it; and I am convinced, that the only means of promoting the happiness and civilization of Africa, will be to annihilate the Slave Trade *in toto*; for whilst there is such a facility in selling slaves, there will be no incentive to industry in that quarter of the world.

I now beg leave to describe our Settlements in this country, as I saw them. As Sierra Leone is under the immediate control of the Colonial Department, I shall only remark, that after all the sums of money which have been expended on its improvement, it is still in a most deplorable state; great abuses and mismanagement are said to have existed; and certainly, to judge from its present wretched condition, the reports appear to have been too well founded.

The present governor, Colonel McCarthy, appears a mild, benevolent, good man; but from the small proportion which the European bears to the black population, his efforts towards civilization can make but a slow progress, particularly when we consider the great emolument which the merchants derive from trade, which induces them to oppose, by every means in their power, any efforts towards cultivation. Another great objection to Sierra Leone, arises from its being at such a distance, directly to the windward of where the slave vessels are captured, which is generally in the Bight of Benin and Beaffra; the vessels are always crowded and sickly, and the mortality in making the passage exceeds one tenth: added to this, the climate is detestable, the rain commencing the end of April, and continuing to the middle of October: it proves the grave of most Europeans who go there, and even those who escape the grave, linger out a painful and miserable existence.

Under these circumstances I am of opinion that Sierra Leone is not so well calculated for forming a settlement for emancipated or captured negroes as the Gold Coast, which possesses every advantage: it is much more temperate, the sun is more obscured, and of course has less power, and I am certain must be much more healthy. From the best information I could collect relative to the soil, it is on the sea coast generally light, where a cotton would be most certain and profitable. At the distance of ten or twenty miles inland, it is rich in the extreme, and would produce sugar cane, rice and indigo; coffee and vegetables of every kind are in abundance. I have been some years in the West Indies, and though it was then the rainy season, and of course the worst time of the year, yet I declare it is neither so hot or unpleasant as the former; as a proof of which, all the officers and crew of the *Inconstant* complained of the increased heat on their arrival at Barbadoes. Hurricanes are not known in this country, and the tornadoes (of which so much is said) are not more violent than the heavy squalls in the West Indies, nor have I ever seen any so bad; there is also a good and safe anchorage on every part of the coast. Our settlements on this coast are in a very bad condition, and the people residing in them little better

better than prisoners to the neighbouring chiefs, who, although they receive pay from the company, consider it in the light of tribute, and make use of our forts and flag to awe their necessitous neighbours and subjects, towards whom they frequently use the most violent and oppressive conduct.

Fort Appollonia is completely under the control of Yan Sacka, the king of Appollonia, who is a most cruel and sanguinary tyrant. It would be highly desirable if we could obtain the Dutch Fort of Axiom, situated a few miles from Fort Appollonia, as it has an excellent anchorage, and the best landing on any part of the coast; there is also a fine river navigable for large boats, a considerable distance in the interior; and is in my opinion the best point to open a trade and free intercourse with the Ashantee country, the capital of which I believe might be reached in the course of ten days. The Fort at Dixcove has been useful, on account of the quantity of timber growing in its neighbourhood.

At Succondee there is a governor, but neither fort or soldier; it is however a good place for trade. Cape Coast Castle is a fine building, strong towards the sea, but most improperly weak on the land side; added to which, the town has been allowed to approach within a very short distance of the castle. All the houses have thick mud walls, which are impervious to musketry, and would afford shelter to thousands; but the filth which is allowed to accumulate in the streets is sufficient to bring a plague. Neither the country or the manners of the people have been improved since it has been in our possession: this I imagine is chiefly owing to the want of proper authority; and there is no doubt of their acquiring the qualifications necessary to form good characters, if proper means were adopted towards them. The natives are at present under no laws but their own, nor have we the means of bringing a man to justice, even for murder; they are tolerably honest towards each other, but consider themselves fully authorized to plunder white men, having no dread of punishment.

To increase our trade with Africa, enlarge the knowledge of the natives, and promote their industry, a free intercourse with the interior is absolutely necessary; but above all, a government must be established there, that will secure such property as may be acquired by exertion; without which, in my opinion, Africa will remain forever in the same barbarous and uncivilized state.

The people of the coast called Fantees, have done every thing in their power to prevent the Ashantees, natives of the interior, from having any communication with it, as by excluding them from trade they act as brokers between the Ashantee and the European merchant: they are a vile, abandoned set of people, and rob both one and the other; and what is more extraordinary, we have countenanced them in it, although it is both unjust to the Ashantees, and in direct opposition to our own commercial interests, as a free trade with the natives of the interior would be of great national importance, and which the king of the Ashantees is most anxious to establish.

Alliances with the chiefs by residents in the principal towns, could easily be formed; a major whom I saw at Cape Coast Castle, was on the point of proceeding to the capital of the Ashantees, when the then governor general Torrane died, and this laudable undertaking was relinquished.

Their present religion has no tendency whatever to improve their morals, as they consider the charms they purchase of the Fettishmen, have sufficient virtue to keep them from the most serious evils, and as an absolution for any sins they may commit; and I am sorry to say that the licentious and immoral state in which many of the English in this country live, not only tends to destroy all respect for religion in the natives, but must give them a contempt for the European character in general. If we except the Danish Castle at Accra, there is not a place of worship on the whole coast; nor do the English garrisons or settlers ever assemble to perform any religious ceremonies. The natives must have a bad opinion also of our military character, from the specimen they have of our company's officers, who not only lose the character of soldiers for that of traders, but frequently join the Fantees in cheating the Ashantees, in consequence of the latter not being acquainted with the Fantee language.

The natives of the coast who live under one English fort, frequently insult those living under another, and boast of the protection they receive from the very flag they insult, thus rendering our flag subservient to a cruel and sanguinary warfare; and I must confess that I felt pain to know that the British flag and uniform is everywhere dishonoured in Africa. Whilst we were at Cape Coast Castle I saw several

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of the Ashantees: they appeared shrewd, active, and intelligent; not the least appearance of the common Negro countenance, but very much resembling the Moors, and many of them wore turbans: two of them said they had seen white men in the back country, meaning, no doubt, the shores of the Mediterranean or Red Sea; and I have no doubt, if the Slave Trade was abolished altogether, that the Africans on many parts of the coast might soon be induced to hire themselves on board our merchant ships trading there, and to and from the West Indies; and this would not only be the means of civilizing them, but be of great importance in a mercantile point of view, as the natives would be much more preferable in such a climate than European seamen, and their wages do not exceed four dollars per month; and as a corroboration of this statement, I had several men on board the Inconstant during my stay on the coast, who in a short time became as active and useful as many of the seamen of the ship, and wished to go to the West Indies with us.

I am strongly of opinion that something must be done soon: our merchants were formerly supported by the Slave Trade, which they carried on to a great extent, independent of their having at that time the whole of the gold and ivory trade in their own hands.

Since the Abolition, the war has prevented competition from foreign nations, but now the whole coast is inundated with French, Dutch, American, and other flags; and they are abundantly supplied with arms and powder, which enables them to undersell our own merchants, whose trade is falling off rapidly; and the decline in the price of gold and ivory in Europe has also materially affected them. Symptoms of decay are evident: at Cape Coast Castle houses are become unsaleable, and all accounts agree as to the present difficulties and future apprehensions.

Our Fort at Annamaboe is, I understand, the best fortification of the whole; but it has only two officers and fifteen men. Tantomquerry Fort is of little or no use. Winnebah Fort is abandoned: at this place there is a good river—a great acquisition for ships, as there is nothing but rain-water to be got on any part of the Coast. Accra, or Accarah, is certainly the most picturesque, fertile, and healthy spot on the whole Coast of Africa: a plain extends some miles in the interior, when you come to hills covered with rich soil, and a beautiful country well wooded and watered, and every thing that is necessary for forming a colony: every kind of vegetable grows here, and could be produced in any quantity. There are now a great quantity of cattle, and herds of buffaloes, a little in the interior; on the plain there is a great quantity and variety of game, such as deer, hares, pheasants, guinea fowls, partridges, pigeons, &c. &c. and every kind of live stock in abundance. I went to visit the banks of the river Saccom, which runs at the back of Accra, about eight miles, and which could be conducted to the town with great ease and little expense; there is also a reef of rocks extending from the English Fort some distance into the sea, on which a pier might be raised with little trouble, as there is plenty of good stone and lime close to the spot: if this was done, vessels of 120 tons and upwards might load and unload inside the pier with safety. In the road, the ground is so good and strong that it is necessary to sight your anchor every twenty-four hours. The climate of this place is so superior to any other part of the coast, that invalids frequently go there to recover their health. The natives at Accra are very superior in civilization, appearance, and manners, to any other on the coast; their town is clean and neat, and in their houses they have all the useful and necessary household utensils, arranged with as much order as in a cottage in England: this is to be attributed to their having had, for many years, a free intercourse with the Ashantees and other nations of the interior, and to their being naturally more industrious and fond of agriculture.

There are now no English settlements to the leeward of Accra, nor had I any communication with the shore.

Several Spanish armed vessels have lately appeared on the coast engaged in the Slave Trade; they generally carry from 14 to 20 guns, and about 80 men, and come out with a determination to fight any vessel they have a chance with. These vessels have committed several acts of piracy: the Paz, of 14 guns, was taken by the Colonial brig a short time since, with the master and mate of an English merchantman on board, which they had taken some days previous.

The Spaniards have taken off upwards of 1800 slaves, between Cape St. Ann and Cape Mount, within the last four months; and I am of opinion that the Slave Trade was never carried on with such system and dispatch as at this moment; and if
some

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some active measures are not taken, it will increase next year tenfold. Should His Majesty's Government determine to suppress this vile traffic, it cannot be done with schooners, or dull-sailing ships; for the Spaniards are not only completely equipped, and sail fast, but are generally commanded by active and enterprising men, either French or Americans. They are seldom to be found at anchor on the coast. Their general plan is to make the land near where they intend to purchase their slaves: if the coast is clear, they immediately land their cargo and supercargo, and stand out to sea until they consider the slaves are ready; they then stand in as before, and if the signal agreed on is given, take on board the cargo, and are off in a few hours, all their water and provisions being complete before they arrive on the coast.

They consider their capture, if met with, as certain; which appears to me very extraordinary, as they must know that our Government have not issued any orders against them, if really Spaniards. I am therefore strongly led to believe, that the principal part of their trade in Slaves is carried on with the funds, and for the benefit of the subjects of other powers who have abolished it.

I should enter more at large on the subject of the Spanish Slave schooners, but I am aware that the Chief Justice at Sierra Leone has transmitted to my Lord Bathurst a detailed account of the numerous vessels that have been, and are now expected on the coast; with a full statement of the many atrocities they have been guilty of.

Having now, Sir, endeavoured to give you, for the information of their Lordships, as correct and fair a view of our Settlements in Africa as my short stay in that country would enable me to make, I beg leave to offer my opinion as to the means best calculated to improve the condition and civilization of the natives, and at the same time open an extensive and profitable trade to this country.

The continuance of the trade appears to me to be the principal, if not the sole cause of the present neglected and barbarous state of Africa.

All the kings and chiefs have for years maintained their power, dignity and riches by this traffic; and as long as any nation is allowed to carry it on, they will not give up a commerce so easy and lucrative, to pursue that of trade and agriculture; which is not only precarious, and attended with much labour and difficulty, but it is as yet what they neither like or understand.

The first step therefore towards civilization, as I have before observed, will be to abolish the Slave Trade entirely; but, at the same time, to open other sources by which the leading men may derive the same advantages and emoluments which they have hitherto done by this vile trade. At present they are decidedly against you, nor is it a matter of surprise that they are so; for although the Abolition Act is in our opinion a very just and humane policy, it is considered by the natives as a ruinous one to them.

I have already given it as my opinion, that a free and extensive intercourse and trade could with ease be opened in the interior of Africa; to effect which, I would recommend cultivating the friendship and goodwill of the several kings and chiefs, by making them suitable presents, and allowing them a participation in trade, for which they are all most eager, and would enter into with spirit, if effectually deprived of a Slave Market, and our Forts and Castles were in the hands of Government, so that a merchant could receive benefit from their protection; the present system being incompatible with the interest of the separate and open trader. The African is very superior in intellect and capacity to the generality of Indians in North America, they are more social and friendly to strangers; and, except in the vicinity of the European Settlements, are a fine noble race of men. It is only in a commercial point of view that I think Africa at present worthy our attention. Agriculture I would leave to the natives, who would, if there was an extensive trade and consumption on the coast, soon find it their interest to cultivate the ground. I am also persuaded that our West India colonies might soon be supplied with abundance of live stock; whereas that profitable trade is at present in the hands of the Americans; our Government pay an enormous price, and our islands are very ill supplied. When we were at Barbadoes, no fresh beef could be obtained, (though there is an order in favour of purchasing for ships from the Coast of Africa,) and the squadron on that station had not any fresh beef for several weeks. To facilitate and protect our trade on that coast, I would strongly recommend our obtaining from the Portuguese Government two islands, either St. Jago or St. Nicholas, off the Cape de Verd Islands; and St. Thomas, on the Equator. The first would not only

answer

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answer for a safe depôt for our merchants trading to that part of the coast, but would afford pasture for the cattle; from whence they could be transported to our West India Islands, and supply our outward bound ships and western cruizers with refreshments. It would open the cattle trade to our merchants, at the expense of America; and would prevent our enemy making it their haunt in war, by which they are enabled to elude our cruizers, and continue longer at sea. Several American privateers refitted at these islands, and also their frigates; one of which remained at Brava upwards of a week. St Thomas, on the Equator, is a very fine fruitful island, about the size of the Isle of Wight; it abounds in cattle, goats, hogs, poultry, and fruit of every description; the sugar cane grows in the most luxuriant manner, and the coffee is very superior to the West India. There is a very good port for merchant vessels, and two good bays for ships of war; and it is so situated, that the ships from the Gold Coast can fetch it from the starboard tack, the wind being in general from S. to S. W.; and it is the most desirable part for ships to sail from, if bound up the coast, to Europe or to the West Indies: as by keeping to the southward of the Equator, you have the wind at south, and sometimes at S. S. E. The *Inconstant* went from St. Thomas's to Sierra Leone, a distance of 1,300 miles, directly to windward, in ten days. If a vessel attempts to keep nearer the coast, she gets into the influence of the westerly winds, and a strong current always going to the eastward.

The *Brisk* sloop of war was ten weeks going from Cape Formosa to Sierra Leone by keeping the coast on board; this island is also well situated for a very profitable trade to the rivers Gabon and St. John's, or river Danger. It would also be superior as a settlement for the captured negroes to Sierra Leone, not only from its climate, and being an island, but from its being directly in the vicinity of where the Slave Trade is carried on; whereas, as I have before stated, Sierra Leone is in every respect the most unfit, and worst situation on the whole coast.

This island was formerly very flourishing, and in a high state of cultivation, particularly sugar cane, until the Brazil trade became so extensive, that it induced all the planters, and most of the principal inhabitants, to leave the island and go over to that continent.

I beg leave to mention one other circumstance, which I think injurious to the mercantile interest of this country, which is, the prohibition of arms and gunpowder into Africa; as, however laudable the motive may be, the desired end is not obtained, and it has only transferred a very lucrative trade from our own subjects into the hands of the Danes, Dutch, &c. who, by importing these very articles, are enabled, as I have before mentioned, to undersell and monopolize the trade, to the great prejudice of our own merchants; some of whom evade the order in council by clearing out for Madeira, land their cargo at that island, and procure a certificate from the British consul of having done so, which certificate he is obliged to grant; it is then reshipped in the same vessel and proceeds to the coast.

I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) *James Lucas Yeo*, Captain.

John W. Croker, Esq.
 &c. &c. &c.

A. N^o 2.—Copy of a Letter from Sir James L. Yeo, dated 12th March 1817.

His Majesty's Ship *Inconstant*, off Cape Coast Castle,
 12th March 1817.

Sir,

A. N^o 2.
 Letter from Sir
 James Lucas Yeo,
 12 March 1817.

I BEG leave to inform you, for their Lordships information, that having landed the specie at Sierra Leone, I sailed from that river on the 21st of January to visit our different settlements on the coast, and to look after an armed schooner under Spanish colours, who had plundered an English brig and several other vessels, but without success, for though there is little or no doubt but most of the armed vessels under Spanish colours, trading for slaves, are guilty of piracy, yet it is very difficult, if not impossible to detect them in the act. This is neither the only or the least evil our trade has and will suffer from so extensive a Slave Trade under the Spanish flag, for now they feel their own security and do not fear any molestation; they do

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do not hesitate to take their Slaves on board in the vicinity and even between the British Forts; the consequence will be, that they will supply the natives with every article they stand in need of (arms and powder included,) at a much cheaper rate than our merchants can afford to do, and will revive a traffic, which is certainly most popular with every African I have seen.

The natives at our different forts begin already to hope for a participation in the trade. I am sorry to say that these vessels receive great encouragement and assistance from the Dutch governor in chief Daendels; and as Elmina is only seven miles from Cape Coast Castle, it cannot fail to prove productive of most mischievous effects to our Settlements.

Having visited our Forts, and run the coast down as far to the southward as the river Gaboon, I proceeded to the Island of St. Thomas's for refreshments and water; after a stay of three days I sailed thence on the 7th, and arrived here yesterday, where I expected to meet the Cherub, but find that, being short of provisions, she had quitted the coast for England five days before my arrival.

Being aware that there are a number of British vessels trading on the coast, I deem it expedient to remain for their protection until the rains are about to commence, which is the beginning of May, when I shall quit the coast and proceed to England agreeable to my instructions.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) *James Lucas Yeo*, Commodore.

John W. Croker, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

A. N° 2:
Letter from Sir
James Lucas Yeo,
12 March 1817.

A.—N° 3. Extract of a Letter from Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo, K. C. B. addressed to J. W. Croker, Esquire; dated on board His Majesty's Ship Inconstant, on the Coast of Africa, the 12th May 1817.

"I AM happy to inform you that a few days before my departure from Cape Coast, three of the Company's officers had proceeded up the country as an embassy to the King of the Ashantees, one of whom is to remain there as a resident factor. I am convinced that this is the only way by which we can ever obtain either a knowledge of the country, or its inhabitants, or hope to benefit the one, or civilize the other; and though these gentlemen will no doubt obtain very useful information, yet I am more certain in my own mind, that, under the present system, there is no prospect, nay, no possibility of our acquiring any great national honour, or commercial advantages in Africa.

"I do not wish or intend to convey any thing to the prejudice of the Company's servants, either as men or merchants; but, I do contend, that they have neither the talent, enterprise, activity or inclination for such an undertaking: few of them ever leave their store or shop during the day, it is their natural occupation; nor can it be expected they will sacrifice their own interests and health for the general good.

"In order to form a plan of operations calculated to discover new sources of commercial wealth, and to direct them towards the Coast, it will be necessary to establish a Government that can secure property, and care taken to select proper officers and others to be employed, who ought to possess information, honour, and moral conduct; without which, I will venture to predict, all will prove futile and unworthy the British nation."

A. N° 3:
Letter from Sir
James Lucas Yeo,
12 May 1817.

A.—N° 4. Extract of a Letter from Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo, dated His Majesty's Ship Inconstant, Barbadoes, 29th May 1817, and addressed to John Wilson Croker, Esq.

"I NOW proceeded off Cape Mount, and run the coast down as far as Cape Coast Castle; off the river Cavalley we visited two English traders belonging to Liverpool, one of which had been plundered off Cape Mezurado, by a large armed schooner under Spanish colours, cruising off there, taking in slaves.

A. N° 4:
Letter from Sir
James Lucas Yeo,
29 May 1817.

A few

A. N° 4.
Letter from Sir
James Lucas Yeo,
29 May 1817.

“A few days before our arrival at Cape Coast, a large armed ship of twenty-six guns appeared off that Castle, and the Company’s officers taking her for a man of war, sent a canoe on board; the captain made most particular inquiries where the Inconstant was to be found, adding, that he had come to blow her out of the water. This ship did not show any colours, but was full of men, and no doubt a slave ship under the Spanish flag.”

B.—N° 1. Copy of a Letter from Captain Fisher, dated 21st April 1816.

His Majesty’s Ship Bann, Sierra Leone,
21st April 1816.

Sir,

B. N° 1.
Letter from Capt.
Fisher, 21 April
1816.

I BEG leave to acquaint you, for the information of their Lordships, the Bann captured on the 16th of March last, off Prince’s Island, the Portuguese brig *Sau Antonio*, from Camaroon, bound to Bahia with nearly six hundred slaves. To feed or attend such a number in a vessel of one hundred and twenty tons was impossible, and seldom has a more dreadful scene been witnessed than she presented; in a passage of eighty leagues more than thirty had died, whilst, at least, an equal number appeared in a dying state: amidst a group of these unhappy creatures, in the last stage of misery and starvation, lay a neglected corpse, in a state too dreadful for description; this, too, in a most unhealthy climate, at the worst season, whilst tornadoes were frequent and violent, and the rains almost incessant. It is impossible in the compass of a public letter to describe half the sufferings of these victims of oppression.

By removing a large portion of them into His Majesty’s ship, by diet, cleanliness, and medical attendance (of which they had hitherto been destitute) in short by exerting every means in my power, and supplying them as well as the exhausted state of provisions permitted, being warmly supported by the humanity of my officers and men, I have succeeded in towing her hither with less loss than I had reason to apprehend. I have the pleasure to add, I have not, during this service, lost one of my own men.

I trust their Lordships will approve my having come up with her; it was necessary to tow her up, or to abandon her to certain destruction: forty-three died on the passage, notwithstanding all our care, and many more are still in a very precarious state.

I am completing my water, and taking on board provisions, and shall proceed immediately for Barbadoes in compliance with my orders.

I have, &c.

(Signed) *William Fisher*, Captain.

J. W. Croker, Esquire,
&c. &c. &c.

B. N° 2.—Extracts of a Letter from Captain William Fisher, dated on board His Majesty’s Ship Bann, at Spithead, the 4th July 1816, and addressed to J. W. Croker, Esq.

B. N° 2.
Letter from Capt.
Fisher, 4 July 1817.

“THE Bann arrived at Goree the 30th December 1815, at Sierra Leone the 9th January instant; on the 12th, whilst refitting, I received intelligence that two schooners were taking in slaves at Gallinas; sailed next morning early, and on the 18th captured, as I had the honour to report, the American schooner *Rosa* under Spanish colours, with two hundred and seventy-six slaves; I returned with her, and having completed my wood and water, &c. &c. proceeded on the 28th to cruize down the coast, landing, on the application of governor M^cCarthy, sixty Krou men at Seltra Krou; arrived at Cape Coast Castle on the 17th February, and in compliance with an application from Governor White proceeded to Axim, (the application and enclosures, with all the proceedings consequent thereon, I have enclosed for their Lordships information;) on the 29th February returned to Cape Coast, and having taken on board such gold and ivory as the merchants wished to send, continued my cruize down the coast, stopping one day at Accrah.

“On

THE SLAVE TRADE.

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“ On the 5th March captured off Whydah (as I had the honour to report from Prince’s Island), the *Temerario* of eighteen guns and eighty men, and having repaired her damages, dispatched her on the 9th for Sierra Leone; arrived at Prince’s Island on the 11th, completed our water and procured refreshments, and on the 15th in the morning proceeded for Gaboon, on the 16th in the evening, still in sight of the island (having been driven back by two tornadoes), captured the Portuguese brig *San Antonio*, with nearly six hundred slaves on board, taken in at Camaroon, in violation of the treaty, a copy of which was on board her: this capture, with my reasons for going to Sierra Leone with her, I have had the honour to report.

B. N° 2.
Letter from Capt.
Fisher, 4 July 1817.

“ On the 25th April we were ready to proceed to Barbadoes; but I was induced by information to look into Gallinas before I quitted the coast; off Sherbro’ Island I fell in with a large armed felucca under Spanish colours, which I was induced by circumstances to send into Sierra Leone.

“ The *Bann* has captured four slave vessels, with thirty-six guns and one hundred and sixty-four men, released nine hundred slaves, and deprived them of the means of transporting eight hundred more, exclusive of *La Neuve Aimable*, a large schooner under Spanish colours with four hundred slaves, which having sprung a leak, bore up for Sierra Leone, and was boarded off the harbour by the boats of the Colonial Brig and the *Bann*, His Majesty’s sloop *Ferret* being in company.”

B.—N° 3.—Extract of a Letter from Captain Wm. Fisher, of His Majesty’s Ship *Cherub*, addressed to J. W. Croker, Esq.; dated Prince’s Island, 4th February 1817.

“ IN obedience to the orders of Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo, K. C. B. K. T. S. &c. &c. I take the first opportunity of transmitting, for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the proceedings of His Majesty’s ship under my command. On the 17th ultimo, she captured off Cape Lahon, the Portuguese ship *Esperanza*, with 413 slaves, taken on board at Whydah, in latitude 6° 20’ N. in violation of the treaty: having dispatched her for Sierra Leone, I arrived off Fort Apollonia, the weathermost of the British Forts, on the 21st, having been much delayed by calms, one of which lasted thirteen days; having communicated with the Fort, and ascertained that all was well at the windward Forts, I proceeded for Cape Coast, communicating with Commenda; finding every where accounts of piracies committed by large armed schooners, generally showing Spanish colours, but manned with ruffians of all nations. I enclose annexed, an Extract from the Log of the American schooner *John Willis*, which had been plundered of all her provisions, and had seen an English brig plundered, of her provisions and stores, her sails unbent and taken away, and her standing rigging cut away. I found it necessary to supply him with a small quantity of provisions. Arrived at Cape Coast the 21st, at night, where I received further accounts of piracies on the coast by armed schooners, and was informed by Governor Smith, that a large armed Spanish ship with 140 men, was slaving in the immediate neighbourhood of the Company’s Forts, and learned from various sources that she was in close correspondence with Governor Daendels of Fort Elmina, who supplied her with every thing necessary for carrying on the Slave Trade, and was supposed to be concerned in her, and that they had publicly expressed their wish to fall in with a British man-of-war.

B. N° 3.
Letter from
Capt. Fisher,
4 February 1817.

I feel it my duty to state that Governor General Daendels of Fort Elmina, gives every encouragement to the Slave Trade; two Portuguese slave vessels have been supplied with water and canvas there: his connection with the Spanish ship is unquestionable. This example has already had a serious influence upon the natives living under our Forts.

The French slave vessels are numerous; there are now three at Gaboon.

(Enclosure.)

A Copy of the Log of the American Schooner John Willis, of Boston, off Little Lesters.

Log of the American
Schooner, John
Willis, of Boston.

Sunday, 15th December 1816.—Throughout moderate agreeable weather; trading with the natives for ivory. At 8 a. m. observed a large schooner under the Spanish flag, lying at anchor $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to leeward of us; to be under weigh at 45' past 8 a. m. He hailed, and wished our captain good morning, and desired we would sell him some bread, as he was going away and had none on board; told him we could not spare any, as we were very short ourselves; he however dropt his anchor on our larboard beam, about 30 yards from us, and sent his boat on board with his first officer armed; they then took the after-hatches off, and took from us, viz. 2 puncheons of rum, 8 barrels of powder, 1 puncheon of bread, 12 kegs of lobsters, 12 kegs of tongues and sounds, 12 kegs of pickles, 12 bottles of porter, and 4 boxes of sperm candles; he hoisted out our boat to carry the things on board; they then prevailed upon two of our men to leave, and enter on board their vessel, one by the name of Charles Green, a Prussian, the other Gardener Turner, an American. The vessel is a large fast sailing schooner, about 200 tons; with a large gun a-midships, and full of men: she has also many slaves.

Monday, 16th December 1816.—Commencing with moderate pleasant weather. At 3 p. m. the schooner that robbed us, got under weigh, and ran down to the anchorage she had left in the morning. At about 30' past 4 p. m. got under weigh for the leeward; as we past the English brig Industry, Captain M^cConnell, her boat came on board of us to buy a little bread, as the Spanish schooner above-mentioned had plundered them of all her cargo, and all their provisions, not even leaving them a single biscuit: they had also partly stript the rigging and sails from the vessel, taking his compasses, and nine of his crew on board (blacks) as Slaves. Middle part squally; at 3 a. m. a breeze off the land; obliged to run under easy sail, on account of being short-handed: ends with light airs and pleasant weather.

“ Copied on board the John Willis, of Boston, off Fort Apollonia, this 20th day of January 1817.

(Signed)

“ *W. G. T. M.*

(Signed)

“ *W^m Vincent Foster,*

“ Master of the John Willis, Schooner, of Boston.”

PAPERS
RELATING TO THE SLAVE TRADE.

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