



Center *for* Research Libraries
GLOBAL RESOURCES NETWORK

The Center for Research Libraries scans to provide digital delivery of its holdings. In some cases problems with the quality of the original document or microfilm reproduction may result in a lower quality scan, but it will be legible. In some cases pages may be damaged or missing. Files include OCR (machine searchable text) when the quality of the scan and the language or format of the text allows.

If preferred, you may request a loan by contacting Center for Research Libraries through your Interlibrary Loan Office.

Rights and usage

Materials digitized by the Center for Research Libraries are intended for the personal educational and research use of students, scholars, and other researchers of the CRL member community. Copyrighted images and texts may not be reproduced, displayed, distributed, broadcast, or downloaded for other purposes without the expressed, written permission of the copyright owner.

Center for Research Libraries

Identifier: 825a0f45-dd97-49b9-90cf-af9df08ac721

Range: Scans 001 - 026

Downloaded on: 2022-05-25 13:59:33

SLAVE TRADE. No. 2 (1880).

CORRESPONDENCE

RELATING TO THE

BOMBARDMENT OF ONITSHA.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
1880.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

[C.—2538.] *Price 3½d.*

LIST OF PAPERS.

No.				Page.
1. The Secretary to the Admiralty to Sir J. Pauncefote Three Inclosures.	..	..	..	November 25, 1879 1
2. Acting Consul Easton to the Marquis of Salisbury .. Two Inclosures.	..	..	..	October 18, — 3
3. Acting Consul Easton to the Marquis of Salisbury .. One Inclosure.	..	..	..	November 3, — 5
4. The Secretary to the Admiralty to Sir J. Pauncefote One Inclosure.	..	..	..	December 16, — 7
5. Mr. Taubman to the Marquis of Salisbury ..	..	..	..	December 18, — 8
6. The Secretary to the Admiralty to Sir J. Pauncefote Seven Inclosures.	..	..	..	December 29, — 8
7. Sir J. Pauncefote to the Secretary to the Admiralty ..	..	..	..	January 13, 1880 14
8. Mr. Meade to Sir J. Pauncefote.. .. Four Inclosures.	..	..	..	January 22, — 15

Correspondence relating to the Bombardment of Onitsha.

No. 1.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Sir J. Pauncefote.—(Received November 27.)

Sir,

Admiralty, November 25, 1879.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a letter, dated the 7th ultimo, from the Commanding Officer of Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer," containing a report of his proceedings in the River Niger.

I am to request that the inclosures to this letter may be returned when done with for transmission to Colonial Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT HALL.

Inclosure 1 in No. 1.

Sailing Orders.

(Memo.)

"Dido," at Sierra Leone, August 16, 1879.

IT is my direction that Her Majesty's ship under your command is to undergo a trial of machinery and steering apparatus on Tuesday next, and if these trials prove satisfactory, and being in every respect ready for sea, you are on Wednesday, the 20th instant, to proceed to Fernando Po, where you will communicate with Her Britannic Majesty's Consul and make the necessary arrangements for proceeding up the Niger in order that he may be able to carry out their Lordships' orders relative to the distribution of presents to the Chiefs up that river.

A case of medicine has been forwarded to you, and two other cases are at Cape Coast Castle, where you are to call on your way to Fernando Po to pick them up.

On your completing the above service you will return to Fernando Po, where instructions will await you as to your future proceedings.

(Signed)

WILLIAM V. ST. CLAIR, *Commanding Her Majesty's ship "Dwarf" for Captain and Senior Officer, West Coast of Africa.*

The Commanding Officer,
Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer."

Inclosure 2 in No. 1.

Mr. Barrow to Captain Burr.

Sir,

Bonny, September 8, 1879.

IT is with much gratification for the interests of the public service that I notice your arrival in the river.

Consul Hopkins is alive, and that is all that can be said, for his medical men have long since given him over.

I have the honour to inclose you copy of a Commission I was favoured with by the Consul, by which you will perceive that, owing to his illness, he has placed the custody of the presents from Her Majesty's Government, intended for the Kings and Chiefs of the Niger, in my hands, requesting me to deliver them.

It so happens that I am accredited to His Highness the Emir of Nupé, who resides, as you are doubtless aware, at Bidâ, on the Upper Niger, with presents from the Government of the Gold Coast Colony authorized by instructions from home, and that his Excellency Governor Ussher not only attaches importance to that Commission, but is anxious that I should carry it out during the present season.

But, in consequence of the commercial changes now taking place in the river by the absorption of the works, stores, and factories of four trading Companies into those of one Company, the usual means of transport up and down the river is irregular and altogether unreliable, for the steamers are employed upon other services, and thus there are no means at my disposal upon which I can place due reliance for carrying out the instructions of the Foreign Office as conveyed to Consul Hopkins, or of those which I have the honour to be the bearer of from his Excellency Governor Ussher.

Under these circumstances, which I shall be happy to explain personally more in detail should you desire it, I have the honour to entreat you to take your ship up the Niger to Eggâ, providing me and my party with passages to that place.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. KNAPP BARROW, *late Captain 57th Regiment,
Private Secretary to his Excellency Governor Ussher,
Special Commissioner to the Niger.*

Inclosure 3 in No. 1.

Lieutenant-Commander Burr to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Sir,

"Pioneer," Fernando Po, October 7, 1879.

IN compliance with instructions received from the Senior Officer at Sierra Leone, I have the honour to inform you that I left that port on the 20th August for Fernando Po (*en route* for the River Niger), arriving at that place on the 4th September, called at Cape Coast Castle for medical stores and at Quitta for coal on the passage.

At Fernando Po I received information that the Consul, Mr. David Hopkins, was at Bonny, so, after filling up with coal, left for that river on the 7th September, arriving there the following afternoon.

I found the Consul so ill that it was rendered an impossibility that he could carry out his instructions from the Foreign Office; in fact, little hopes were entertained of his recovery. He deputed Mr. S. F. Easton to act as Consul, which gentleman I embarked to do the duty in the Niger in place of himself.

I also found, waiting at Bonny for an opportunity to be conveyed into that river, Captain Barrow (Private Secretary to Governor Ussher), with seven men of the Houssa force, who had been sent from Accra by his Excellency the Governor of the Gold Coast on an expedition to Bidâ, on the Upper Niger, to collect recruits for their force.

On his written representation (which I inclose) I felt myself justified in embarking him for the purpose of carrying out his instructions, especially as, in consequence of this gentleman's many years' experience of the interior of Africa, Mr. Hopkins had requested him to give the presents to His Highness the Emir of Nupé received from the Foreign Office (he having already in his possession several cases of goods to be distributed amongst the Chiefs of Bidâ from the Colonial Office) with Mr. Easton to superintend.

Having again filled up with coal at Bonny, I proceeded to and arrived at Brass on the 12th September for the purpose of procuring a Niger pilot, but was unsuccessful. This is the accustomed place to ship them.

Our steaming qualities having fallen very low for a great consumption of coal, viz., 15 cwt. per hour for seven knots, and bearing in mind that this vessel has not been docked since she was launched; also being aware of the strong currents in the Niger she would have to contend against, I determined to beach her at Brass, a place there being favourable for that purpose. It was not only with the intention of clearing her bottom, but to try and get at the Kingston valves, which are partially choked with oysters and other matter. She was beached one tide with 3 feet of water round her; the bottom was thoroughly cleaned, but it was not possible to get at the valves, they being too far under her bilge. The ship was got off the next tide, and, as events afterwards proved, the

cleaning has done her a deal of good in point of speed. When beached it was a neap tide, rise and fall 5 feet. I would here remark that the ship is much in want of going into dock for overhauling.

I left Brass Sunday, 14th September, arriving at Akassa, mouth of the Niger the same evening, filled up with coal, and on the following morning, having engaged a pilot, proceeded up the Niger, and anchored in the broadest part of the river, 3 miles below Eggâ.

Captain Barrow and Mr. Easton, Acting Consul, having requested me to co-operate with them in their duties at Bidâ, as regards the presentation of the presents to His Highness the Emir of Nupé, I proceeded with these gentlemen in a steam launch to the capital.

This launch I towed up the river for the purpose, it having been placed at our disposal by the United African Company.

The business having been satisfactorily concluded, I left Eggâ on the 2nd October with the Consul, not feeling justified in remaining in the Niger for Captain Barrow, his time in the river being regulated by his duty collecting Houssa men; also in consequence of the water having already commenced to fall.

Arrived at Akassa on the 5th October, passed safely out of the river, and anchored, according to instructions, at Fernando Po on the evening of the 7th instant.

Many complaints in the river have been handed to me through the Consul, some of them of a very serious nature. I contented myself, with the little time at my disposal, by inquiring into the several statements, and in most cases am satisfied of their accuracy. The town of Onitsha, especially, appears to be in the hands of a gang of desperadoes, and the King is powerless to check them. The principal traders have intimated to me that they would gladly remove all their goods and dismantle their factories; but this, they say, is impossible, unless in the presence of a man-of-war, as the natives would not permit their removal. Property to the value of 20,000*l.* is thus locked up and at the mercy of these ruffians, who have also threatened the lives of several merchants.

As remaining so much longer time in the river whilst the merchants removed their property would have incurred so much risk to the health of the crew and the safety of the vessel at this time of the season, I declined to delay, but promised to place the circumstances before the Senior Officer.

The health of the ship's company and officers has been very good, and I am pleased that I cannot report a single case of illness. Strict attention has been paid to the Niger Sanitary Instructions, and great care to the well-being of the crew generally.

I cannot say too much of the courtesy of the officials of the "United African Company" in the Niger, who facilitated the ship's movements by every means in their power.

I arranged for coal at a cost of 2*l.* per ton, using full power ascending the river and the economical speed returning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JNO. L. BURR.

No. 2.

Acting Consul Easton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 2.)

(Extract.)

Bonny, October 18, 1879.

I HAVE the honour to report that I left Bonny in Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" on the 11th September, 1879, and proceeded in her to Eggâ, on the Upper Niger, whence I travelled overland to Bidâ, the capital city of the Emir of Nupé's dominions, taking with me the presents sent by Her Majesty's Government for the Emir and the surrounding Kings and Chiefs. These presents I duly delivered as instructed, and was assisted by Captain R. K. Barrow, Private Secretary to his Excellency the Governor of the Gold Coast, who proceeded also to Bidâ in order to procure recruits for the Houssa force. This gentleman was himself the bearer of presents to the Emir from the Colonial Government. These were of small value compared with those sent by the Foreign Office, and, should Captain Barrow's mission be successful, much of that success will be due to the Foreign Office presents.

I was accompanied also by Captain John L. Burr, of Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer," and this officer's untiring exertions contributed much to the success of our mission.

His Highness the Emir of Nupé received our party with every mark of respect, treated us well during six days spent in Bidâ, and promised to exert himself to the utter-

most to develop trade and protect the lives of the traders in the Upper Niger. I am convinced of his sincerity.

I left Bidâ on the 30th September, and, travelling in Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer," reached Fernando Po on the 7th October.

Copies of complaints made to me by European traders at various stations on the Niger form Inclosure No. 1. Several of these are very serious, but the terms of my Commission are so specific as to my only assuming the executive duties of the Consulate "upon my return," that I refrained from active interference. However, I collected every information I could upon the subjects, went direct to Fernando Po, where I presented to the Governor of that island my Commission, and obtained his official recognition. Having thus fulfilled the terms of the Commission, and being in possession of all the details, I have written the Senior Naval Officer, inclosing copies of the complaints, and asking him for a gun-boat to help me in chastising the natives of Onitsha. Copy of my letter forms Inclosure No. 2.

Whilst at anchor off Onitsha, six slaves, the property of a British subject (J. N. Palmer, a native of Sierra Leone), came alongside Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer," and begged protection from their master, who had threatened to murder them. I felt justified in requesting Captain Burr to convey them to Akassa, where they are now employed, fed, paid, and kindly treated by Captain Macintosh, General Manager, United African Company.

Inclosure 1 in No. 2.

Complaints from European Traders.

October 30, 1878.

J. N. PALMER, Sierra Leone man, shot one of his "boys" through the breast, under the heart, with a Winchester rifle. The boy lingered and eventually died. Palmer states this to have been an accident, but think it requires your investigation.

2. Andrew's boy cut Mr. Flint, of the C. A. I. Company with a matchet, with intent to do him a serious injury.

It appears on the morning of the 11th November, 1878, the "Satellite," a steam gig, was at anchor about 8 yards from the beach. In her were two Krooboy, who had a small canoe alongside to come ashore for their "chop." Nimbly, one of the boys, came to the beach, and, before going to the factory, was washing himself at the beach. Two women were within a few yards of him, and made a remark in the Onitsha language alluding to his person. He replied in the same tongue a remark which she said was forbidden, and at once commenced to draw the attention of the wharf people, being a wife of one of them. On hearing the noise Mr. Flint went down to the wharf, and inquired into the affair, and, as the woman commenced to interfere first, he tried to settle the affair with a few words, when the woman came up to him and knocked his nose with her finger. He pushed her arm away, and she fell down to suit circumstances. He then went to the house, and was immediately called back, as one of Andrew's boys tried to seize Nimbly. The Krooboy got the better of him, and the native then seized a lump of wood and knocked Nimbly down. When he fell he seized hold of a stone and struck the native on the back of the head. He jumped into the small canoe and got safe away. Immediately the whole of Andrew's boys went in the steam gig, seized the remaining boy, Palm Tree, and dragged him to Andrew's house, and there placed him in irons. They then commenced to haul the gig on the beach, ordered by Andrew (converted man) in every movement. Ogoo came down to the assistance of Mr. Flint, and both were holding on the rope of the anchor when Mr. Flint received the cut on the head. He was defenceless, and sought shelter in Mr. Pinnock's yard. Even then, Ogoo thought it advisable to pay Andrew some measures for the wounded boy, to save further palaver, which was done by him.

3. Miller Brothers' factory on fire, 10:30 P.M. on the night of the 17th January, 1879. Native work by a man then staying with Mortiboy (converted man).

4. Ogoo and Astrope, with their boys, fighting. No one dare go near, as bullets were flying in a most reckless manner. Several wounded on both sides. Disgraceful affair. Sunday, the 9th February, 1879, guns, rifles, knives, matchlocks, &c., used.

5. James Ambufa seized Captain French, of the "Foulah," dragged him to his house, demanded 100 measures for the alleged damaged canoe, not worth 2 measures. All

white men were refused entrance to the house. This man is a worthless scoundrel, and, to make the matter worse, understands English well, having been at the Mission.

March 17, 1879.

Inclosure 2 in No. 2.

Acting Consul Easton to the Senior Officer, Bights Division.

Sir,

River Niger, October 6, 1879.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of complaints made to me by British subjects at Onitsha, regarding their treatment by the natives and the insecurity of their lives and property.

I have duly inquired into these statements, and am quite convinced of their accuracy.

The town seems to be in the hands of a gang of desperadoes, and the King is powerless to keep them in check.

The principal traders have intimated to me that they will gladly remove all their goods and dismantle their factories, but this is impossible unless in the presence of a man-of-war, as the natives will not permit the removal.

Property to the value of 20,000*l.* is thus locked up and at the mercy of these ruffians, who, as you will observe from the inclosures, have also threatened the lives of several merchants.

Under these circumstances, I have urgently to request that you will, without delay, grant me the assistance of a man-of-war to remove the property of the Europeans, and to mete out to the natives that chastisement they so thoroughly deserve.

I have, &c.

(Signed) S. F. EASTON.

No. 3.

Acting Consul Easton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 17.)

My Lord,

Bonny, November 3, 1879.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I left Bonny in Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" on the 20th October, and reached Onitsha on the 24th October. The object of my visit was to investigate the outrages against British traders, as detailed in Inclosure 1 of my despatch dated Bonny, the 18th October, 1879, and those which form Inclosure 1 of the present despatch.

On my arrival at Onitsha I consulted with Captain J. L. Burr, of Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer," and Captain McIntosh, General Manager of the United Companies trading in the Niger. We thereafter called a meeting of all the British subjects in the place. Amongst these latter were three Sierra Leone men, J. N. Palmer, J. N. Ogoo, and J. O. Astrope, all of whom I ascertained were engaged in slave-dealing. I caused these three to be arrested, and my dealings with them form the subject of my next despatch.

The traders having agreed to remove their goods and dismantle their factories, a guard from Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" was sent on shore to assist them. The natives proved exceedingly troublesome, frequently firing upon the party engaged in removing the goods, and wounding in the arm one of them, Captain Wallace, of the steam-ship "Fulah." This happened on the 25th October. On the following day I caused a notice to be conveyed to the King of Onitsha demanding that two men (James Ambeefa and Andrew) should be given up to me; that he would guarantee the safety of all white men in Onitsha; and that his principal Chiefs should attend a meeting on the 26th October in one of the factories.

These demands were treated with the utmost contempt, the natives laughing in our faces and telling us we dare not touch them.

On account of the frequent attacks upon the removing party, Captain Burr had several times to fire upon the town for their protection.

On the 28th October things were looking so serious and the natives so aggressive

that, all Europeans being ordered away, the town was bombarded during the remainder of the day.

The following day, the 29th October, we marched to the inner town, about 3 miles distant, and burned it; and, on the 30th October, we levelled all the walls left standing in the lower town.

All the goods have now been removed and the factories taken down.

Our proceedings at Onitsha will have a most salutary effect up and down the river, and the missionaries and traders unanimously gave us their thanks for our promptness and decision.

I am certain that, had nothing been done, the lives of the Europeans in the river during the forthcoming dry season would have been in the greatest danger.

I have, &c.

(Signed) S. F. EASTON.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Statement of Complaints by Traders in the Niger.

Osumari Factory.—A robbery from the above factory took place a few days after the one that occurred at Utchi, and goods stolen to the amount of 77*l.* 6*s.* 1*d.* The thief, Asanapoh, was seen in the yard the day of the night of the robbery. I can only indorse my remarks about this man as expressed in my complaint of the Utchi Factory.

Oduhuri Factory.—On my establishing the first factory here, the natives to all appearance were inclined to be friendly and disposed to trade in a proper manner, but ultimately the King of the place (my landlord) found it impossible to control his people.

In January last the natives seized the cooper in my yard, carried him to the town, and placed him in chains, under the pretext that he had spoken forbidden language. Mr. Luke, the agent, distinctly denies this; however, four measures were paid to release him.

Two days before this event happened, the natives had seized two Kroo boys belonging to Miller Brothers as they were cutting wood in the bush, and stated they required my agent to pay their ransom as well as Miller Brothers. Some measures were paid before they would release the men.

After this happened my labourers were prevented by the natives from cutting wood, carrying sand, &c. They also seized a girl of Luke's (Jane Riffel), and at the same time stole a goat from the yard.

Finding seizing the cooper was very remunerative, the Chief, Atoko, came one evening to the factory at 9.30, with armed slaves, war drums, &c., and informed Mr. Luke the cooper had "called his name." Both emphatically denied having done so. They saw what was their intention, and, of course, were forced to pay what they demanded, viz:—

Twenty pieces cloth, 1 demijohn rum, 14/12 cases gin, or otherwise a serious disturbance would probably have taken place.

When any cargo is landed on the bank side the natives assemble in large numbers and seize the gin, rum, &c., and make off with their plunder to the town, and Luke (the agent) finds it impossible to recover even a portion of it.

Utchi Factory.—A robbery from the factory here occurred on the 1st February last, and goods to the amount of 68*l.* 14*s.* 11*d.* were taken away. On making inquiries, the agent found that the chief robber was a man by the name of Asanapoh, who is known all over the river as a notorious thief.

On looking over the other lists you will see that this man has made a raid on all my factories in the river below Alenzo.

The agent went to the King of Utchi to lodge his complaint; had to go several times, when he was told by him he did not want to hear any more of the "palaver."

Now, this thief makes Utchi his head-quarters, and I feel convinced the King knows more about the robbery than he wishes to state; also harbours and protects the man; and up to the present time I have had no redress beyond a few pieces of cloth, which were almost useless when returned. If this man is allowed to continue in the country, a factory will not be safe within the circuit of the lower river. He was expelled

from Alenzo for the same thing and since then has become a notorious man at his now only occupation.

Aboh Factory.—A robbery has also taken place here, and goods to the amount of 36*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.* stolen.

This Asanapoh being in Aboh at the time, I have come to the conclusion it is the same band that have robbed my other factories.

There seems to have been an arrangement made to visit my factories, as none of the other firms have been disturbed in a like manner.

The same band attempted an entrance at U'doni Factory, but, an alarm being raised, they fled.

You will now see they have been round all my establishments except Oduguri.

(Signed) D. McINTOSH,
General Manager, United African Company.

No. 4.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Sir J. Pauncefote.—(Received December 17.)

Sir,

Admiralty, December 16, 1879.

WITH reference to my letter of 25th ultimo, forwarding the report of proceedings of Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" in the Niger, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the perusal of the Marquis of Salisbury, extracts from a despatch received from Acting Captain William St. Clair (Senior Officer on the West Coast), who states that owing to the unfavourable condition of affairs at Onitsha he had ordered the "Pioneer" to proceed again to the Niger, taking with him the Acting Consul from Bonny.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT HALL.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Commander St. Clair to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

(Extract.)

"Dido," off Bonny, October 28, 1879.

I ARRIVED at this place on the 15th instant.

I communicated with the Chairman of the Court of Equity relative to the stoppage of trade in the river, and decided from what he informed me that it would be better to wait until the Acting Consul returned from the Niger before taking any steps in the matter.

I received a letter from Lieutenant-Commander Burr, reporting his return from the Niger, all well; I therefore proceeded with all despatch to Fernando Po to meet him, and intending to catch the Acting Consul before he had time to start for any of the rivers; but in this I was unsuccessful, as he left in the mail steamer for Bonny just as I arrived.

In consequence of the very unfavourable report of the state of affairs at Onitsha in the River Niger, I ordered Lieutenant Burr to proceed in the "Pioneer" with all despatch to the Bonny to embark the Acting Consul, and proceed with him to Onitsha for the purpose of making a full inquiry into all the circumstances, and to obtain redress and satisfaction for the numerous outrages which have been committed on British subjects in that place for some time past.

The "Pioneer" started for this service on Sunday, 19th instant, and I expect to meet her on her return at the Nun entrance to the Niger on the 30th instant.

No. 5.

Mr. Taubman to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 19.)

*The United African Company Limited, 34 to 40, Ludgate Hill,
London, December 18, 1879.*

My Lord,

WE cannot sufficiently express our gratitude to Her Majesty's Government for the prompt and decisive action taken by them in defence of the lives and property of British subjects in the River Niger.

Intimately acquainted as we are with the threatening attitude of certain of the natives on the banks of that river during the past twelve months, we have not the slightest doubt that the lesson given by Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" to the people of Onitsha has averted an otherwise inevitable massacre throughout the lower portion of the river during the coming dry season, when the natives would have felt themselves secure from interference or from punishment.

Such alarming symptoms of violence showed themselves as far back as last year, that the four independent firms then trading in the river found it absolutely essential to unite into an Amalgamated Company, in order to present a firm front to aggression.

Your Lordship is probably aware that the mass of the natives in the towns where we trade are very favourable to the establishment of British factories in their midst, but we find everywhere a knot of turbulent Chiefs, who hope to enrich themselves by plunder, and who are ready to take advantage of any apparent weakness and want of protection on our part to stir up the idle portions of the population against us. In close alliance with these Chiefs are a small number of coloured British subjects, for the most part sub-agents discharged in former years by the trading firms now amalgamated, and who live in a most immoral manner by an organized system of slave-dealing. These persons are almost invariably the cause of any disputes that occur, and to them indeed may be legitimately attributed the necessity for the presence of a gun-boat, and for the strong measures requisite for the protection of life.

During the past year outrage has succeeded outrage, agents have been beaten, factories broken into and plundered, an attempt at murder made, and threats of further violence during the coming dry season freely uttered.

A mere withdrawal of trade from Onitsha would unfortunately have only aggravated the danger, as it would have been attributed to weakness by the turbulent Chiefs of Oko, Alenzo, and other principal towns, and would have precipitated the meditated attack.

It is unfortunately true that the action of Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" has entailed a very large immediate loss upon us through the destruction of valuable stores, the pulling down of large iron houses, the hurried removal of vast quantities of goods, and the cessation of trade at Onitsha; but this was unavoidable, and we should show great ingratitude to Her Majesty's Government were we to weigh this loss, heavy as it is, against the enormous permanent benefits secured, by their action, to life and property throughout the river.

Had Her Majesty's Government not acted so decisively as they have done, no alternative would have been left to us but to withdraw entirely from the Niger, where for fifteen years past so much capital has been expended, and so much done towards the opening-up of Africa and the advance of trade, and consequently of civilization.

In again thanking your Lordship, we would add that we believe that what has been done will ensure the blessings of peace for many years in the Niger, provided that Her Britannic Majesty's Consul is fully empowered to suppress summarily all slave-dealing practices among British subjects in that river.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. S. GOLDIE TAUBMAN, *Chairman.*

No. 6.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Sir J. Pauncefote.—(Received January 1, 1880.)

Sir,

Admiralty, December 29, 1879.

WITH reference to my letter of the 16th December, forwarding extracts from a despatch from the Senior Naval Officer on the West Coast of Africa, stating that he had sent the "Pioneer" up to Onitsha, in the Niger, to investigate the unfavourable state of

affairs at that place, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Marquis of Salisbury, the inclosed copy of the proceedings of the "Pioneer" on this occasion, together with a copy of the Senior Officer's letter which accompanied the Report; and I am to acquaint you that my Lords propose to approve of the means adopted by Lieutenant Burr, in chastising the natives, and of the manner in which he carried out the expedition generally. In this approval their Lordships would be glad to have Lord Salisbury's concurrence.

A copy of the report from the Medical Officer of the "Pioneer" on the termination of this expedition is also inclosed, and shows that all the officers and men have suffered from fever consequent on this service.

Lieutenant Burr has himself been invalided home.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT HALL.

Inclosure 1 in No. 6.

Captain Domvile to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Sir, "Dido," River Bonny, November 10, 1879.
I HAVE the honour to inclose a letter of proceedings with four inclosures of Lieutenant Burr, commanding Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer," with the account of his expedition to Onitsha, in the River Niger, under the orders he had received from Acting Captain St. Clair (Senior Officer), a copy of which I inclose.

The expedition appears to have been carried out judiciously and very successfully, and the necessity of it is clearly proved by the attacks made on the labourers whilst in the act of embarking the goods, &c., preparatory to abandoning the factories, which could not have been done without the presence of a man-of-war.

Lieutenant Burr thought it necessary to inflict chastisement on the inland town of Onitsha as well as the beach town. This I hope will meet with your approval, as though not strictly within the scope of his orders, still the bad feeling among the natives there, and the idea that no active measures would be taken, have no doubt tended to the late unsatisfactory state of affairs. He appears, with the assistance of the officers who he brings to my notice, to have brought this part of the expedition to a successful conclusion without loss of life.

The result on the river Chiefs in the late expedition has already borne fruit; fines ordered to be paid some years ago and still unpaid were paid on their way down, and the Acting Consul, Mr. Easton, assures me that he believes the expedition will have the effect of keeping the river quiet for some time to come. The missionary and mercantile community unite in tendering their thanks to Lieutenant Burr for his services. I cannot conclude without bringing to your notice for favourable mention the conduct of that officer; his untiring energy and zeal for the service, though his health is much enfeebled by the climate, is worthy of all praises.

The health of the "Pioneer's" ship's company has not at present suffered by the late expedition, though the six men lent by us have all been attacked by fever, but not of a serious kind.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COMPTON DOMVILE,

Inclosure 2 in No. 6.

Lieutenant-Commander Burr to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Sir, "Pioneer," at Onitsha, River Niger, November , 1879.
IN accordance with instructions received from you, I left Fernando Po on the 19th October, calling in at Bonny River; embarked on the 20th October Consul Easton and proceeded to Niger entrance, where I anchored at 6 A.M. on the 21st October. The following morning I started up the Niger for Onitsha, and anchored off that town on the evening of Friday, the 24th instant. I caused a Circular notice to be sent to all the British traders and residents living on shore to appear on board Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" at 6-30 the following morning, to enable me to inquire into the alleged

barbarities, robberies, and other disturbances of the public peace, as stated in my inclosures of my recent Niger Report. Everybody appeared, but it was with great difficulty, indeed, not without stringent measures, that N. Palmer and J. Ogoo could be induced to be present. The result of the investigations (which is inclosed) more than amply proved what has already been reported, and I felt it my duty by the advice of the Consul to make prisoners of N. Palmer, J. Ogoo, and J. O. Astrope. The two first mentioned are Sierra Leone men, and the last a native of Lagos. Their slaves, which were very numerous, I gave their freedom to. Some have gone up the river to where they came from, and others are with me for passage down the coast. On the evening of the same day I held, together with Mr. McIntosh, Agent United African Company, Consul Easton, Captain Barrow, and Sub-Lieutenant Luke, palaver with the Chiefs of the inner town, in consequence of their having control of both places.

I explained to them what was required, namely, that they should deliver up to me the two natives, Ambeefa and Andrew, who with their men have caused such serious disturbances. I also required other conditions from them (which I inclose), in default of which I pointed out that it would be my duty to punish them in such a way as to prevent the recurrence of such outrages upon British traders by their tribes in the future. I regret to say that, in consequence of their doing for so long a time exactly what they pleased without the injured parties receiving any kind of redress, that they looked upon our appearance here with some amusement, and treated us, if not with indignity, certainly with a great amount of contempt, stating that we came as vessels had come before, but they were not afraid of us, for we cannot do anything, and refused all my advances towards a peaceful settlement. I did not consider this meeting final, but gave 24 hours longer, and would have given even a more lengthened period if the circumstances admitted of it. Our return to the boats was attended with considerable danger, as the natives were in large numbers and well armed, and looked upon us with anything but a friendly eye. On my leaving the factory, I was informed that even whilst consulting with their Chiefs, the natives had captured several large and valuable canoes belonging to the United African Company whilst moored alongside the banks of the river. Attempts were made to get them back without violence, but the idea had to be given up. On my return on board and about 9 p.m. fire was opened upon the ship, bullets passing freely in close proximity to us. I caused a blank cartridge to be fired from one of the guns, which had the effect of silencing them for the night.

The following morning, the 26th October, the United African Company commenced under cover of our guns to withdraw on board their steamers (four of which are with me for the purpose) all their goods and merchandise—the total value of which is estimated at 50,000*l.*—previous to the dismantlement of the factories, which are built of corrugated iron. Just as they had started with the largest of the buildings numerous armed natives came down and attacked the labourers, carrying off the goods at the same time.

I immediately landed with our small-arm party under Sub-Lieutenant Luke and opened fire, which in a short time dispersed them. I am glad to say we escaped without casualty, but amongst those that were wounded in the affair was Captain Wallace, of the steamer "Fulah," who has had a narrow escape. After this, and taking into consideration that I had received a message from the King and Chiefs that they did not intend to comply with any of my requirements, and the time given them more than expired, I opened fire on the upper part of the beach town, Onitsha proper being three miles inland with an estimated population of 10,000, with our ship's guns, and the small-arm men burned that part of the town down. Towards the evening I caused shell and rockets to be thrown into every part of it.

The following morning it was reported that the natives had concentrated in the bush in rear of the town, and were about to attack the factories in force. I ordered everybody belonging to us and all friendly-disposed people to repair on board the different vessels, and then opened fire with shell and rockets continuously through the day, not only into the lower town, but also into the bush beyond.

On the 28th, after very mature consideration, I came to the conclusion that I could not leave Onitsha with credit to the flag after what had taken place (not only before a man-of-war's presence, but whilst one was actually lying in their anchorage) without bombarding and marching on Onitsha inland.

1. Because I had received accurate information that the fighting men, supposed to number 2,000, of that place had joined the beach men; and

2. That all my messages sent up to the King and Chiefs were returned on my hands with insult.

Having given timely notice to them to that effect, I commenced to bombard the place during the day (28th), and at 6 a.m. (29th) opened fire again for an hour, knowing

the place to be full of men and bearing in mind the comparatively small force at my command.

At 7 A.M. of the same day I landed the ship's company, in all about sixty men, the Gatling gun, and rocket tube. The small-arm men were in charge of Mr. Luke, Sub-Lieutenant; the rocket party under Mr. Lindsay; and the Gatling gun under Mr. Blower, gunner. Captain McIntosh, Chief Agent of the United African Company, placed 12 white men (captains of steamers and others) and 170 coloured men at my disposal. I also had the advantage of Captain Barrow, late 57th Regiment, Private Secretary to Mr. Ussher, Governor of the Gold Coast Colony, lately returned from the Upper Niger, who delayed his return to Accra, and together with one Sergeant-Major and twenty-four rank and file Houssas placed himself at my service. I owe a great deal to this gentleman in bringing the expedition to a successful issue by his military advice and zeal. It will be seen my force of all kinds mustered roughly 270 men (one-third of these carrying rifles), a very small number to march against a large town of 10,000 inhabitants, three miles distant, through an African bush.

Of this I was well aware, but I had so much confidence in my continuous bombardment of the place, having driven them for the most part further inland, that I considered burning their town down would not be attended with the same risk generally accompanying an expedition where the odds are so great.

The town consists of five villages, with a little interval of bush between each; therefore when the force had arrived in sight of the first one, rockets were thrown into it and those beyond. The natives made no stand until our arrival inside, when fire was opened on us at different times during our march through the villages, and each time the Gatling gun was brought into action, as also the small-arm men; the gun being exceedingly well handled by the gunner. This large town was entirely destroyed, besides property in palm oil, crops, &c., to a very large amount. I account for this by many of the inhabitants not really believing we could ever march against them there, and who, on receiving our rockets so close to them, ran away, leaving their goods behind them. The King's Palace was the furthest point, which, when thoroughly destroyed, we marched back and arrived safely on board with no casualties, excepting a few of the coloured men, who were wounded.

The head town of Onitsha is well built, and some very solid houses are amongst the others; in consequence of which I sent parties on shore, under cover of our guns, to blow them down with gunpowder. The place is now completely levelled, including all the factories.

I thought it prudent during each day to throw a few shell into the bush, and placed scouting parties around during the time this work was proceeding.

I feel sure this punishment will have a general beneficial effect on the river, and confidence is already entirely restored.

I cannot speak too highly of Mr. Luke, Sub-Lieutenant, Mr. Lindsay, Sub-Lieutenant, and Mr. Blower, gunner. From the beginning to the end of a hard week's work, they have in the heat of the sun laboured indefatigably to bring the undertaking to a successful issue, and acquitted themselves the day of the march on the inner town to my entire satisfaction.

The crew also have been everything that could be desired, and have worked on all occasions when their duty required them cheerfully and well. I am happy to say that up to this date no man has suffered seriously from fever, and we only number four on the sick-list, though the men have been landed daily. I am indebted to Dr. Todd for this result, who has been up night and day with unremitting attention to the comfort of the crew.

Lieutenant Wainwright, 2nd West India Regiment, who has been on board since our entry in the Niger, proved most useful to the small-arm party, and rendered me every assistance in his power.

Having thoroughly completed the service upon which I was sent, which I trust will be satisfactory, I left Onitsha Saturday, the 1st November, calling at Oko and Alenzo to settle with the Consul some slight offences there.

Arrived at Akassa on the 2nd November, and having completed with coal, purpose, in accordance with your instructions, to proceed to Sierra Leone Monday, the 3rd November.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JNO. L. BURR.

Inclosure 3 in No. 6.

Sailing Orders.

(Memo.)

"Dido," at Fernando Po, October 18, 1879.

IT is my direction that you proceed in Her Majesty's ship under your command to Bonny, and there communicate with Her Britannic Majesty's Acting Consul Easton, and, having embarked him, proceed with all despatch to Onitsha, on the River Niger, and there make full inquiries into the atrocities, robberies, &c., which, according to your letter of proceedings and inclosures, have been taking place there for some time past, with a view to punishing the offending party or parties, and full reparation being made to the sufferers.

In carrying out this duty you will act in conjunction with Her Britannic Majesty's Acting Consul, and will also be guided by the Station Orders; but in case you find it imperatively necessary (of which you, being on the spot, will be the best judge) for the protection of British life and property to resort to force, or even to land an armed party, you have my authority to do so.

Having carried out the above orders, you will proceed to Sierra Leone and relieve Her Majesty's ship "Firefly."

Six men will be lent to you for the expedition, and as soon as the service is completed you will discharge them to Her Majesty's ship "Dwarf," to await passage to this ship.

(Signed)

WILLIAM H. ST. CLAIR, *Acting Captain and Senior Officer, West Coast of Africa.*

Lieutenant-Commander Burr,
Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer."

Inclosure 4 in No. 6.

*Notice.**"Pioneer," River Niger, October 24, 1879.*

To the British subjects residing at Onitsha—

YOU are requested to repair on board Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" to-morrow, the 25th instant, at 6:30 A.M., when an inquiry will be held concerning certain outrages committed on several British subjects, and when means will be devised for the satisfactory settlement of all matters in dispute with the natives, as well as the better preservation of life and property.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JNO. L. BURR, *Commanding.*

P.S.—After reading kindly sign on the back.

Signed by—

Joseph Flint, Jun.
Thomas J. Williams.
Isaac Thomas George.
Abraham George.
Robert Taylor.

J. Thomas Cole.
Bernd. Mathison.
N. A. Palmer.
J. N. H. Ogoo.
J. O. Astrope.

Inclosure 5 in No. 6.

Conditions required of the King and Chiefs of Onitsha at the Palaver held at Onitsha, October 25, 1879.

1. THAT they would deliver up to us, to be dealt with, the two natives Ambeefa and Andrews, it having been proved that they were the ringleaders in the late disturbance.

2. That it having been decided upon that Beach Town should be knocked down, houses were not to be built in the place of those destroyed.

3. That if natives were proved to have misconducted themselves—such as pil-

fering, thieving, insulting traders, &c.—the King should investigate the matter and punish them.

4. That the King and Chiefs should exert themselves on all occasions to keep their people orderly, and induce them to trade properly and peacefully with the European traders.

(Signed) JNO. L. BURR, *Lieutenant-Commander, R.N.*
S. F. EASTON, *Her Britannic Majesty's*
Acting Consul.

Inclosure 6 in No. 6.

Acting Consul Easton to Lieutenant-Commander Burr.

Sir, *Onitsha, October 25, 1879.*
I HAVE the honour to request that you will put under arrest the three British subjects, Palmer, Astrope, and Ogoo, with a view to their being taken to Akassa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) S. F. EASTON.

Inclosure 7 in No. 6.

Evidence in Support of the Charge of Slave-dealing against Nathaniel Adolphus Palmer, John Nathaniel Ogoo, and John Obadiah Astrope.

Onitsha, November 1, 1879.

THE charges having been duly read and explained to the prisoners, each of them tendered a plea of "not guilty." They all acknowledged their British nationality.

D. W. Sergeant, being duly sworn, deponed:—

I am aware that the prisoners have been dealing in slaves. These slaves were never paid, and they frequently told me they were very cruelly treated. I should think Palmer had about a dozen slaves, but most people say he has many more. I know he has been dealing in slaves since 1876. When he came to Onitsha he brought with him six persons whom I know to have been slaves.

Isaac Thomas George, being duly sworn, deponed:—

I am quite aware that the prisoners, Palmer, Astrope, and Ogoo, have been dealing in slaves. About two years ago they began trafficking in slaves, and they are recognized by the natives as regular dealers.

I should think Palmer possessed about 24, Astrope 40, and Ogoo 50 slaves. Astrope and Ogoo seemed to compete as to who should possess the greater number. These slaves were mostly got from higher up the river, and a few came from the Eboe country. Those belonging to Ogoo and Astrope have frequently complained to me of their ill-treatment by their masters. I have not heard any complaint made by Palmer's slaves. They were chiefly employed cutting wood, which was sold to the steamers. The money was always paid to the prisoners, and I am not aware that the slaves ever participated. I should say the value of a slave was about 7*l.* sterling.

Abraham George, being duly sworn, deponed:—

I am quite aware that the prisoners, Astrope, Ogoo, and Palmer, had slaves in their possession, and it is quite understood by everyone. I have heard the slaves frequently complain of their ill-treatment by all of the three prisoners, Palmer in particular. They were mostly employed cutting wood and building materials. I am not aware that these slaves ever received payment.

Simon Jonas "Inbanage" (native convert), being duly sworn, deponed:—

I know that these three prisoners possessed slaves. Astrope told me he had 120 of them.

Josiah Obianwe (native convert), being duly sworn, deponed:—

Everyone knows that the prisoners had slaves in their possession. I have never heard of their being paid nor of their being ill-treated.

Joseph Flint, being duly sworn, deponed :—

Since I came to Onitsha, about fifteen months ago, I have known that Palmer, Astrope, and Ogoo possessed slaves, and they were never paid to my knowledge.

H. S. Fletcher, being duly sworn, deponed :—

It is quite an understood thing that Ogoo, Astrope, and Palmer were holding slaves. I have frequently spoken to them about this, and warned them of the consequences. They admitted the possession of slaves, and said no interference was likely to be made by the Consul or a man-of-war. When wood was cut by the slaves and paid for, it was always the prisoners who took the pay. I am not aware that the slaves ever received any pay. They were cruelly treated by the prisoners.

Eserf (duly cautioned) :—

I am one of Ogoo's slaves, and have been such for four years.

Howdo (duly cautioned) :—

I have been one of Ogoo's slaves for eight years. He bought me for 13 measures of palm-oil (3*l.* 5*s.*). I never received any payment from Ogoo.

William Palmer (duly cautioned) :—

I am Palmer's head slave. He has occasionally given me small articles as presents. I never got any pay. Palmer treated all his slaves very badly.

Teioo (duly cautioned) :—

I have been Palmer's slave for four years. I never received any pay and had no liberty. Palmer paid 20*l.* for me.

Woru (duly cautioned) :—

I have been Palmer's slave for two years. I got no pay and allowed no liberty. Palmer paid 6*l.* for me. He treated all his slaves very cruelly.

Eschappa (duly cautioned) :—

I have been Astrope's slave for four years. He paid 15 measures of palm-oil (3*l.* 15*s.*) for me. I occasionally got 2 measures as a present. Astrope treated me very badly and frequently flogged me.

Howdo (duly cautioned) :—

I have been Astrope's slave for five years. I occasionally received a present of 2 measures of palm-oil. Astrope treated me, in common with the others, always very badly, and we were often flogged.

This having concluded the evidence, the following sentences were pronounced by Acting Consul Easton :—

Nathaniel Adolphus Palmer; penal servitude for seven years.

John Nathaniel Ogoo; penal servitude for fourteen years.

John Obadiah Astrope; penal servitude for fourteen years.

No. 7.

Sir J. Pauncefote to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 13, 1880.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, together with its inclosures, giving an account of the proceedings of Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" at Onitsha, in the Niger; and, in reply, I am to request that you will state to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that Lord Salisbury has read these papers with great interest; that in his Lordship's opinion the success which attended the expedition was entirely due to the able and bold manner in which it was carried out by Lieutenant Burr, and that his Lordship entirely concurs in the approval which the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty propose to convey to that officer.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

15

No. 8.

Mr. Meade to Sir J. Pauncefote.—(Received January 24.)

Sir, *Downing Street, January 22, 1880.*
 I AM directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you, for the information of the Marquis of Salisbury, with reference to the letters from this Department of the 12th and 22nd ultimo, the accompanying copy of a despatch from Governor Ussher, forwarding Captain Barrow's account of his expedition up the Niger.

I am, &c.
 (Signed) R. H. MEADE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 8.

Governor Ussher to Sir M. Hicks Beach.

Sir, *Quittah Fort, November 27, 1879.*
 I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your information, Captain Barrow's report of his visit to the Niger district during his recent expedition to obtain recruits for the Gold Coast Constabulary.

2. I am of opinion that the way has been opened for a good supply of Houssas. The first effort has not been as successful as I had hoped, but it will, I trust, bear fruit, and cannot be said to be a failure. It will be observed that the main difficulty in getting men to volunteer for service lay in the objection to bringing down the women, without whom the recruits appear unwilling in many instances to leave their homes. Had I known that it would have been necessary for Captain Barrow to charter a steamer to bring down his party, I would have offered no objection to the women accompanying them, for I believe that their presence would tend to attach the men to the Colony, and cause them to settle on the soil. Moreover, a great source of squabbling would be removed thereby, as the Houssas not unfrequently come into collision with the Fantees on this very subject, and the presence of their wives would tend to remove, or at all events diminish, such cause of complaint. I think this may be advantageously kept in view on a future occasion.

3. I beg to bring to your notice the very kind and willing assistance given by Lieutenant-Commander Burr, of the "Pioneer." This gallant officer's chastisement of the Onitsha barbarians will have a great effect on the peace of the river. I am told that Commander Burr has rendered everywhere on the West Coast very efficient services both during the Ashantee war and subsequently to Governor Rowe at Sierra Leone, and I trust that the Lords of the Admiralty will take his services to this Government into full consideration.

I have, &c.
 (Signed) H. T. USSHER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 8.

Captain Barrow to Governor Ussher.

Sir, *Christiansborg Castle, November 14, 1879.*
 IN obedience to your Excellency's commands, conveyed to me in your letter dated the 21st July, 1879, I have the honour to report that, having taken passage in the mail steam-ship "Gaboon" on Wednesday, the 23rd July, at Accra, I arrived in Lagos Roads at daylight on the following Saturday, the 26th July, when I found that his Excellency Captain Moloney, the Acting Administrator of the Settlement, was away on duty up the eastward lagoon, and it was not until the evening of Friday, the 1st August, that his Excellency returned, so that six days were unfortunately but unavoidably lost.

2. On the following morning, Saturday, the 2nd August, Captain Moloney took steps for my departure inward in the next steamer leaving Lagos for the oil rivers, for the purchase of the presents referred to in your Excellency's letter before quoted, and for other important details connected with the fitting out of the expedition, which, being

duly completed, I embarked, together with the small party as per margin,* in the branch steamer "Ramos," on Thursday, the 14th August, arriving at Bonny late in the afternoon of Saturday, the 16th August.

3. I would here remark, for your Excellency's special information, that the local branch steamers running between Lagos and the oil rivers very seldom, if ever, run direct to Akassa at the mouth of the Nun, their course being usually to Benin direct, passing in sight of Akassa, but not calling at it, and thence to Bonny. This was the precise course of the "Ramos," which was vexing, because Akassa was the place I wanted to get to. However, as your Excellency will see a little further on, this loss of time was apparent, not real, for upon my arrival at Bonny I set about to provide a means for proceeding promptly to Akassa, but found that though communication by branch steamer between Bonny and Akassa was frequent, no good result could possibly have accrued by my availing myself of it, since there was nothing at the latter place but the bare exposed beach for habitable shelter, and no steamer was proceeding thence to the Upper Niger until about the 14th September. Thus I had in the end to endure twenty-five days of dull inactivity at Bonny on board a hulk moored out in the stream, with an unusually unhealthy and heavy rainy season to contend with.

4. During this compulsory stay at Bonny I made a point of collecting information about the Niger, and learnt that the dates of departure of the various steamers up and down that river were very unreliable; in fact, that these vessels were altogether uncertain in their movements, and that to trust to a passage in one was out of the question. This state of things was caused, as I afterwards discovered, by the transfer, which was then being proceeded with, of the stores, works, and factories into the trusteeship of one Company, viz., the United African, and this led me to doubt whether I should be able to ascend to Bidâ at all this season.

5. It so happened that the late Consul Hopkins was then lying dangerously ill at Bonny, whilst Mrs. Hopkins was at the British Consulate, Fernando Po. Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" was also at Fernando Po, so it occurred to me, notwithstanding the Naval Station orders about men-of-war not entering the oil rivers, to write to the officer commanding the "Pioneer," representing the Consul's serious illness, and suggesting the possibility, under the circumstances, of his giving Mrs. Hopkins a passage up to Bonny as the only chance of her seeing her husband alive. Upon receipt of this letter (which was private) Captain Burr took upon himself the responsibility of entering an oil river, and brought Mrs. Hopkins up just in time for her to see her husband before his death.

6. I then communicated to Captain Burr a letter, of which the Inclosure No. 2 is a copy.

7. I afterwards had the advantage of several conversations with Captain Burr on the subject, and he consented to proceed to the Upper Niger, taking me and the whole of my party in his ship. His orders were to proceed to the delta of the river only.

8. On Thursday, the 11th September, I left Bonny on board Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer," and after calling in at Brass for stores arrived at Akassa, mouth of the Nun, at 2 o'clock P.M. on Sunday, the 14th September, having been 53 days out from Accra. We started to ascend the Niger at 10 o'clock A.M. on Monday, the 15th September, all well, and arrived at Eggâ on Tuesday, the 23rd September, soon after noon.

9. On the passage up I called in at "Lukoja," a town on the river banks about 80 miles below Eggâ, in the hope of obtaining the services of a Mahomedan, named Jacob Meheux, who has lived there many years, speaks English well, and who altogether was likely to be of service to us. The town of "Lukoja" is within the dominions of the Emir of Nupé, and Jacob Meheux is in charge of it on behalf of His Highness the Emir as a sort of Governor. I naturally considered he would be on good terms with the Emir, and that he might be able to exercise some influence over His Highness. These were my reasons for calling in at Lukoja to ask him to accompany me. In the end I was not disappointed at having done so, as Jacob fully realized all that I had expected from him. Meheux has been in England and is known at the Foreign Office, having been detained in England by that Department on the occasion of his taking to England the papers, &c., of the late Consul Baikie in 1864. When he found that I was there upon a Government mission he readily came off to the ship and accompanied me, and was subsequently of great service to me.

10. It may perhaps be here well to mention, in support of the precariousness of the service of the Niger steamers, that the boat which left Akassa on the 13th September went only as far as Alenzo, about 160 miles up, whilst that which left on the 14th September went only to Onitsha, about 180 miles up, and that no boat of any kind reached

* Houssas, 1 sergeant-major, 6 rank and file.

as far as Eggâ, about 480 to 500 miles up, until the 8th of October, or too late for me then to have gone on to Bidâ ; therefore, had it not been for the man-of-war I should not have got up there at all this season. The distances just mentioned are estimated as the length "over the ground," not as the "crow flies," and are obtained from the ships' logs.

11. Upon the arrival of Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" at Eggâ, as just related, Captain Burr, R.N., caused a salute to be fired, because we thought it might have a good impression on the natives, and also that the news of it might reach Bidâ before we did, and, in that case, that His Highness would be impressed. It turned out as I expected. His Highness did hear of it from his Rogan of Eggâ, and was impressed and gratified. He told me so himself in audience at Bidâ. I attribute partly to this salute the handsome reception the Emir gave me, which I shall presently attempt to describe to your Excellency. The salute being over I sent a messenger ashore at Eggâ to the Rogan, requesting him to send a messenger at once inland to His Highness the Emir, to inform that monarch of my arrival so far, and that I was commissioned by your Excellency to pay him a friendly visit. I also informed him of the strength of the party, including the naval officers, and said that we should be at Wanangi the following evening, and that I requested that horses might be sent thither to take us on to Bidâ on the following morning, together with about 200 carriers for some presents of which I was the bearer, and for our baggage.

12. On Wednesday, the 24th September, at day-break, I started in the steam launch "Gando," accompanied by Captain Burr, R.N., and five of his officers, also by the Acting Consul, Mr. Easton (this gentleman, however, at this period, had not got his commission, and consequently occupied an unofficial position), Mr. Shita, of Lagos, but staying at Eggâ ; Mr. Sergeant and Mr. Bishop, of the United African Company, were also amongst the number.

We arrived at Wanangi, after a trying day of almost unbearable heat, just before dark, a great many being knocked up. Soon after retiring for the night, the messengers from Eggâ, which I had dispatched across country to His Highness on the previous day, arrived in camp at Wanangi, reporting to me that His Highness was much pleased with my message, and that horses would be provided for the whole party the next morning, and carriers as well.

13. On Thursday, the 25th September, early in the morning, a mounted escort of cavalry from Bidâ arrived at Wanangi with about twenty good decent horses, saddled and bridled, one very handsome one being sent by the Emir's order specially for the Queen's messenger.

I mounted this one, and started from Wanangi about 9 o'clock A.M.

The line of route was very picturesque, and altogether different to anything I had previously seen in Africa, the country being open as far as the eye could see, and the whole of it covered with tall waving corn, handsome trees, but no forest, while here and there were lofty table-topped mountains. The distance is eight miles from Wanangi to Bidâ.

When I had proceeded about a mile on the road a mounted escort of one officer and twenty men was drawn up, and having received me with a salute, the officer gave me a verbal message from His Highness, saying he was glad I was coming to see him ; the escort then galloped to my front, and forming in Indian file continued so until another and then again another similar escort, posted along the road in waiting, was arrived at. They each did much the same as the first one, until at length the leading files of mounted men in my immediate front numbered by the time I reached a spot about a mile outside Bidâ just 100 men.

14. Upon arriving at the spot just mentioned, a perfect view of Bidâ was before me, distant about a mile. It is a large town surrounded by a high wall, loop-holed for musketry, surrounded with a broad deep ditch. I computed its circumference to be from twelve to fifteen miles. The scene from the hill where I was looking round from was not only splendid in itself from its natural beauty, but a military force of about 600 cavalry and about 2,000 infantry was drawn up on its slope to receive me, the cavalry on the right of the line, the infantry on the left. The showy-coloured togues of crimson, yellow, white and purple, particularly those worn by the mounted portion of the force, made this an imposing feature in the day's work, which I can only describe as a most magnificent reception to be seen in order to be understood.

Amongst those who saluted me as I arrived were several Princes and members of the Emir's family.

Their uniforms were gorgeous ; they were all splendidly mounted.

I am informed that a salute, given as I have stated, is never given except to the Emir himself, or to those for whom the special honour is directed by His Majesty, and

that in the instance of myself it was ordered by His Highness. I mention these matters of detail, believing that it ought to be known how the Emir of Nupé receives an officer accredited to His Highness by your Excellency.

15. When these officers had ridden back to their places after saluting the force retired, but I was not allowed to move forward, though I wanted to, for the sun was very fierce that day, and some of those who were with me were suffering from its effects. The cavalry then executed a few simple movements, and delivered a charge in line up to within a horse's length or so of where I was.

This was a great honour, and it was certainly very well done. The entire force then went about, and accompanied by the mounted corps, called the King's "Musicians," escorted me and my party to the Palace inside Bidâ, where I arrived at 2 P.M.

16. The Emir was waiting there in state to receive me. Having saluted him and shaken hands, he introduced me to the Commander-in-chief of his forces and to his principal dignitaries, amongst them being the Ambassador of the Sultan of Sockatoo, who happened to be on a visit, and with whom I had, during my stay at Bidâ, several agreeable and instructive interviews. I should judge the Emir to be from 50 to 55 years of age. He is of dignified manner and with much reserve, fairly educated, speaks four local languages and Arabic. The Commander-in-chief specially and favourably noticed the Houssa Guard from Lagos.

17. Soon after arriving at our quarters the presents came to me from His Highness, consisting of bullocks, sheep and goats, turkeys, ducks and fowls, and a host of smaller things, such as yams, plantams, &c.

18. On Friday, the 26th September, at 7 o'clock A.M., an escort of an officer and twelve men of the King's Life Guards (these men are dressed in scarlet and are called Life Guards), waited upon me at our compound and escorted me to the Palace. Captain Burr, R.N., and his officers came with me. His Highness was waiting, but this time he had hardly anybody with him.

The Chief Justice of the Sultan of Sockatoo appeared during the interview, and the Emir introduced me to him. I met him three or four times subsequently, when he was always most courteous and kind. His business at Bidâ was to assist the Emir in adjudicating upon difficult matters in litigation. I introduced Captain Burr, R.N., and each of his officers to His Highness, specifying his rank and duties on board ship, in which he took the greatest interest. Having communicated to His Highness the cause of my visit, I delivered your Excellency's letter to him personally, as directed in my instructions, having previously satisfied myself that he had the means of having it accurately translated. His Highness was much pleased with this letter.

19. The presents had not all arrived at this time, but were hourly expected, and the following day (Saturday) was fixed upon for my attendance at the Palace to hand them over, which I did. His Highness was much pleased with them. The Foreign Office presents were extremely handsome, and must have been costly, but I am certain that the less costly, but appropriately selected ones of your Excellency, pleased him equally well. Quitting the Palace to allow of his closer inspection of them in private, I then left to return by arrangement at 4 o'clock P.M., to talk over the subject of your Excellency's letter to him.

20. I went back to the Palace at 4 o'clock P.M., and found His Highness waiting to receive me, and that he had had your Excellency's letter translated to him, and that he understood it thoroughly. This interview lasted exactly two and a-half hours, and was of a satisfactory nature; his kindness and courtesy towards me were very marked. He promised to do all in his power to meet your Excellency's wishes as regards the recruits wanted for the Gold Coast Constabulary, and then and there dispatched messengers to several of the outlying farm districts of Bidâ, telling the men there that they could join the Houssa force and go down with me if they liked. At the same time, he was careful in explaining that he could not order them to do so. He sent messengers to Lukoja and Eggâ, and it was generally believed, as the result of his sending thither, that I should pick up on my return down the river sundry men from each of those towns. His Highness personally inspected the seven Houssas I had brought from Lagos, instructing them to go out into the town, and to tell the people that he had given his sanction to their joining the Houssa force. My interpreter, Bahi, and Jacob Meheux, from Lukoja, were also out for several hours each day, endeavouring to obtain recruits. I engaged the services of other people in Bidâ for the same purpose. As the results were not altogether satisfactory as regarded the number who had joined, I saw His Highness and told him so. He expressed his regret, and begged me to stay on, adding that if the caravans from Kanu were only there at Bidâ, that he could get me any number of men. The time for the arrival of these caravans is during the dry season from January to June.

He wanted me to persevere. I rode daily into the farm districts outside Bidâ to get men. By the 5th October only ten men had joined. I therefore made up my mind to quit Bidâ and to fall back upon Eggâ and Lukoja.

21. Captain Burr, R.N., and his officers had left Bidâ for the coast on the 30th September.

22. The causes for so very few men joining at Bidâ were locally attributed to the Illorin-Ibadan war, which was drawing away numbers of young men, who, it was said, would otherwise have enrolled themselves, and to an impending war which His Highness was about to embark upon. It was not easy to find out what this latter war really meant, as secrecy prevailed about it, but a rumour reached me that a tributary Chief of Sockatoo had rebelled against the rule of the Sultan; that Sockatoo was in danger of an attack from that Chief, and that the Sultan of Sockatoo, through the Sultan of Gando, had requisitioned the services of His Highness the Emir of Nupé to support him. I could have obtained plenty of married men, only some had three, some four wives each, whom they conditioned were to go down to the coast with me. I had to decline these men. They cannot understand why they should be asked to leave their wives behind them.

23. During my stay in Bidâ the Emir gave me an audience at the Palace nearly every day. I had his assistance all through, but there was no getting over this woman difficulty, and finally he seemed to agree with me that it would be well to get on to Eggâ and Lukoja.

24. On the 6th October I left Bidâ. Before doing so, however, the Emir saw me at the Palace, and gave me the presents which your Excellency has already seen; also two letters, one for Her Majesty the Queen, the other for your Excellency.

25. On the afternoon of my departure from the town the troops paraded in a large space inside it, when His Highness, splendidly mounted and well escorted, rode on to this parade ground, where, by previous arrangement, I had arrived myself. The troops were set in motion towards the Wanangi gate of the town. A position was assigned for myself in the procession. On arriving at the walls at the Wanangi gate, His Highness dismounted and seated himself upon a prepared spot, and summoned me to sit near him. I then learned that he had ordered the three Princes of Bidâ, his cousins, to join him in state to bid me farewell. They arrived very soon after us. There were about 2,000 troops on the ground. One of these Princes, Prince Makun, is the reputed successor to the throne of the Emir. His Highness told me to thank your Excellency for the presents, and that he always should observe most friendly relations with the British Government: that he would at all times help your Excellency in the matter of raising recruits from his kingdom; again expressed his sorrow at so few men having joined me, and said that when the Kanu caravans came in numbers of single men would be glad to join. He then commanded his Chaplain to offer up a prayer aloud for my safe return to your Excellency. I then took my final leave for Wanangi, accompanied by a mounted escort commanded by one of the Emir's sons, and reached that place soon after dark.

26. His Highness often said to me that he wished an officer of the British Government might be sent oftener to him. He evidently felt that he was neglected by not having one sent more frequently.

27. Having slept at Wanangi, I proceeded forward at daybreak the following morning in a canoe for Kipo, distant about 80 miles, and arrived there the same night at 10 o'clock, sixteen hours in a small canoe; the rest of my party were distributed over other canoes; they all duly arrived. Kipo Hill is exactly opposite Eggâ, distant from it about two miles; the Niger divides them.

28. On Wednesday, the 8th October, I distributed recruiting parties over the town of Eggâ, and dispatched two of the Houssas from Lagos back by road to Bidâ with the letter to the Emir, to endeavour to obtain some deserters from my force, and others who were to follow. I dispatched messengers from Eggâ into the country districts, and arranged with a man of some influence to give him ten bags of couries (5*l.*) if he would bring me in 50 men; when I added that I could not take more than a very few women he gave the matter up as useless until the ivory caravans came in. I saw the Rogan, and he said the same thing; it is true he promised to do all he could, but told me plainly that I should get no men unless I took all their women also. My position was very difficult; moreover, the river was falling.

29. On the 11th October I dispatched some of the newly enlisted men, who I felt could be trusted to a place in the country strongly recommended as worth trying, and an additional party to Lukoja. The first lot returned reporting non-success, but said that the men would join if the women might be taken also.

30. On the 13th October I had another interview with the Rogan. He was perfectly prepared to help in any way he could; he had been ordered, he said, by the Emir to do so;

he had no power to order the men to join without their wives, but said that if I would consent to take all the wives, then he would order the men to join—knowing full well, I imagine, that if I agreed to take the wives the men would volunteer.

31. On the 15th October the messengers I had dispatched to Bidâ returned, having been unsuccessful.

32. When going over to Eggâ to arrange with the Steam-ship Company's Agent for passage down the river, a letter was handed to me suggesting that I should wait for the caravans.

33. Thereupon I made up my mind to leave Balu, my interpreter at Eggâ, to await the caravans, where, by arrangements I had made, he would be aided by Mr. Bishop and by Mr. Shita ; but he was to leave Eggâ by the first opportunity, rejoining me down at Lukoja, or wherever else I may happen to be in the river. Captain McIntosh or Mr. Sargeant would be visiting Eggâ, and I knew he could come down to me with them.

34. On Sunday, 19th October, I left Eggâ for Lukoja, arriving there on the following day in the evening ; very few men would join here, at which I was embarrassed, and upon investigation found that it was not the woman influence only which was doing harm here, for some bad impressions were current in the town ; one was, that if a man could not hit the bull's-eye when at target practice he was flogged. It originated with some Lagos men residing at Lukoja. I had the Town Crier out, and the bell rung, and then met several hundreds of the townspeople in palaver, contradicted the report about the flogging, and explained the benefits and advantages offered by the Gold Coast Government to men joining the force.

35. I left Lukoja on Wednesday, the 22nd October, with the intention of picking up more men at Onitsha, Alenzo, and other towns down the river.

36. On the 24th October, having passed Onitsha we met Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer" returning up the river to that town to inquire into the alleged barbarities committed there upon British traders. We were turned back, and had to follow her up to the place.

37. I should wish, however, with your Excellency's permission, to add a word or two to that report in favour of the conduct of the Houssas on the 28th October, the day of the advance on and fighting in the inner town. One Sergeant-Major and twenty-four rank and file were landed, consisting of those who accompanied me from Lagos, and eighteen selected men from the new recruits ; the latter were armed with sharpened matchets, and I told them off to join the scouts, having first of all explained to them their duties ; they proved most valuable in clearing grass and bush for the advance of the Gatling, and were always well to the front. I took the precaution of dressing them in white baft, that they might not be shot by the blue-jackets and marines. At the check in the inner town which was given to our advance by the stand which was made by the natives, and when the small-arm party were ordered up against it, the seven Houssas (from Lagos) behaved most coolly ; they formed on the left of the blue-jackets and delivered their fire low and steady. The range was only about twelve paces ; so thick was the bush at this point volleys were freely exchanged. It was rather a critical moment for us. It would be impossible to speak too highly of their firm and resolute behaviour on the occasion, and I am glad to inform your Excellency that no Houssa was hit, and that all (one Sergeant-Major, twenty-four rank and file) returned to their ships in the afternoon, having acquitted themselves thoroughly well.

38. During this day at Onitsha Balu rejoined me from Eggâ, being the bearer of a letter to me from Mr. Shita, copy of which is Inclosure No. 5.

39. I arrived at Akassa on Sunday, the 2nd November, having collected together seventy-seven recruits,* a nominal roll of them is Inclosure No. 6, for your Excellency's information. I could have brought down three to four times the number of men had I not been obliged to discourage women ; as it is I was compelled by circumstances to consent to some coming down, and twenty-seven women accordingly accompanied their husbands.

40. Passages for them all was then the next subject for debate. It so happened that passages in a man-of-war were not to be had, so I had to choose between passage via Bonny in a mail-steamer and special charter. I consulted the commander of one of the branch steamers as to the price per head at which he would carry the men and women round to Bonny. He wanted 10s. a-head, but was indifferent about taking so many, as they would crowd his decks too much. The price of the passages in the mail-steamer from Bonny to Accra would have been 30s. a-head. So that these 104 men and women, together with the cost of the passage of myself, of Balu, and of the 7 Houssas would not

* Nominal roll not inclosed.

have been much, if any, lower than 250*l.*, but putting the question of expense aside altogether, this route would not have been prudent, on account of the risk one would have run of not exactly meeting the mail-steamer there upon our arrival; in such circumstances the branch steamer would not keep the men on board after arriving in the river, and the hulks would not take them, and therefore they would have to be landed, which would have been most disastrous. Finally I made up my mind to charter—copy of the charter party inclosed (Inclosures Nos. 7 and 8), from which your Excellency will perceive that the cost of the charter was estimated would amount to 150*l.*

41. For the assistance rendered by me to the United African Company at Onitsha, no charge will be made by the General Manager for the passages down the river of myself or of any of my party.

42. The question of a further and periodical supply of men engaged my serious attention whilst up the river, and should the following plan be adopted, your Excellency will always have a continual supply, viz., to locate a trustworthy non-commissioned Officer of the force at Eggâ, regulating his departure hence, so that he may arrive there by the middle of January in time to meet the ivory caravans as they arrive from Adamawa during the dry season; but this non-commissioned Officer must be, so as to avoid possible complications with the commercial authorities in the river, under the control of the General Manager of those commercial affairs on the special point as to who he may take and who he may not take from the caravans, for supposing him to be unassisted on this point, and that in his zeal to get men he took slaves, then their owners in the interior would in time cease sending their ivory down, and commercial interests would thus be affected, whereas my plan would be quite upset. Captain McIntosh will assist your Excellency to carry this out, and instead of charging 20*l.* a-head for the passages down to Akassa will charge but 2*l.* only, making a deduction thereby of 18*l.*, but the Government would have to feed them, or pay for its being done. Should this plan find favour I would recommend that a letter from your Excellency should be sent to Bidâ, to His Highness the Emir, and that this non-commissioned Officer should have liberty to go on to Bidâ to meet the caravans which arrive there from Kanu, whenever he heard they were there; Jacob Meheux of Lukoja should also be invited to help, and an inexpensive present sent him also. For the passages of the men from Akassa to Elminu, and in the absence of an available Colonial steamer, I strongly recommend that special charter be resorted to, and that the non-commissioned Officer bringing them down should accompany them all the way.

43. It is now my duty to mention the names of those who have assisted me.

44. Mr. Neville, agent at Bonny to the British and African Steam Navigation Company, took the whole of my party on board his residence, the hulk "Adriatic;" we were a total of eleven, and we were on board for 25 days. He materially assisted to collect general information about the Niger, and if I may venture to suggest, I would intimate that an official letter from your Excellency, thanking that gentleman for the assistance he rendered me, would be very gratifying to him.

45. Lieutenant-Commander Burr, R.N., Her Majesty's ship "Pioneer," accepted a heavy responsibility in taking his ship up as far as Eggâ. He was not obliged to go further than the delta, but that would have been no good to the cause which your Excellency had intrusted me with. This officer helped me in a good many ways, and but for him I should never have reached Bidâ at all this season. The gifts from the Queen would not have been taken up, and the whole affair would have been a failure for want of transport. With great submission I would recommend Captain Burr to your Excellency's kindest consideration.

46. Jacob Meheux was of very great service; he not only interpreted on many important occasions, but was of great value through the local influence he possessed during my negotiations with His Highness the Emir. I had no means of rewarding him on the spot, so I told him that I should represent his case to your Excellency, and with permission would suggest that an official letter should be written to Jacob Meheux thanking him for having aided me, and I would beg to intimate that a small present would be acceptable to him.

47. The Sergeant-Major and six rank and file supplied to me at Lagos by his Excellency Captain Moloney conducted themselves in a manner entirely satisfactory. The conduct from the beginning to the end was such that I had no occasion ever to reprimand one of them. The behaviour at all times of the recruits was everything that could be wished for; they never gave any trouble; their conduct was good.

48. The weather throughout the three months and eighteen days of my absence upon this duty was more than usually trying even to the natives themselves; the difficulties of transport, and sometimes those of obtaining necessary provisions, were often very great; yet I am glad to be in a position to repeat that I had very little sickness

amongst the party, and that as concerns myself throughout this long period of almost undue exposure to the climate, I had never any sickness myself, not even a touch of fever.

49. In conclusion, I trust that my conduct of the mission confided to me may meet with your Excellency's approbation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. KNAPP BARROW.

Inclosure 3 in No. 8.

Consul Hopkins to Captain Barrow.

Sir,

Bonny, August 9, 1879.

AS I am prevented by illness from proceeding up the Niger with the presents from Her Majesty's Government to the Kings and Chiefs of that district, would you have the goodness to take charge of those presents and deliver them?

I have, &c.
(Signed) DAVID HOPKINS.

Inclosure 4 in No. 8.

Captain Barrow to Lieutenant-Commander Burr.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 1.]

Correspondence relating to the Bombardment of
Batanga.

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by
Command of Her Majesty. 1880.*
