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## THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

The African Royal mail steamship Macgregor Laird, A. J. Croft commander, arrived at Liverpool, May 12, with the mails from the West Coast of Africa and 50 passengers. Her dates were—Benin the 25th, and Fernando Po the 30th of March; Cameroons the 1st, Old Calabar the 2nd, Bonny the 4th, Brass the 4th, Lagos the 10th, Accra the 12th, Cape Coast the 15th, Cape Palmas the 17th, Sierra Leone the 21st, Bathurst the 23rd of April, Tenerife the 1st, and Madeira the 3rd of May.

On the 2nd inst. the Macgregor Laird passed the Royal Mail steamship Athenian, hence, 90 miles north of Tenerife. From Cape Coast Castle, under date of the 15th of April, it is reported that the King of Ashantee had invaded the protected countries on the Gold Coast. For the most authentic information on this subject, we refer our readers to our interesting correspondence from the Gold Coast, in page 126.

## SIERRA LEONE.

(From our own Correspondent.)

April 17.

Major Jones, of the 2nd West India Regiment, having been appointed by the Governor to be one of the Commissioners for settling boundaries with the Liberian Government, left for Monrovia in Her Majesty's ship Philomel, on the 10th April.

Thirteen wounded soldiers have arrived from Lagos, having been hurt in the attacks on Epe.

It is stated here that the Gold Coast Artillery Corps is to be disbanded, in consequence of the mutiny, for which two of the soldiers were shot, and above eighty are now in penal servitude. The 4th West India Regiment, it is said, will form the headquarters at Cape Coast Castle, whence the necessary detachments of troops will be sent to the neighbouring settlements.\*

We have had a merchants' ball here, under the patronage of Mrs. Blackall, the wife of his Excellency Major Blackall, Governor of this place. The papers complain of there being so many more native gentlemen than ladies present, and accuse the African fair sex of being backward on such occasions.

Her Majesty's ship Adventure, which brought up the wounded soldiers from Lagos, left this on the 2nd April for the West Indies, but returned on the 10th, having on board 140 of the

\* We believe there is an error in this, and that the head-quarters of the West India Regiment for African service will be placed at St. Helena.—[Ed. A. T.]

2nd West India Regiment, from the Gambia. The Adventure left port again on the following Monday.

His Excellency Major Blackall laid the foundation stone of a new church at Wilberforce, on the 9th April. 3731. had been collected towards building the church; and the people had themselves brought 1,100 bushels of lime, and 3,000 feet of board, from a distance of two miles. This is the way great churches were built in Europe in the olden time, and looks well. His Excellency commended the people highly for what they had done; and after stating that civilization was making rapid progress on the Coast, endeavoured to enforce upon the people the importance of good Christian character and conduct. He knew no difference on account of colour, but he did know of a great difference as regards character; he could respect the conscientious, the virtuous, the industrious, and the Christian man, without distinction of colour.

Four natives of the Sherboro have been condemned to death for a cruel murder there.

THREAT OF THE CAPTAIN OF A FRENCH WAR STEAMER TO TAKE A VESSEL BY FORCE OUT OF SIERRA LEONE HARBOUR.

We copy the following verbatim from the *Free Press*, where it reads as if inserted by authority:—

"An occurrence which might have led to very serious results, but which were happily averted, took place in our harbour during the past week. As well as we have been able to ascertain the facts, it appears that one of the English cruisers, the Zebra, took, on suspicion of being a slaver, a vessel which carried the French flag, but which flag was hauled down when the officer from the Zebra went on board. Be this as it may, the vessel arrived here without colours—it is said without papers—and in charge of a lieutenant and a prize crew, and the usual steps were taken to place her in the Vice-Admiralty Court for adjudication. We understand that the French Consul presented a formal protest against the seizure of the vessel, on the ground of her being really French. But the Governor considered he had no power to interfere between the seizors and the decision of the Court. On Saturday morning a French steamer of war arrived in the roads, and it is reported that the captain declared his intention to await no decision of the Court, but that having satisfied himself of the nationality of the vessel, he would proceed to take her by force. From the appearance of the military and naval preparations which were made on that afternoon, we believe he would have signally failed in any such attempt; but fortunately, the Court came to a decision, releasing the vessel on the French Consul's producing the papers belonging to her, and apologising for the misconduct of the captain, in not having exhibited them when requested by the officer of the Zebra.

"We have no wish, nor indeed have we any information to enable us, to discuss the question of the validity of the seizure, but it does appear to us a very dangerous doctrine that captains of vessels of war should consider themselves entitled to constitute themselves judges in cases already referred to a legal tribunal, and to make use of the threat of physical force (however impotent they might be to carry it into effect), if their demands were not instantly complied with.

"In the present instance we are informed that the Lieutenant-Governor declined any official communication except through the Consul, and that the Consul declared himself powerless to control

the naval officer. We hope a proper representation may prevent any danger of a recurrence of so unpleasant a question."

#### SHERBORO.

The dry season has been of unusual length and dryness, and the rivers are very low, but some refreshing showers have lately fallen.

The war in the Kittam still continues, and is going adversely to Prince Mahna, but the navigation of and trade in the rivers is uninterrupted.

The town of Welab, on the Jong, was recently destroyed by fire; also a factory at Waterloo, on the Boom.

#### GOLD COAST.

WAR WITH ASHANTEE.—ASHANTEE INVASION OF THE PROTECTORATE TERRITORY OF THE GOLD COAST.

(From our Special Correspondent.)

It is not unlikely that ere this time you have received information about the pending danger which threatens this coast. We have for the last three months been anticipating what, to all intents and purposes, will prove a reality—viz., a war with the King of Ashantee. In November last, one of the captains of the King being ordered up to Comasie, on a charge of robbing what is regarded as the King's quota of gold, and being apprehensive that the issue would cost his head, escaped with eighty adherents from the kingdom of Ashantee to the coast, and claimed protection from the English Government. The King immediately sent one of his principal chieftains, with a number of sword-bearers, to request that the captain and his men should be given up. On his arrival at Cape Coast Castle a grand palaver was held, in which were present the Governor and Council, the principal merchants at Cape Coast and its vicinity, the chiefs and head men of Cape Coast, the runaway chief, as well as the King's messengers. After a long palaver, the last were unable to substantiate the charges against the man, who swore that he would rather have his head cut off before the fort gate than that he should be sent up to Comasie. After long deliberation it was unanimously agreed that the captain and his followers were not to be delivered up until the King should send down witnesses to corroborate the charges alleged against him. The King demanded that the men should be delivered up unconditionally; or, if not, the Governor must stand the consequence. During this time it was noticed that Ashantees, who came down as peaceful traders, bought almost wholly guns, powder, and lead bar, articles which are decidedly munitions of war. The chiefs in the interior got alarmed at this, and seized the articles as the men passed along their territory. Intelligence of this reached Comasie, and from that time the King gave orders to his captains to make preparations for an invasion. In the meantime the King sent to inform the Governor that he had broken the treaty with his Government, and that he (the King) was going to send down one of his captains, who was then in the interior, to show the Governor the treaty. The Governor promised, whenever that should be done, to deliver the captain up, and even escort him to the frontiers of the King of Ashantee with British soldiers. The next information that reached the coast was that a large Ashantee army had crossed the river Prah (the boundary line between the protectorate territory and the kingdom of his Majesty King Quaku Duah) towards the eastern district, and that the Kings of Akim had fallen back before them to get the support of the tribes on the seashore. A few days afterwards another army crossed the Prah at Assin, in a direct road to Anamaboe and Cape Coast. Most of the men on the seacoast who are able to bear arms have left for the Fantee camp, at the neighbourhood of Assin, where at least about 14,000 men are at present, waiting the movements of the Ashantees. Scouts have been sent out, and some Ashantee heads have been sent down, to corroborate the report that the Ashantees have invaded the Fantee territory. The report is just now current that pickets of the army of Ajeman, King of Western Akim, met an Ashantee pillaging band, fired at them, and wounded their leader, who was brought before the King as a prisoner. He begged hard for his life, and promised to reveal

everything about the war. He was made to swear by his King's stool that all that he was about to say were facts. The information he gave was the following: The King, on hearing that the Governor refused to deliver up the men, turned out all the available force, numbering about 60,000 men. Of these, 20,000 were to form a corps of observation on the eastern district, by descending on Akim, and thus preventing the Accras, Aquamhus, and Akims from joining the Fantees, and the remaining 40,000 were to descend upon the Fantees through Assin, sweeping everything before them, until they arrive at Cape Coast and Anamaboe, both of which places they intend to sack; the victorious were then to march against the Accras. So that, perhaps before you receive this account, we might all have been massacred by these brutal Ashantees; but we are determined to give them a most hearty reception.

The movements of the Ashantees, I must confess, have been very mysterious. Pickets of both armies have met; the Fantees fired, but the Ashantees simply retire. It is reported that they received strict command from the King not to fire until he arrives in the camp. The regulars are under orders to move on to Dunquor. The ammunition is being carried up by the Cape Coast people. We are all very busy; so *au revoir*. You will hear from me again, if all is well.

#### CAPE COAST.

(From our own Correspondent.)

April 14, 1863.

Sir,—I am not well now, and shall therefore be very brief, but trust before the 14th May to be well enough to furnish you with full details of the vastly-important events at this very moment engrossing the attention of the whole Gold Coast—viz., the invasion of the protected territories by the King of Ashantee with a comparatively well-disciplined army of from 50,000 to 80,000 men—60,000, I think, is nearest the mark. No action has yet occurred, but our forces are mustered at three different points of our frontier. At the back of Cape Coast and Anamaboe we have some 20,000; at the back of Ninnabah about 50,000. The Denkeras and Wassaus 20,000 more. Besides this, the Accras, Akims, Aquapams, and Kroboes will muster some 50,000 more. There is no doubt that we could bring 150,000, if not 200,000,\* men to the field, but it is equally certain that 50,000 Ashantees will, *as affairs are at present*, be more than a match for us. The movements of Quaku Duah's army are up to this hour enveloped in the most impenetrable mystery. Although his forces have been thirty-three days in our territory, we cannot obtain intelligence of a reliable nature regarding them. Our people have captured several of their scouts and spies; but they are so exasperated against the Ashantees, that, unfortunately, they execute them instantly they are caught; but the last spy stated before his head was off that his master had sworn to sweep the Coast now and for ever, and that he had a force of 80,000, divided into three armies. The Government, not having made up their minds that his Majesty Quaku Duah really meant war, have until now left the natives to shift for themselves. Great preparations are certainly being made at the different forts, but very slowly. Some people have an idea that Quaku Duah is a king of about the same calibre as those in the vicinity of Sierra Leone, and that he can be disposed of by three companies of the 2nd West India Regiment. But the power of Ashantee, like that of Dahomey, is of a very different class; and Ashantee is more powerful than Dahomey. Commodore Wilmot has recently returned from Dahomey; he is now at Cape Coast, consulting with our Governor as to the measures to be adopted in the present crisis. Osai Quaku Duah, King of Ashantee, has now invaded our territories because, in the month of December last, one of his chiefs fled to us for protection, and we gave it to him. I write this in a hurry, and so you must excuse me if it is not perfectly legible.

\* We fear that there is a great error in this enumeration. We do not see how the protected districts could furnish half the number of effective men.—[Ed. A.T.]

#### ACCRA.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Eastern District, Gold Coast, April 9, 1863.

Sir,—Since I wrote you last, we have had "rumours" of war and earthquake. On the 20th March we had a strong shock at 11:4 A.M., which made us to look for our doors, to escape. Fortunately, the shock passed away without doing much damage. Our houses here are one-story houses, mud walls of two feet thickness, covered with a substantial shingle roof, which, no doubt, keeps the walls together. The shock was of the same nature as the former.

The Ashantees are also moving to attack our Government. I hope you will have received information from your correspondent at Cape Coast, who will be able to give you more particulars than I. As rumours are spreading, and enlarge in an astonishing way, it is difficult for me to say what is true, and what not.

So much seems to be probable, that we here have not much to fear, except the Government troops and Fantees were overcome. I have received a letter from a missionary in Kyebi, Akim, who says: "The Ashantee war rumours are most confused. First, we were told that three armies were marching towards the protected territories (one towards Cape Coast; the second to attack Agyemang, chief of a part of Akim, who was fighting with the other Akim chief, Ata, in 1859-60, and retired westward to Soedru; and the third towards the river Volta). Soon afterwards a messenger from Kumassie arrived at Kyebi in due form (i.e., with a gilt sword, as a sign that he is sent by the King of Ashantee), who said that 'the Ashantees will not fight with Ata—they are not Ata's enemies.' But the Akim do not believe him, and keep a strict watch at the frontiers, as it might be a ruse. The messenger further stated: 'Agyemang (the chief of Soedru, who was in former times under Ashantee rule, but withdrew to Akim, and is therefore not a good friend of Ashantee, but attached to the English Government) has killed an Ashantee man, and has stigmatised others by cutting marks in their faces, as the Donkos have them (which are slaves in our country), and has sent them back to Ashantee. He intended to hint to the King of Ashantee that he considers him not better than a despised Donko. This made Kwako Duah, King of Ashantee, angry, who has sent his warriors to catch Agyemang. But this wicked man has run away to Fantee. Therefore Kwako Duah has sent a messenger to Ata, to tell him that he has nothing to fear.' This is the message. Of course it is a great question whether anything is true, as our African monarchs are as good diplomatists as any statesman in Europe, as far as they never say what they mean, but the contrary."

A friend, whose name I am not allowed to mention, but with whose opinion I fully agree, writes to me: "It seems that an Ashantee war is now imminent, and whatever may be the *proximate* cause, the *primary* one is, doubtless, the shameful misgovernment of 1859-60, which exhibited its weakness and incapacity to the rulers of Ashantee, in allowing the Akim chiefs to fight and tear each other on the frontier, and the King of Akwamboe to make human sacrifices openly, a thing never done with impunity—until then—since the early days immediately after the Ashantee war, in 1828—at least, not within the British protectorate. These glaring instances of weakness and incapacity cannot have escaped the notice of the King of Ashantee and his chiefs, and hence it appears that it only required a comparatively slight moving cause to bring armed bands of Ashantees over the frontier."

In addition to the above, we learn that one of the Ashantee spies, taken in the woods near Cape Coast Castle, stated that his mission was to obtain some "sand and seawater, to complete the war Fetish" (or charm). This, if accomplished, would, it seems, according to the Ashantee Fetish priests, ensure the possession of the whole country, as far as the seashore, to the Ashantees.

Her Majesty's ships Rattlesnake and Ranger were at Cape Coast.

#### LAGOS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

April.

His Excellency Governor Freeman leaves for England by this day's mail.

The senior officer of the detachment of the 3rd West India Regiment here has been appointed acting governor, *ad interim*.

By a late proclamation, the roads to Abeokuta have been declared open so far as this colony is concerned. If the Abeokutans respond, which they no doubt will, as their men are now no longer required for the defence of the town against the Dahomans, who have retreated ignominiously to their own country without hazarding any attack on Abeokuta, trade will be speedily resumed.

In a second war demonstration at Epé, our troops were not very successful, and some loss of life is to be deplored. A treaty has, however, since been signed.

The French flag floats over Porto Novo. This is a heavy blow to us, and will, if the present high duties be persisted in, lead to a loss of trade here, we think, although casks have to be rolled and goods carried eight miles from the sea-beach to Porto Novo. There have been some sad blunders here.

(From a Correspondent.)

A SECOND ATTACK ON EPE, OR EPEH—ALLEGED REFUSE OF THE BRITISH TROOPS—SIGNING OF A TREATY.

Lagos, April 7, 1863.

Sir,—We, the unfortunate people on this part of the world, wish to ask a few questions through the medium of your valuable paper—viz.: Have the English people changed their policy?—Do they wish the Africans to look to them as *friends* or as *enemies*, or to look upon an Englishman (whenever he may happen to visit any of our towns) with mistrust and jealousy?—Or do the English mean to establish civilization in Africa after the plan of the Mohammedans in establishing their religion—viz., with fire and sword?

We feel assured that the English people will answer all the above questions in one voice—No. But we must say the way things have been carried on here of late might lead us to suppose so. The affair I am now particularly alluding to is about a place called Epeh, a place situated on the Lagoon, about forty miles to the south and east of Lagos, and belonging to the King of Jabu. Governor Freeman thought proper, under some authority, to levy duties at that place the same way as at Lagos, and for this reason posted a detachment of a few men belonging to the 2nd West India Regiment, under an officer by name of Dr. Rowe, at Palma, the seaport of that place, who was to enforce the payment of the duties. We know not what communications passed between the Governor and the above-named gentleman, but the Governor embarked on board Her Majesty's ship Investigator, and proceeded to Epeh, by way of the Lagoon, to enforce the chief of that place to return the duties levied by that chief, as reported to him (Governor Freeman). When he arrived at Epeh he summoned the chief of that place, named Possu, to come to pay him obeisance. This summons Possu refused to obey, saying that he thought, as he was the chief of his own country, or town, it was but right that Mr. Freeman should come to see him first, more particularly as he was quite a stranger, and had come without any warning. The Governor then sent a message to Possu, saying that he would give him twenty-four hours to consider, and if he did not comply with his orders by that time, he would fire upon his town. Possu's reply was that he would not go on board to the Governor, and he did not wish for any quarrel with the English; but if the Governor *wished* for fighting with him, and to destroy his town, *he* would fight him. Accordingly, when the stipulated time was up, the Governor, Major Leveson, and Lieutenant-Commander Lefroy, landed with a party of between thirty and forty men, under cover of the Armstrong gun of the Investigator, and were setting fire to the town, when they received a sharp fire from the muskets of the natives; and they were eventually obliged to make a sharp retreat, two or three being wounded, amongst whom was Major Leveson, who got a shot in the neck, which could not be got out, and he has been obliged to return to England.

The setting fire to that place has caused great loss to the firm of Oswald and Co., who had several thousand gallons of oil at Palma; also to a French firm that had a trading depôt at the same place. Not being satisfied with the above, on his return down in the Investigator, they came to a place called Egina, about ten or twelve miles from Epeh, on the Lagos side, and set fire to and destroyed that, where the people showed no hostility, and destroyed all the property of Mr. J. M. Turner, a black man, who was the only one trading there, trying to collect produce to pay his debts to a firm in London; and this was done whilst Mr. Turner was gone on a message from Governor Freeman to a neighbouring town.

Mr. Freeman, it seemed, got exasperated at being, as it were, beaten on this occasion; so in three or four days after he returned to Epeh with the Investigator, taking with him the whole of the troops that were stationed here, and some belonging to the 3rd West Indian Regiment, that had just arrived in the Adventure, to relieve the 2nd West India; together with some irregular troops of Hausa men, and with Lieutenant-Commander Dolben, of Her Majesty's ship Handy, mustering about 150 strong. When they got to Epeh the Governor again demanded that Possu should come to him, which of course he refused to do, saying that if the Governor came to him as a friend he would be very glad to receive him at his house, and that he would not be molested. Governor Freeman thought it too much below his dignity to go on shore to Possu, and sent a message to say that if Possu did not comply forthwith, he would land and take him by force. Possu's reply was: "I do not want any dispute at all with you; I do not want to fight with you; I know you have plenty big guns, and you are stronger than I, but I will not come on board to you. I see you want to kill me, and I may as well die one way as the other. I have done you no wrong as I know of, and if I had, why not come to me peaceably, and let us explain matters to each other? Why come to fight me? Is that the fashion of your country to settle matters? Is that the way your Queen told you to do to the black man? We thought the white men came to make our country good, but we find they come to destroy and take all our country from us and kill us. I say again I don't want war; but if you come on shore here to war with me, I will fight you." Upon receiving this message the Governor hauled down his flag of truce, and immediately landed with all his force, consisting of the soldiers of the West Indian Regiment, the Hausa men, and as many men as they could spare from the Investigator. But they got a warmer reception than they expected, for Possu and his people were better prepared than before. The result was that they got for the second time next thing to being beaten, and in fact would have been cut and shot down almost to a man, had it not been for the Hausa men, who held Possu's troops in check when one party was coming down by another road to form a junction which would have completely hemmed the Governor's party in and stopped their retreat to the boats. However, they managed to get to the boats in some sort of way, leaving a rocket tube in possession of the enemy, besides three being killed and about thirty-five wounded, some very dangerously. Lieutenant Dolben was among the wounded, and has been obliged to be sent to Ascension, and the captain of the new detachment was also slightly wounded. Of course, then the Governor returned to Lagos, and a few days after he sent H.M.'s ship Handy, with Dr. Rowe, to Possu, to offer terms of peace, and tell him to come to Lagos and sign a treaty. But he would not agree on any account to come to Lagos. The Governor sent to tell him that if he would come to Lagos, he would make a great chief of him; but Possu could not be caught by such bait. He said that he was already a chief, and in his own country; and he was quite satisfied with it. That he was a chief long before he ever saw Mr. Freeman, and his ancestors had all been chiefs. As for signing the treaty, he saw no reason why he should have to go to Lagos to sign it, more than any other chiefs had done before. If the Governor wished him to sign a treaty, let him send it and explain it to him, and, if fair, he would gladly sign it, as he wanted no palaver with white men. Accordingly, the treaty was taken to him, and he signed it; but

what that treaty contained we know not; but we hope that it was fully explained to him, as the reverse has often been the case in Africa.

Now, Mr. Editor, we wish to know, after all this loss of life and blood, not to say anything about other things, what has the Governor gained by all this for the English Crown, or for his own honour? What is Epeh itself worth as a possession to the English or other European nations? What right has Governor Freeman with Epeh? We know that Lagos belongs to the English, but that has nothing, nor ever had anything to do with Epeh. Before Lagos was made over to the English it had nothing to do with Epeh, nor until this day, so far as we know. Mr. Freeman accused Possu of forming duties at Palma which belongs to Epeh, and for selling slaves, but Possu indignantly denied the latter, and challenged him to bring proofs. He said he made all his men, or whoever of his people traded with the white people at Palma, pay so many strings of cowries, equal to about ninepence, for a certain quantity of oil that they sold—which custom had existed for some length of time—and that he considered as his proper revenue. We all feel assured that it is not the wish of the people of England to use such extreme measures for such paltry matters; but certainly they ought to send some person of foresight and experience, or at least some one who had got sound opinions of his own; not one that will get prejudiced by hearsay, and punish the innocent for the guilty, merely because they are all "black fellows." Look how the French are establishing themselves on different parts of this coast; but we have never heard about any killing, or burning, and destroying by them. For instance, Porto Novo: the French have got that place given to them quietly and peaceably, without any fighting.

We beg that you will not, on account of the length, refuse to insert our communication in your paper, as we wish the matter to come to the notice of the officials and good people of England, who we know wish justice should be dispensed with mercy.—We are, your obedient servants, CONTEMPLATORS.

P.S.—We forgot to mention one very strong remark of Possu's, and which every one of us join in—viz., "Had Mr. Glover" been here, all this rout would not have been; he is the man that could go through Africa."

#### ABEOKUTA.

##### RETREAT OF THE DAHOMANS—SAFETY OF ABEOKUTA.

We are indeed happy to state that our favourable anticipations have been realised. The Dahomans found the Abeokutans too strong to give them any chance of success. There seems to have been no combination whatever between the Dahomans and Ibadans. As regards Abeokuta itself, Dahomey must in future be regarded merely in the light of an obstructive and hurtful nuisance. We hope that the tacit confession of weakness made by the Dahomans, in their retreating without hazarding an attack on Abeokuta, will make the Dahoman King and chiefs more inclined than heretofore to accede to the expressed wishes of England for a change of system in Dahomey.

We copy the following verbatim from the *Iro-Irohin*, published at Abeokuta. It is interesting, as showing the nature, habits, and customs in time of war, as well as a record of facts:—

"MARCH 23.—The Dahoman alarm proved to be more real this year than at any time since the year 1851, when the famous battles were fought on the 3rd and 4th of March of that year, ending in the total defeat of the Dahomans. Great excitement prevailed on the 6th instant. The enemy was said to be somewhere near Ibara. Thousands of armed men assembled at their various posts to defend the town from attack. The large number that were brought together, all armed with muskets, some with pistols, and others with a sword as well, showed how abundantly they had supplied themselves of late years with these weapons of offence and defence. On the 7th the Dahomans were

\* Commander Glover, who happily went out by last mail to Lagos, as Acting Governor. We are glad to see this native tribute to the great merits of Commander Glover, and have no reason to doubt that we shall find ample cause for congratulating the Colonial Office on his appointment.—Ed. A. Z.

observed, with the use of a telescope, marching near the Ibara wood. The town of Ibara is situated on a hill enclosed by a wood, bearing near due west from Abeokuta, about seven miles distant. Being thus enclosed, the town cannot be seen from Abeokuta, but the wood is a conspicuous object. The people had previously fled to Abeokuta and other places for protection; the Dahomans met there nothing but an empty town. On the 8th several small parties went out to observe the enemy. One or two of these approached too near, and were made prisoners. A speedy attack was anticipated, and every preparation made. An easterly wind blew for two or three days, which thickened the atmosphere so that distant objects were obscured. On the evening of Monday rapid firing was heard, which was supposed to be an attack. Those sleeping at home rushed to their posts, but found it to be a mistake. On the following night a general discharge of muskets took place throughout the Egba lines by arrangement, in order to prove their efficiency, and as a demonstration to the enemy. The effect was singular as seen from a hill commanding a view of the walls occupied by the people, extending over several miles. It produced a considerable effect on the enemy, we are told, and was heard in the farms near Lagos; at Otta it was supposed Abeokuta had been taken. A fall of rain cleared the atmosphere, and distant objects became again visible. The Dahomans were observed to have encamped around the Ibara wood, having it in their rear, and in their front were several small patches of trees and underwood, which afforded them partial cover. They appeared to occupy extended lines, with but little depth, and to be divided into divisions of some sort, with well marked spaces between. Their main strength appeared to be on their right, which occupied the highest ground, on the south side of Ibara wood. On Friday a party of young men went out to observe the enemy, and were driven back. On Sunday, the 15th, two persons on horseback, one of them of rank, went to observe the enemy: they went too near, and were surrounded and fired on by parties in ambush. They escaped by the strength of their horses, through God's good providence. One of the horses was so severely wounded, that he died on the road returning, and his rider received several wounds. We observed on Wednesday evening, the 19th, a large fire in the direction of the Dahomey camp; it is supposed to have been caused by their burning the town of Ibara. The following morning the Dahoman camp appeared as usual. In the course of the forenoon smoke was seen to ascend from a place on the north of Ibara, and more distant, supposed to be some other village destroyed by them. In the evening a report prevailed that the Dahomans had destroyed three or four small towns, and caught many persons in them. It is strange that small towns should remain occupied, with so formidable an enemy near. Since writing the above a person who fled with his family has been spoken with. He states that he belongs to Ibara. On the approach of the Dahomans he fled to Kesson. That on the morning of the 19th the Dahomans came and attacked Kesson, but he fled with his family as soon as he heard the report of their muskets. On the 20th, a fresh party were seen in the Dahomey camp, in the rear of their lines; they were supposed to be captives, others supposed them to be holding a public meeting. Some of the Ibara people, going off, it was supposed, to Iberekodo, were attacked by a party of Egbas and Ijaves on the look out; on their return with those whom they caught, the chiefs seized as many as they could, to set them at liberty, and commanded all the rest to be delivered up. A considerable stir was observed in one part of the Dahomey camp on the morning of the 21st. A party of Egbas were seen going out to observe them, with the belief that the Dahomans had left, because they had destroyed some towns and made a few captives. Of this party it is reported that fifteen, at least, were caught in an ambush, and the rest returned with shame. Many young men among the Egbas and the Ijaves have been thus caught; unwilling to believe their elders, proud and selfwilled, they have had to pay dear for a little experience. As the new moon appeared the Mohammedans fired their muskets at the close of their fast, and on Sunday they went out to perform their usual ceremonies, accompanied by firing. Early on Sunday morning a heavy rain fell, lasting for a considerable time; after it

had ceased the atmosphere became very clear; a great stir was observed in the Dahomey camp, a great moving about, fires were generally lit, as shown by the smoke. To-day, the 23rd inst., the camp was hidden by a heavy mist until after nine o'clock; on its clearing away objects became visible. The camp appeared as usual, but no one could be seen moving about; after some time a fire was observed to burn beyond the Ibara wood. When near twelve o'clock a fire was seen in the Dahomey camp. At the same time a large number of persons were observed moving about, and one on horseback dressed in white. It soon became apparent to us that the Dahomans had deserted their camp, that the Egbas had taken possession of it, and were burning it down. We were soon after informed that some one had escaped in the night and brought information to the Egbas that the Dahomans were on their homeward march. It is a subject of great gratification and thankfulness to God that this great invasion has thus terminated. The Dahomans saw Abeokuta, and feared to attack it. The prayers of God's people for this place have prevailed; those who thirsted for our blood have been influenced by a higher power than man's. To God be all the praise.

"APRIL 6.—In continuation of the account given of the Dahoman invasion, I have to bring a few facts and incidents together connected with it. Several European friends went to visit Ibara and the site of the Dahomey camp on the Tuesday. The impression conveyed to them was that the Dahomans were not so strong as they have been thought to be; one person supposed them to have been not above 10,000 fighting persons, men and women. The camp, seen from Abeokuta, was only a part arranged in three single lines, with a considerable space between the end of one line and the beginning of another, as if to make the best possible appearance, if seen from a distance. The camp behind Ibara was larger, in which the King was present, for whom a superior dwelling was erected, as seen by the remains. One of those who went to see the spot, remarked that they were evidently in great fear, for their huts are everywhere a good gunshot off from Ibara bush, as if afraid it would give cover to an enemy. It was reported in Abeokuta that of some prisoners they had taken one had escaped, stating that the Dahomans pierced their hands or arms just above the wrist, and passed a cord through the wound, to tie them, and ensure their not getting free. One of the gentlemen who visited the site was desirous of testing the truth of this statement. He examined the body of a man, and found on his arm a wound above the wrist as described. Another individual was anxious to know whether the bodies had been otherwise maimed, as described to him, and verified its truth by inspection. One of the native Christians reporting that he had seen many dead bodies, headless corpses, but that they were chiefly old men, was asked how he could tell they were old. He remarked that their scalps were there, and the hair was grey. The Dahomans seek to secure skulls, and after beheading a man have a process of cleaning it, as the skull is the only valuable part. Thus their own friends who fall in battle are beheaded, and their skulls taken home. Who can distinguish between the skull of friend or foe? Several reports are rife as to the doings of the Dahomans after leaving this place. The first was that they had attacked and destroyed Ishala, a town in league with them, but it was not true, and again, that the Okeodan people and others had attacked them on their way home; but this also we believe to have no foundation in truth. Whilst they were at Ibara they destroyed several small towns in its neighbourhood; those named are Ilewo, Kesson, and Ijalle. As mentioned before, the Ibara people were attacked by the Abeokuta people. It appears they were going off or coming to Abeokuta, that some of the Abeokuta and Ijave people heard of it, and thinking to get plunder, went to meet them. They endeavoured to plunder; the Ibara people remonstrated and resisted. A fight ensued, in which many on both sides fell, including the Chief of Ibara, and they were captured. As soon as the chiefs of Abeokuta heard of it they were filled with indignation at the conduct of their people, and have used every means since to give liberty to every one thus taken. Sentence of death was passed on the individual who shot the Chief of Ibara."



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The African Times.

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1863.

AFRICAN-AID SOCIETY.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS SINCE OUR LAST.

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THE ACTION OF THE AFRICAN-AID SOCIETY.

ROME was not built in a day. Few societies that effect any permanent good are grand in their beginnings. Precociousness in them, as in children, is fatal to real power. Fiction alone starts into complete existence; while the realities of life build up gradually the individual and general structures of human history. Error is glittering; nothing is easier than to dazzle and to win with it. Truth is the reverse of this; and struggles amid difficulty and hardship into appreciation and favour. Look at our great missionary societies. Consult their early records. The Church Missionary Society was at first very coldly received. During some years its income fluctuated from three or four hundred to a thousand pounds a-year. People who could not, or did not, care to see, or were unable to grasp the great principle of its existence, sneered at it, no doubt. It was doing nothing, of course. No one could perceive any rich fruit of its exertions; and yet it had sown and gathered something in from the first seed—and yet it was from the first moment gradually advancing toward the great harvest of its present utility—and yet it had securely laid the foundation of its present goodly edifice. The germ of its actual vigorous life was swelling amid the ceremonies of the national apathy, anon to throw out its roots, to raise high its head and spread wide its branches; to fatten and flourish in the rich soil and sunshine of popular wealth and favour, and cast around the precious leaves of Christian truth appointed for the healing of the nations.

It would justly be thought presumptuous in us to liken the African-Aid Society, now struggling through the diseases and feebleness of infancy, with that veteran society whose efforts have been crowned with much success. But there is no presumption in comparing the actual infancy of the one with the remote infancy of the other. All societies of slow development are subject to the same early maladies. The future alone can determine whether the African-Aid Society will pass safely through those to which it, in common with others, has been subject. But we fearlessly maintain that if actual service performed entitles to success, the African-Aid Society has established its claim.

What was and is its self-imposed mission? To grapple with the material evils that oppress and degrade Africa, and its people—to hasten the annihilation of the atrocious slave-trade, which drains the African continent of its life's blood—and to aid and stimulate the development of the industrial resources which God has there so lavished.

And what has been its action? New born, it entered the lists against the slave-trade wars and traffic, and the superstitious atrocities of Dahomey! Is it a just ground of reproach to it

that it has not, in the short space of a couple of years, overcome the great iniquity which has now had nearly two centuries of life—not yet opened that magnificent country to industry and commerce? It has organised public opinion against it so as to claim the attention of Government, and incite it to action. Since the moment at which it struck the first blow at Dahoman atrocities, it has vigilantly watched for and taken advantage of opportunities for renewing the attack; and if supplied with the sinews of war, it will eventually triumph.

It asked and it obtained a consular establishment for Abeokuta, as the commencement of a system of interior consulates—of bringing a direct British action to bear upon the centres of production. It did not obtain it in the perfect form that it desired, and thence came whatever disappointment has ensued. Had a consul gone to Abeokuta in the name of the Queen of England, he would have been received and welcomed, while a vice-consul, going in the name of the unknown and unrecognised Governor of Lagos, failed to obtain acceptance. But the victory is only deferred, the vote for Abeokuta maintains its place in the estimates; and Abeokuta will receive ere long a consular organization, with the certainty of its producing a great increase of industrial and commercial exertions.

It desired to send artisans and agriculturists from Canada and the States. But this was opposed in Abeokuta by those who now deplore that there are no brick and tile-makers there—no handicraftsmen to instruct the youth in the mechanics of civilization. But since they were objected to there, it has purposed assisting some to Amba Bay; there to form an industrial and mechanical nucleus for neighbouring states. Every element of success is to be found there. But the work cannot be done without money. The society cannot make bricks without straw, and it objects to spending 50% in obtaining 100%. It has supplied funds for making the *first commercial road* ever attempted in native Africa, that forming by the Basle missionaries over the Aquapem Mountains, at the Gold Coast. It has been incessantly stimulating the Government to a system of roads in our African possessions of the Gold Coast, that will open those naturally wealthy districts to easy communication with the coast. For 150 years England was active in devastating and depopulating the Gold Coast; but during fifty years of better conduct she has not made five miles of road there! Government abandoned the Fort of Quittah, on the Slave Coast, to save 300*l.* or 400*l.* a-year. This led to a renewed slave-trade, and to 700 to 1,000 slaves a-year being carried past it into the lagoons, for shipment to Cuba. The society never relaxed its efforts till orders were sent out relative to the reoccupation of the fort.

Compelled by inadequacy of funds to postpone its emigration efforts, except as it has been the means of rescuing several individuals from misery here, and sending them abroad to prosperity, is it nothing that it has obtained a recognised political influence? Nothing that it has brought Africa into the light of public opinion here? Nothing that it has purposed inquiry on the Coast expresses a dread of the African-Aid Society and its journal? Nothing that it keeps Government and governors awake and in check? Nothing that the educated African on the coast has been made to feel that he has now a public advocate in England? Nothing that Lagos has become a British colony, and, in spite of temporary mismanagement, a beacon of civilization? Nothing that the principle of interior consulates has been acceded to? Nothing that, by sending its Brazilian tilemaker to Abeokuta,\* it has opened eyes there as to the real material wants of Africa? Nothing that it is urging the change of system in Dahomey—the improvement of harbours, the making of roads, the production of cotton—the utilising of the Niger and other great rivers—the production of coffee (for Africa could soon supply enormous quantities)—and conducting gradually, but surely, to the development of all resources, and the annihilation of the slave-trade?

Honour to those who have supported and are supporting it by their pecuniary aid. They are doing through it a great work for Africa. Wherever in Great Britain, there exists, as regards

\* An article on this subject will appear in our next. The important news from the Coast has prevented its insertion in the present number.—  
Ed. A.T.

MAY 23, 1863.]

THE AFRICAN TIMES.

Africa, anything beyond the mere egotism of surface philanthropy, it will find fresh support. If it ever perish for want of it, while, as now, faithful in its mission, disgrace to those who shall have allowed it to perish. And here we must say one word to the educated Africans of the West Coast. They have recognised, and are recognising, by their subscriptions to this paper, the importance to them of the *African Times*. But they have not as yet done anything for the support of **THE SOCIETY** whose influence makes that journal a power. In future every subscription will be published in this paper. Every educated and commercial African ought to feel that this society is *his*. The name of every one ought to be found year by year in the list of its annual subscribers. There are hundreds who can afford their one or two guineas a year. It is only thus they can show that they recognise the important efforts of this society for them and for their race and country; thus only they can show that they are alive to the vast benefits of the civilization of which they have themselves become partakers. It was for this that we hailed with peculiar satisfaction the annual subscription of the Rev. Mr. Robbin, Colonial Chaplain at the Gambia, as announced in our last. His worthy and honoured name stands first on the list of our African subscribers. We hope, for the credit of the educated Africans, that it is but the first of hundreds. Then will the people of England recognise the advancing civilization of Africa.

THE ASHANTEE WAR, THE RELIEF OF ABEOKUTA,  
AND THE SECOND RAID AT EPE.

Our coast news of this month is very important. The exclusive intelligence to be found in our columns will well repay perusal. We fear there is no doubt of an Ashantee war. Imperfect as our system (if it merit the name of a system) on the Gold Coast is, the comparative security of life there has long been gradually draining Ashantee of a portion of its population. Slaves seek refuge there, rather than be slaughtered and buried in a dead chief's grave. Is any chief or headman summoned to Comassie in a manner that causes him to dread a fatal termination to his journey, he prefers to migrate to the protected territories with his willing followers. If the British Government had fully comprehended its inevitable mission on the Gold Coast, the active influences of civilization would long ere this have penetrated Ashantee, and such a war as is now imminent, or actually commenced, would have been impossible. Had there been roads from the coast to the Ashantee frontier, every police post at their terminus would have been a radiating centre of civilising influences. We think that on the first symptoms of approaching trouble with Ashantee, the Gold Coast authorities ought to have called upon the chiefs to open up military paths, if not roads, through their districts. Now we suppose every man is engaged as a soldier. The people have to defend their homes. But when this war shall have finished, roads *must* be made, and such changes as may be requisite in the character of our occupation there in order to enable this to be effected *must* be ordered. A wave of proclamation must have way made for it to roll on from the seacoast to the Kong Mountains. We are sorry not to have heard of any proclamation forbidding the Fantes and other people of the protected territories to slaughter and decapitate their prisoners. It is not creditable to us that it should be thought pleasant to our authorities on the coast to have human heads sent to them. We are in Africa to civilise, and to countenance barbarous practices is not the way to civilise. Again, if the quarrel proceed to full and widespread hostilities, we hope the small British force there will be under good leadership. We confess to great misgivings on this point. The state of the Gold Coast Artillery Corps does not inspire us with any confidence in those who have allowed that formerly fine, well-behaved body of men to lose all discipline and subordination. The Ashantees have been always formidable enemies. They are a warlike people, and our troops will require good handling.

The return of the Dahomans to their country without daring to attack Abeokuta gives cause for great thankfulness and rejoicing. It is a practical confession of weakness on the part of the Dahomans that may lead to important results. Now that the French Government have appointed a Consul to Dahomey,

some joint action on the part of the French and British Governments might surely be tried for putting a stop to the Dahoman man-stealing expedition (for their so-called wars are nothing else), to the slave-trade from, and the horrible customs in, Dahomey. If this can be accomplished, no one would hail the presence of French authorities in Dahomey more joyfully than ourselves.

The letter of our Lagos correspondent, giving an account of the second military and naval expedition from Lagos against Possu, the chief of Epeh, will be read with grief and pain. What shall we say with regard to those dead and wounded men who have suffered on our side, as well as to the natives who have been made victims of those expeditions. Poor Lieutenant Dolben, who has been sent to Ascension, will, we hope, be spared to his friends and to the service, of which he promised fair to be a most useful and distinguished officer. We wait with anxiety to hear what the British Government will say to these proceedings on the part of the local authority. Lives have been lost, property destroyed, and the British name and moral influence has unquestionably suffered. We will not prejudice the decision of Her Majesty's Government, which, we hope, will speedily be given. As Governor Freeman and the Colonial Secretary are now both in England, there is no excuse for procrastination or delay. If the conduct of the local authority be approved, we are entitled to know this, and the grounds of approval. If it be not approved, it is of equal importance that the decision of the Government should be known. We shall press for it, if there be any unnecessary delay. We are now the recognised public guardians of the African people, and of the interests of advancing civilization in Africa, and therefore these Lagos military expeditions touch us nearly.

## SOURCE OF THE NILE.

Captain Speke and Captain Grant have found the great source of the famous river Nile. We congratulate the scientific world, and more especially Captains Speke and Grant, on this discovery. For the particulars we must refer our readers to Sir Roderick Murchison's letter, on page 134.

## EAST AFRICA.

WE had intended entering fully this month into the important question of the obstructive Portuguese influences in the East African rivers. Commerce, civilization, and missionary effort are paralysed there by the ineradicable slave-trade propensities of the unworthy representatives of Europe on the coast. The Zambesi stations of the Oxford and Cambridge Mission, abandoned to themselves by the withdrawal of the Government grant for the Zambesi expedition, have now a strong claim to our active sympathy and support. We shall do all that lies in our power to aid the mission, as well as our enterprising colonial brethren in Natal, in obtaining the release of East Africa from the slave-trade depopulating and debasing thralldom in which it is held, through the claims of Portugal, upon a long line of coast, including the embouchure of the principal rivers.

Meanwhile, we hope it will not be deemed impertinent in us by the distinguished men at the head of the Central African Mission to remind them there are other entrances into Central Africa than those from the East Coast. Why not strike at the interior of Africa from both sides of the continent at once? A secure and most important access is to open them from the West Coast. Rabba, on the River Niger, which will, in some way or other, soon be opened to organised commercial enterprise, is the western outpost of the great Mohammedan error in Central Africa. An able, earnest, prudent, active bishop at Rabba might lay the foundation of a Christian influence that would spread throughout Central Africa, and overthrow that dominant mixture of Mohammedanism and heathenism which now prevails. We feel certain that within no very long period a Bishop of Rabba might be followed by a Bishop of Kano. This is a work too important to be longer neglected, and one that is particularly suited to the ecclesiastical organization of the Oxford and Cambridge Mission. Its efforts in this direction

would rest upon the influential basis of British presence and occupation, at Lagos only 180 miles from Rabba, and at the British establishments that must soon permanently occupy the Niger. Intelligence would come to England by every monthly mail, and the zeal and interest of the supporters of the mission would thus be kept alive. We must, with all deference, beg leave to submit that only by such an action from the west, as well as up the Zambesi from the east, can it have a just claim to retain its present title of Central African Mission. If it confine itself to the Zambesi effort, the East African Mission will be its most fitting designation. In our earnest anxiety for the civilization of Africa throughout, we cannot conceal our conviction of the widespread benefits that may result from an immediate action in the direction we now presume to suggest and recommend.

#### REVENUES OF LAGOS.

An adequate revenue is indispensable to every colony or state, if good is to be effected. To expect any administration to administer *nothing*, with benefit, is simply absurd. Rule implies revenue. Without the latter, the former is more than liable to fall into contempt. We have, therefore, always advocated the raising of a sufficient revenue in our new colony of Lagos. But it was equally necessary for the future welfare of the colony that the revenue system should be based upon sound and established principles. We therefore objected to duties on manufactured goods imported, and other duties at the same time on the export produce purchased with those goods. This has since been changed. We have already congratulated the colony upon that change. Instead of those mixed duties, import duties only are levied. And now, before proceeding further, we beg to offer our humble meed of praise to his Excellency Governor Freeman for having introduced into African finance that exceptional legislation approved by the good sense of Christian communities in Europe. Whatever errors he may have committed, this, at least, is an important step in the right direction. It must be most desirable to carry into operation in our colonies, as far as may be practicable and safe, the principles that have been established at home. Here, in Great Britain, we have certainly made spirits and tobacco articles for exceptional duties. While abolishing or reducing all other duties, we have thought it justifiable and wise to tax these articles to the extreme limit. We charge them with as much duty as they can really be made to bear. Governor Freeman justly conceived that in British efforts to civilise Africa—for that we presume is the main object of British rule on the West Coast—the approved results of civilization in Great Britain should accompany the exercise of British authority in Africa. A revenue had to be raised. Lagos was a new colony. The very foundations of a revenue system had to be laid. Docemo, who ceded the place to us, obtained all he wanted by a small export duty on palm oil. But unless Lagos was to remain without those improvements which ought to attend British rule, or was to be a clog and a constant charge upon the home exchequer, no such duty could supply the necessary revenue. A false move in the first instance may well be excused, when the subsequent one was so much in the right direction. Lagos is the key of a large district of the mainland of Africa, where there is a numerous population. Our readers are aware it is the seaport of Abeokuta, and of Egba and Yoruba generally. During the year 1861, the following quantities of spirits and tobacco were entered in the port of Lagos: Rum, 380,000 gallons; gin, &c., 50,000 gallons; tobacco, 1,450,000 lbs.

Governor Freeman, by and with the advice and consent of his Legislative Council, has imposed a duty of 6d per gallon on rum, &c., and 2d. per lb. on tobacco, &c. These duties, if the importations continue on the same scale, would yield a revenue of above twenty thousand pounds sterling per annum. We, of course, are unable to judge whether these duties can be levied without diverting a portion of the trade to Porto Novo, now under French protection. There are great impediments to the landing and transport of goods at Porto Novo; but they cannot be so serious, we should think, as to render it preferable to pay twopence a pound on tobacco at Lagos. We confess it seems to

us that, in order to make the revenue above mentioned secure, the Governor ought, by some conciliatory means, to have introduced Porto Novo into this revenue system. A paramount influence in Porto Novo seems almost indispensable to a productive revenue system at Lagos. The not having secured this, is, therefore, a grave fault, and may make the twenty odd thousands from rum and tobacco only a revenue on paper after all. The sooner this is looked to by the Acting Governor at Lagos, or by the new Governor, should Mr. Stanhope Freeman not return there, the better. If those duties cannot be levied without diverting the trade to Porto Novo, they had better be at once repealed, or reduced to such an amount as can be levied without thus injuring the trade of the port. As these new duties are greatly complained of by the Brazilian and other foreign merchants, who chiefly carry on the rum and tobacco trade, it is not likely they will submit to them if they can help it. No time ought therefore to be lost. A trade once diverted is not easily recalled. But if the duties can be maintained without thus diverting the trade, it is on all accounts desirable that they should be maintained. It is only because we have a doubt on this point that we refrain from urging the repeal of the 3 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on British and other manufactured goods imported at the same time with the rum and tobacco duties. We detest *ad valorem* duties. They lead to fraud and deception, under which the honest, upright trader, who will not resort to them, suffers; and if a sufficient revenue could be raised from rum, spirits, and tobacco, we would have them dispensed with altogether. We hope the attention of the Acting Governor of Lagos will be immediately directed to these points. Manufactured goods—the consumption of which indicates the progress of civilization—ought to enjoy the freest welcome possible. And the present is an exceptional time in the trade of the West Coast as regards these articles. Cotton goods, which figure very largely among them, have so increased in price here, that it is difficult to obtain such an advance on them from the natives in Africa; a difficulty aggravated by the decreasing value of palm oil in England, which is now nearly 7l. per ton below the price it brought two or three years ago. The object in view as regards revenue at Lagos should be, not to impede, but to foster commerce; and especially that commerce which attends and stimulates progressive civilization. It should be, not to raise an excessive revenue that may be prodigally squandered, but to obtain what will suffice to render the colony permanently independent of the mother country as regards everything but mere protection, and give at the same time an adequate fund for those improvements which ought to take place under our rule. With this we ought to be satisfied for the present; and we have no doubt that in the course of a few years the colony would advance to such a condition of prosperity as would enable it to pay for its necessary protection also—a most desirable thing, and one which we hope to see achieved in all our African colonies.

#### INSULATING GUM.

We recommend our African friends to search in all directions for a gum that may be used as a substitute for gutta percha, which is now 6s. 6d. per lb. It has thus reached a price that makes it impossible to employ it for submarine telegraph cables, and many other useful purposes. Africa is so rich in gums, that we feel certain she must possess some one, at least, with the qualities of gutta percha; and any of our friends who may find such a gum will, in so doing, have found a fortune. We should be glad of specimens of all sorts of African gums not hitherto known in commerce. Gutta percha may be obtained by tapping the tree, in the same way that India rubber is got. And a substitute for gutta percha, if found, will be found, we think, among that description of gums. We will get any sample tested that may be sent to us by the Royal African Mail Steamship Company's vessels, addressed for the Museum of the African-Aid Society, 8, Adelphi-terrace, London.

Orders have been received at the Cape of Good Hope for the recall and breaking up of the Livingstone expedition.

#### SOUTH AND EAST AFRICA.

##### CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

The mail steamship Briton arrived at Plymouth April 28th, with the Cape mail and thirty-five passengers. She left the Cape on the 22nd, St. Helena on the 31st March, and Ascension on the 4th April. The Cape Parliament was to meet on the 16th of April.

The colony was suffering under very serious depression. Three years' drought and the long winter had reduced the agricultural population to great straits.

Provisions were scarce and dear, and money dearer. It was, however, hoped that the depression would ultimately benefit the colony, by prompting to large improvements in farming and commerce.

Fine rains continued to fall in all parts of the colony. The appearance of the country was beautiful, and there was great promise of abundant winter crops.

On the 12th of March the Federal corvette Jamestown, twenty guns, for China, put into Table Bay, having damaged her rudder. She was suffered to remain two days, on a plea of effecting repairs. During that time she shipped surreptitiously about twenty seamen there.

##### NATAL.

(From our own Correspondent.)

March 7, 1863.

The conduct of the rascally Portuguese in the matter of the trading cutter Agnes, up King George's River, Delagoa Bay, has greatly irritated our mercantile people here. For all practical purposes, Natal may now be considered the representative of European civilization on the South-east Coast of Africa. All that the Portuguese have ever done upon the coast is, after having exhausted the coast population, to demoralise and depopulate the interior. They are now, as they have always been, and always will be, while they can find a purchase for their horrid merchandise—*Slave Traders*. There must be a change, and that speedily. The growing enterprise of this colony will not allow itself to be kept in check, and excluded from the rich commerce of the interior of the continent *through its natural channels, the rivers*, merely because the Portuguese have established a slave-trade authority on the coast. The sooner Her Majesty's Government comes to some understanding with the Portuguese for the freedom of commerce on the eastern rivers the better—if not, there will be far more serious collision between the Portuguese and our people than have yet taken place. The Zambesi Mission, too, which might have done great good, will certainly have to decamp in a very short time, if what we hear from home be true. You have told me that the Government will not continue the 5,000l. a-year for the Zambesi expedition any longer. Well, all I can say is, that if it cuts that off, it is bound, in justice to the Oxford and Cambridge Mission, to do something to secure them not only free access by the river, but entire protection as regards the slavetraders, and their infamous agents, natives and others. All the evil-doing in the country they are the cause of, and they ought to be held responsible for it, and made to pay heavily. The proper way for the British Government, according to my mind, is to make the Portuguese domination on the East Coast so expensive for Portugal, that she may be only too glad to get rid of it. Then we shall get quit of another of the world's great nuisances—the presence of the Portuguese on these coasts.

We have every prospect of good harvests this year. The coffee trees are represented as being borne down by the weight of berries on them. And the sugar crop will no doubt be large. An enormous stool, composed of 214 China canes, twenty months old, has been cut on the plantation of Mr. A. B. Kennedy. Such a mass of canes growing in one cluster is quite exceptional.

Tobacco is developing itself, and has every prospect of turning out a remunerative enterprise for men of small means. Some seed of the Latakia tobacco, introduced by a Mr. Robinson, in September last, has not only germinated, but thrown out plants of the greatest luxuriance, quite overgrowing the other varieties

planted in the Botanic Gardens. Very sanguine expectations are entertained about the extensive growth of this valuable and marketable plant.

An indigenous grass that grows in great abundance more or less throughout the colony, and that yields a most beautiful fibrous tassel, exactly resembling silk, is likely to prove a valuable textile staple. A sample was lately taken home by Mr. Otto, and shown by him to a spinner at Macclesfield, who offered to purchase any quantity. As this plant is wild, and native to the soil, there is no saying how far cultivation might not develop it into a profitable staple for cultivation.

Now that arrowroot sells so badly in England, it is of great importance to the smaller and least wealthy of the coast agriculturists that these articles and cotton should become profitable. As you only consume less than 800 tons of arrowroot a-year in England from all quarters of the world, there can never be a great market for it, unless you find out some new use for it. It is cheap enough here now. Fine quality does not bring above 36s. per cwt.

Capital promises to become more reasonable for our planters here. The London and South African Bank opened a branch in Durban at the beginning of February. It is rumoured that the present rate, twelve per cent., will be reduced to a more reasonable figure, when applications for accommodation will proportionately increase. The annual statements and reports of our three local joint stock banks have been lately issued. They show for 1862:—

|                   | Capital paid up. | Fixed Deposits. | Bills discounted. |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Natal Bank . .    | 40,000           | 53,000          | 139,677           |
| C. & A. Bank . .  | 50,000           | 36,049          | 121,333           |
| Colonial Bank . . | 17,298           | 1,583           | 24,399            |
|                   | 107,298          | 90,632          | 285,409           |

This does not include the operations of the Natal Fire Assurance and Trust Company, the London and South African Bank, the Natal Land and Colonization Company, and the private establishment (the Durban Bank) of Messrs. W. Hartley and Co. So you see we have plenty of banking agencies, though the capital is not very large.

The Government will have shortly to make some new and definite arrangement with the Griquas as to the extent of land they are to occupy. There are only 3,000 of them, while the territory allotted them—the whole of the upper portion of Nomansland—is altogether beyond the needs of such a population. The frontier farmers and capitalists are keenly alive to the advantages of this district, and would gladly take or send large flocks there immediately, could they secure adequate pasture-ground.

By statistics lately published it appears that in the Richmond Ward of Maritzburg County, a district containing 523 square miles, there are 373 whites, who cultivate 797 acres, and 12,624 natives, who produce only 28,050 lbs. of corn; and of whom 266 are in employment.

By this mail the Government will send to its agents in Calcutta and Madras instructions to embark 500 Coolies for this place. Applications for that number, if not for more servants, have been received by the immigration department, and we may anticipate the arrival of this, the second batch of East Indians, in the course of a few months. The first importation has given very general satisfaction, but they cost too much. There is no excuse, I think, for their costing 22l. per head to bring here, when they can be got to Mauritius for less than 10l. per head. But we want and must have them, though we have a native population of 130,000, most of them doing nothing. *I wish you would take up this native question.* The real interests of the natives, as well as of the colony, are at stake. Meanwhile, we begin to think that we have as good a right to some of the liberated Africans from St. Helena as Barbadoes has. We have just learnt that 158 of these Africans had lately been shipped there per Bonanza from St. Helena, and that 700 more were left on that island.

Surely this colony is as much entitled as Demerara to the



services of such liberated Africans. We hope some will be sent here. They are sure of being well treated, and of doing well when their apprenticeship expires.

The commercial report to-day is for arrowroot, 35s. per cwt.; ivory, 4s. 7d. to 4s. 9d. per lb.; dry hides, 1½d. per lb.; wet ditto, 2d. to 2½d.

#### EAST COAST.

By the arrival of Her Majesty's ship Penguin at Natal on March 5, we have much later intelligence from the East Coast. This vessel left the island of Johanna on the 23rd February, and brought to Natal the residue of Captain Speke's party, which originally comprised twelve, but has been reduced by disease, &c., to four, one of whom was so terribly disabled by the attacks of wild animals, that he had to be left at Zanzibar; the other three are to be left here. Captain Speke himself had passed on northward, through the Somauli country, and would, it was presumed, succeed in the object of his journey—that of traversing East Africa, from Zanzibar to Abyssinia. Five of his party are said to have been made away with by the attacks of savage animals and men. No later intelligence from Dr. Livingstone was received by this opportunity. After recruiting at Johanna, the party had passed on to Rovuma, and proceeded on their explorations. The Penguin, it will be remembered, was the vessel whose boat's crew was so barbarously murdered by Arabs near Cape Guardafui, a short time ago; severe retribution, however, was exacted. Several dhows have been captured by the vessels on the station. The Penguin having landed her mails and invalids, and obtained what supplies she needs, returns to Johanna on Saturday, but will probably be here again before long on her way to the Cape.

The latest news from the missionary stations was favourable. Messrs. Chapman and Baines had effected their passage across from Walwich-bay to the Zambesi, and confirmed Dr. Livingstone's glowing description of the Victoria Falls.

#### SPEKE AND GRANT JOINED BY PETHERICK ON THE WHITE NILE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AFRICAN TIMES.

Sir,—It will be a relief to the public anxiety respecting the fate of Mr. Petherick, whose death had been announced some time ago in a telegram from Alexandria, to hear the good news that he is alive and well, having effected a junction with Captains Speke and Grant at Gondokoro, on the White Nile, on the 23rd of February.

In reference to the great question of the sources of the Nile, Captain Speke thus writes to me:—

"I said I would do it, and I have done it. The Victoria Nyanza is the great reservoir of the sacred Bahr el Abiad (White Nile). . . . I think I may safely say (he adds) that I never felt so rejoiced as I did when Petherick delivered to me your letter, notifying that the Royal Geographical Society had adjudicated to me their Founder's Medal (for the discovery of the Lake Victoria Nyanza), the more so as the kind expressions in your letter reached me just as my trials were over."

By the intelligence communicated to the Foreign-office by Mr. Colquhoun, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Alexandria, and for which I am indebted to Mr. Hammond, it appears that the Viceroy of Egypt was about to send a steamer to Assouan, to bring Speke and party down to Cairo, so that we may soon welcome them at home.

It further appears that Baker, the adventurous author of the "Rifle and Hound," had gone to the south-west in search of another great internal lake, or branch of the White Nile, and will return in one year.

Captain Speke, writing on the 30th of March, from Khartum to Mr. Saunders at Alexandria (as I learn by a letter just received from Mr. C. L. Conyngham, of the Foreign-office), says:—

"We left Petherick, wife, and doctor all well at Gondokoro. Baker, who was the first Englishman we met with, gave us assistance in boats, stores, and money."

As Captain Speke was in anxiety as to the means of sending back the negro porters and attendants, 23 in number, to their native country, near Zanzibar, I am happy to say that this wish has been anticipated by the last mail. Believing that he would be so embarrassed, I applied to my friend, Admiral W. H. Hall, who, as one of the directors of the Peninsular and Oriental Navigation Company, has liberally arranged with his associates that these poor and faithful people shall be conveyed *gratis* to Aden or Bombay, whence they can be shipped direct for Zanzibar.

Looking to the vigour of Consul Petherick, and his being so well inured to African climate, I ventured to say at the last meeting of the Geographical Society that I thought he would emerge from the region into which he had penetrated, notwithstanding the loss of his stores and the disasters which had befallen him.

This discovery of Speke and Grant, by which the southernmost limit of the basin of the Nile is determined to be four degrees south of the equator, is the most remarkable geographical feat of our age, and is indeed an achievement of which all our countrymen may well be proud.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
RODERICK I. MURCHISON.

16, Belgrave-square, May, 16.

#### WILLIAM O'CONNOR PRATT, DECEASED.

We have received from Africa some very strong eulogiums on this gentleman, whose premature death, at the age of twenty-six, seems to have been deeply felt by a large circle of friends. He is said to have been "a bright and living example of the capacity and willingness of the African race to accept of the civilization of Europe and of the holy influence of a pure Christianity."

We regret that our limited space will not permit of our inserting the long eulogiums we have received on this African gentleman; but the loss of such a man as he is described to have been is a severe loss, and we sincerely sympathise with his numerous friends at Sierra Leone, Cape Coast, Anamaboe, &c. Mr. Pratt, a man of pure African blood, was the son of W. H. Pratt, Esq., merchant, and Marshal of the Vice-Admiralty Court at Sierra Leone, and at ten years of age was sent by his father to the Wesleyan College at Taunton, Somerset, England. There, and under a private tutor in London, he remained seven years, returning to the colony in 1853. He became a partner in his father's house in 1859, and lieutenant, paymaster, and quartermaster in the Royal Sierra Leone Militia. He served with distinction in the Quah war. He also officiated for seven years as organist of St. George's Cathedral. His life of usefulness was prematurely closed by the rupture of a blood vessel during sleep on the night of the 27th October, 1862. We hope the good example he seems to have set will be followed by many other Sierra Leone-born Africans.

M. JULES GERARD'S (THE LION HUNTER) VISIT TO DAHOMEY. —We learn that M. Jules Gerard passed Accra on his way to Dahomey, by the mail-steamer that left England in March. We wish him every success, though our correspondent at Accra doubts the practicability of his scheme, so far as Dahomey and Ashantee are concerned therein. But M. Jules Gerard is a clever man, and possesses a special ability likely to be appreciated by King Badahung and his chiefs, so that we really hope for some good results.

HER MAJESTY'S steam corvette Archer, Captain Bythesea, V.C., has sailed for her station on the West Coast of Africa. Her crew consists of 195 men and boys; her engines are of 202-horse power, and her burden is 973 tons. She has an armament of 13 guns on the quarter-deck—namely, eight 32-pounder smooth bores, four 20-pounder and one 110-pounder Armstrong, and two field-guns, consisting of one 12-pounder Armstrong, with field carriage and limber, and one 6-pounder brass smooth bore, for short practice, with elevating carriage. She has been thoroughly renovated at Woolwich.—The Jaseur, 5, screw gun vessel, has also left for the West Coast of Africa.

#### ON THE CLIMATE AND DISEASES OF WEST AFRICA.

1. *Short Notes of the Prevailing Diseases in the Colony of Sierra Leone.* Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association at Glasgow, 1855. "Statistical Journal," Vol. XIX. March, 1856.

2. *Parliamentary Reports of Her Majesty's Colonial Possessions for 1858.* 1862.

3. *Transactions of the Epidemiological Society, 1860.* By R. CLARKE, Surgeon, late of Her Majesty's Colonial Service.

So much has been said and written about the climate of West Africa, and it has been so long the fashion to abuse and condemn it without inquiry, that the medical profession, like the general public, have accepted and endorsed the common report as an established fact. It is therefore important to find such mischievous exaggerations combated by a medical officer, who writes of West Africa, not from hearsay evidence, but from the experience derived during a residence of twenty-three years in the colony of Sierra Leone and settlements of the Gold Coast. We make these remarks by way of introducing to more general notice the papers above noted, because they supply much valuable and novel information, not only regarding the diseases to which Europeans and natives are subject in West Africa, but because they furnish an interesting description of the topography of Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast.

Mr. Clarke is of opinion that the climate of West Africa, fairly tested, can stand comparison in point of healthfulness with most of our colonies in the East or West Indies, where endemic and epidemic fevers, dysentery, with cholera to boot, prevail quite as frequently and fatally. There are men now in Europe in the enjoyment of fair health who have lived there for periods varying from twenty to twenty-five years. Comparatively, their number is not small, comprehending persons of all classes—governors, civil and military officers, merchants, and missionaries, with their wives and families. He states "that formerly many officers in the English, Dutch, and Danish service resided upon the Gold Coast, some fourteen, twenty, and thirty years,\* and enjoyed good health, although those in subordinate positions had to remove from one station to another." The fact ought no longer to be concealed, that half at least of the deaths and incapacities which occur amongst Europeans arise from errors of personal economy, and that the mortality lists are unfairly swelled by ascribing to the climate deaths which have been caused by accident or intemperance.

The following passages may be adduced as proof that the climate is not to blame for everything:—

"The sanitary condition of the town of Cape Coast, and indeed of all the towns upon the seaboard, is deplorable. Notwithstanding that some good has of late been effected by the municipality, yet, strange to relate, no public cloacinas have as yet been provided to meet the wants of the people, although the subject has been repeatedly taken up, and just as suddenly dropped, the consequence being that decency is constantly outraged, and the most disgusting nuisances are openly committed in the streets. Foul stenches everywhere assail the nose and corrupt the air, dunghills being attached to the huts, where garbage, filth, stinking fish, and other abominations are thrown. The smells along the by-paths and beach in the neighbourhood of the towns and villages are most offensive from accumulations of human ordure and offal; in fact, the native population is unrestrained by any police rules, except at Cape Coast and Accra. In both towns the municipal corporation have enacted laws for their conservancy; but in reality they are a dead letter, and hence an amount of nuisance scarcely credible. In the other towns, the Paynims, or native police, utterly neglect important matters of this kind. Indeed, the inhabitants of Cape Coast and the other towns and villages are chiefly indebted for their partial cleanliness to those useful scavengers, the turkey buzzards, largely helped by packs of half-starved, mangy curs and ill-conditioned hogs, who greedily devour the excrementitious matters which are left to rot upon the streets."

"The town of Cape Coast is irregularly built; the houses are constructed of clay or bricks, and are generally square. In some of the rural districts they are made of bamboo, wattles being woven between the upright posts, which are then plastered over with clay, which becomes, when dry, remarkably hard. The walls of their dwellings

\* Mr. McCormack and Mr. Goddard have each respectively lived at Sierra Leone and the Gambia for nearly fifty years.

are rarely, if ever, whitewashed, and are often crowded, ill-ventilated, and dirty. Most of the rooms are miserably small, dark, damp, and badly ventilated, especially those devoted to sleep. In their sleeping places the poorer classes, and many persons in better circumstances, keep all the dirty clothing not in wear either about their beds or hanging from the wall, scraps of food and putrid fish being strewed about or collected in corners. The lower rooms open into inner courts, where, in fine weather, the members of the several families meet, and where they often cook and eat their food. The houses of what may be termed the middling class are well furnished with European articles of cabinet furniture, with crockery, glass, and mirrors, while the walls are decorated with cheap prints. The wealthy native gentlemen (living in the seaboard towns) live in well-built houses, commodiously, and often elegantly, furnished; but few of them have fire-places in the public rooms or bedrooms—a want which impairs health in a country exposed to heavy night-dews, and in some wet seasons to heavy falls of rain. The general custom on the Gold Coast is to burn charcoal in clay pots in the public rooms and bedrooms when the weather is damp or cold. From inquiries I have made, I find that twenty may be safely reckoned the average number of tenants living under one roof in the two-storied houses in Cape Coast, and it often happens that sober, decent people dwell in one apartment, and a drunken man in the next, for I regret to say that drunkenness is a wide-spread vice among the natives—a circumstance chiefly dependent upon the cheapness of the spirits imported from the United States, Holland, and the Brazils."

And again:—

"The mass of the inhabitants bury their dead in the basement floor of their houses—a practice not confined to the pagan part of the population, but also practised by many respectable and wealthy families. This hurtful custom cannot be too soon discontinued. It is not done by the natives of the interior, but by all accounts it has been an ancient custom in the coast towns. When the deceased is wealthy, valuable articles, as gold ornaments, gold dust, agger beads, are placed in the coffin, and the body is sprinkled with gold dust. These tombs in this way become family banks, and in the time of trouble the gold so deposited is applied to meet pressing claims or other family purposes. The practice of depositing articles of value with the dead is of very ancient origin, for King David had large treasure placed in his tomb by King Solomon."

The frightful condition in which the slaves are landed from the captured slavers at Sierra Leone is vividly depicted:—

"At the period I took charge of the Kissy Hospitals (1837) the slave-trade was in active operation, consequently great numbers of liberated Africans were constantly received into hospital. It was a most distressing sight to witness the arrival of these poor creatures; and it is necessary to make a few preliminary remarks in order clearly to understand the difficulties with which the medical officers had to contend. The appearance of the slaves when landed was most striking. In some the expression of the countenance indicated sufferings, moral and physical, of the most profound and agonising nature. Others of them gazed vacantly around them in the most utter helplessness. Occasionally, among the newly-arrived groups all sense of suffering was merged in melancholic or raving madness. The wizened, shrunk, and skinny features were lighted up by the hollow, feverish eye. The belly was, as it were, tacked to the back, whilst the hip-bones protruded, and, in some cases, became the seat of foul, sloughing ulcers. The hand and skinny fingers seemed much elongated by the great and neglected growth of the nails, and they were so deplorably emaciated, that the skin appeared tensely stretched over, and tied down to the skeleton. The legs refused to perform their functions, and they reeled and tottered about from sheer debility. Their squalor and extreme wretchedness was heightened, in many cases, by the particoloured evacuations with which their bodies were besmeared. When large numbers of the sick were suffering from dysentery, the condition of the wards and yards in the morning was extremely loathsome. This was in a great degree unavoidable, as the sick were too weak to crawl from their mats to the commode, although everything was done under the surgeons' orders to keep the wards as clean and wholesome as the crowded state of the hospital would admit of." In a word, "the moral and physical causes of depression were often so overwhelming, and so intensely concentrated, that the combination produced disease in such formidable shapes as to be beyond remedy. The mortality was consequently very great; many persons brought to the hospital in the last stage of disease died a few hours after their arrival; others even expired by the way. A large proportion died within a few days; and as the names of all these persons were recorded in the hospital books, the percentage of deaths was thereby largely increased."

(To be continued.)

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