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BRITAIN
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WEST AFRICA

JOYCE CARY

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JOYCE CARY.

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DESCRIPTION DE L'AFRIQUE—O. Dapper, 1686 *Inside Front Cover*
(By kind permission of the Royal Empire Society)

BRITISH WEST AFRICA *Inside Back Cover*

I. *The Merchant Adventurers*

NO ONE KNOWS what wandering sailor first touched at the West African beaches. He probably did not know himself. He landed, traded, and sailed on. It is said that the Phœnicians had a regular trade south of Cape Bojador. Hanno the Carthaginian reached Cape Palmas about 500 B.C. and saw the bush fires, still lit every year by African villagers to clean the ground and drive game. But, till the age of print and reference libraries, discoveries were soon lost. Everything had to be refound, re-explored, restated a thousand times. Between Hanno and Henry the Navigator, in 1415, Europe knew nothing of Africa behind the deserts. It is said that some Dieppe sailors made an earlier landfall on the Guinea Coast and set up a trade. It is very likely. Ships of every country, carried on the south-west winds, are likely to have skirted that coast and landed for provisions or goods. But they left no records, no maps. The Portuguese left both, without dispute. Prince Henry, when he landed at Ceuta in 1415, heard talk of gold across the Sahara and in 1430, against the bitter opposition of those who said that everyone who sailed south would turn black, sent his first expedition to Guinea. The Portuguese bought there a few slaves, the first of the trade, and, what pleased them more, gold-dust. From this they named the country Gold Coast. They opened mines, and when they built their first fort, in 1482, it was called Elmina or The Mine.

They claimed the land by that odd right called "of discovery," and by legal right. Pope Martin V granted to them all they cared to take of Africa not already seized by other Christians. Thus all sailors of other nations who dared to visit the coast risked the fate of pirates. The first English expedition,

planned by a Captain Baker in 1481, was actually stopped by Edward IV on complaint of the Portuguese King.

To landmen the world consists of nations surrounded by a general water; to sailors it is different seas bounded by a common earth. Seamen distinguish Atlantic and Pacific by their several natures, but do not find a notable difference between the rocks and sand of any continent. They understand national rights to the seaboard as hardly as landmen understand maritime law in mid-ocean. Seamen were the first internationalists and sea empires the first federations. The Pope's edict was often broken and the Portuguese custom was to fire on all strangers within reach of their guns. So they remained masters of as much as they could overlook and defend, and wandering tramp ships of those days picked up their cargoes out of sight.

The first Englishman who joined this African contraband trade was William Hawkins, father of the great Sir John, the Armada captain. To quote from Hakluyt: "Old Mr. William Hawkins of Plimmouth, a man for his wisdome valure experience and skill in sea causes much esteemed and beloved of King Henry 8, not contented with the short voyages then commonly made to the known coasts of Europe, armed a tall and goodly shippe of his own of 250 tunnes, called the Paule of Plimmouth, and made 3 voyages to Brasil."

Hawkins touched on the way at "the river Sestos in Guinea where he traffiqued with the negroes and took of them elephant teeth." * This was in 1530.

But Hawkins called at Guinea, under the Portuguese guns, only as a man going to his office pauses at a stall to buy a punnet of fruit. His voyage is rightly listed by Hakluyt as a voyage to Brazil. The first English voyage express to Guinea was that of Wyndham, with the "Lion" and the "Primrose," in 1554. It was a disaster. Wyndham, a passionate, stupid man, fought with his guide, a Portuguese, and insisted on going into

* Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations . . . of the English Nation*, Vol. IV, 1599.

the Benin River at the worst season. Here he died of fever with two-thirds of his crews. "Having sanke one of their ships, they departed and of seven score men, scarce forty returned to Plymouth of whom also many died."

But this remnant brought back 150 pounds of gold-dust, and so their story did not chill courage but only raised hopes. For African gold at that time had even stronger attractions than the Australian diggings and the Klondike in the last century. Gold was a magic word and idea. Not many years ago a Nigerian chief asked to touch my ring, a gold signet ring. I put it into his palm, and, gazing at it with a look of wonderment, he said at once: "What heaviness! It draws down the hand."

It was such magic and romantic ideas of gold, of strange races, beasts and seas, which drew the pioneers, and still draws them, to Africa.

The pioneers who risked their lives must be distinguished from those who risked their money. But not too invidiously, for the one needed the other. African enterprise has always been expensive as well as dangerous. Hawkins had his backers who, as it was said, "set him forth." The word adventurer has changed its meaning. In the sixteenth century it meant speculator. But the gambler has the merit of courage, and without merchant adventurers there would have been no Greek or Dutch or British empires: empires not of conquest but of intercourse and diffusion.

The early captains were also the earliest explorers. John Lok, sailing in 1554, tells us of the Gold Coast: "The Princes and Noblemen pounce and rase their skins in divers figures, like branched damask." That is to say, they had cut their skins in patterns as they do to-day, "and many of them, as it were, laden with collars, bracelets, hoopes and Chaines, of gold, copper and ivory." Lok was also charmed by the idea and sight of gold.

But Lok, besides the romantic curiosity and the romantic gold-love of all these early men, had advice for the trader

which, obvious to him, has not been obvious to stay-at-homes, either critics or capitalists. "Whoever would deal with them," he writes of the negroes, "must behave civilly, for they will not traffique if they be ill used."

African historians, I think, have not always seen the meaning and application of this remark. It throws upon much colonial history one of those sidelights which give the detail without which history is as flat and deceitful as a political poster. Traders, as distinct from conquerors, must be on good terms with their customers. Thus the smallest trading post becomes, merely by force of necessity, a nexus of personal ties which, of themselves, breed obligations on both sides.

This is shown as early as 1620 by Captain Richard Jobson, who sailed more than 200 miles up the Gambia River in search of a famous African trader, Buckor Sano. He writes: "There is, as it were, a certaine combination made betwixt the people above and us, never to faile them of a yearely trade, which if in our parte it should be neglected, may justly cause them to take a great distruste of our fidelities, in regarde we are nowe the first white people they have seen," and he recommends to Englishmen "The Auncient and free commerce, that uniteth nations, wherein our especiall animation is, the certaine knowledge we have gained in discovering the Golden Trade of the Moores in Barbary, which was the first encourager of this businesse." *

In history books, which must be full of dates and institutions, it is easy to lose sight of history itself which is made by men, all singular, all full of their private creeds and passions. We read of companies and governments, but the chief interest of West Africa lies in the men who made it; adventurers and poets of action; at their worst very close to pirates, at their best not far from monomaniacs, but always free and independent. For this reason they were extremely hard to manage by any kind of government. It is comic or tragic, as you like, to see, century after century, the efforts of home governments

* *The Golden Trade*, by Richard Jobson, gentleman, 1623.

—that is, prudent men of affairs—to restrain or control these other kinds of men, far from offices and far from prudence.

First Chartered Company, 1618

We have said that the adventurous seaman was lucky to find in England the adventurous merchant accustomed by long tradition to risk capital in foreign voyages. But the African trade needed backers even more than the Baltic or the Levantine. These seas had harbours open to trade. On the Guinea Coast there were few safe anchorages and no free harbours. The freebooter captain who anchored opposite some native settlement and did his barter on the strand, had the advantage, like the modern tramp, in being able to seek cargo where it was to be found. He needed only local agents among the natives to recommend him as a safe man. But he had also great disadvantages on the African coast, beaten night and day by those huge Atlantic rollers which, even from 5,000 feet up in the air, can be seen to-day like an everlasting fringe of waving lace to the bright ochre beaches. He had to send his boats through the surf, and chance the weather and the Portuguese guardships till they came back. And this might mean a long wait if his African agents were away from home, or had no gold, peppers, ivory or slaves ready for him.

Slaves especially needed a shore establishment, a barracoon, in which they could be gathered and fed until a ship came. But stations required a staff and, because of the Portuguese and the pirates, a fort. They were expensive beyond the reach of private firms, without some warrant of special profit. In those days this warrant was given by a monopoly secured by a charter from the Crown. There were already chartered companies holding monopolies for the Baltic or Eastland trade, the Russian or Muscovy trade, and the Levant.

In 1618 a group of London traders applied for and was given a charter for the Guinea trade. It undertook to build stations and forts in exchange for a monopoly. The name of

this first company was The Governor and Company of Adventurers of London trading to Gynney and Bynney, and it built the first British forts in Africa at Fort James, on an island in the Gambia River, on Bunce or Bence's Island, in the Sierra Leone River, and at Cormantine, on the Gold Coast. It was this company which sent out, in 1620, that famous Richard Jobson whose book is an English classic.

This company and its successor, the African Company, were quickly ruined, by bootleggers stealing their trade, and by the Dutch who were now all-conquering on those seas. When the Dutch took Elmina from the Portuguese in 1637, they remained masters of the Coast, and defied all comers.

The Slave Trade

The coastal trade had now a value beyond gold, pepper or ivory. It was turning more and more to slaves.

The slave trade, like slaving itself, was of course an established commerce. It has existed from pre-history, and, what seems strange to us, records a first step in civilization. For at one time men had exterminated their enemies. It was an innovation, due perhaps to the change from hunting and herding to agriculture, to spare lives to workers. Prisoners of war were kept or sold, throughout the ancient world. Every African chief caught slaves and kept slaves; and even while the Portuguese and French and British captains were taking Africans in slavery, thousands of Portuguese, French and British citizens were slaves to the Moors and the Turks. Every sailor ran the risk of being caught by some Algerian pirate and sent into slavery. As late as 1816 there were over 3,000 white slaves in North Africa, found there and freed by Lord Exmouth, who, with five line-of-battle ships, attacked the great fortress of Algiers from the sea and blew it to pieces.

It should be noticed that in the worst times the European nations, though they made galley slaves of their criminals, did not sell them. This was no alleviation of their fate. Many a

white slave in Turkey or Barbary had a better life than the naked convicts or war prisoners in Spanish and Venetian galleys. But it acknowledged a difference between man-goods and other goods ; and every such distinction of truth, however slight, has in it a seed of liberation. It is a beachhead for the invasion of justice and freedom. As a commodity, the Portuguese bought slaves, but not many, because the demand was small. Negroes did not stand well the climate even of Portugal. Sir John Hawkins, indeed, "being assured that negroes were very good merchandize in Hispaniola, communicated with his worshipfull friendes of London," got a concession from the Crown for an exclusive trade, and took slaves from Sierra Leone.* This was in 1562. But the British slave trade was small in the sixteenth century.

Even in 1620, when Richard Jobson's African friend Buckor Sano, up the Gambia River, brought to him "certain younge black women who had white stringes across their bodies, which he told me were slaves, brought for me to buy," he answered that "we were a people who did not deale in such commodities, neither did we buy or sell any that had our own shapes."

Jobson must have heard of Hawkins' trade. He spoke, that is, like many who claim a special glory for their people, rather what he wished than what he knew. Yet it was true that he did not want slaves ; he went to Gambia for gold. His mind was all on the golden trade.

But in the same year, 1620, a Dutch ship called at Virginia and sold slaves, the first negro slaves in America, to the tobacco planters ; and the settlement of Barbados in 1628 greatly raised the demand. It was supplied at first chiefly by the Dutch, French and Portuguese, for the first English company was ruined by their competition and the second by the civil wars. It was not till the Restoration and the Dutch peace that the British slave trade began to grow.

* Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations . . . of the English Nation*, Vol. IV, 1599.

First Committee for Colonial Affairs, 1660

Charles II had seen at work in France the most modern and efficient government of that day. He knew the value of organization, of the specialized government department; and in 1660 he appointed a committee for colonial business. It had no State Secretary. It was merely a committee of the Privy Council that had to act through the Secretary of State for the Southern Department. But it was the first organ of government with an exclusive and, what is more important, a continuous mind for colonial affairs.

Charles warmly supported the new African company, that of the Royal Adventurers trading to Africa founded in 1662, and sent a royal ship down the West Coast, which harried the Dutch so thoroughly that it was called the beginner of the Dutch wars. And Van Ruyter, the Dutch admiral who destroyed every British fort in Africa except Cape Coast Castle, soon broke the new company.

But by the Treaty of Breda the British right to Cape Coast Castle was allowed. It has been British ever since. And in 1672 Charles and his brother James chartered a new company, the Royal Company, which built six new forts. It shipped as much as £70,000 worth of woollens in a year, and imported redwood, ivory, pepper and gold-dust. Both these companies of Charles II bought gold; and it was from this gold that guineas were first coined, stamped with the elephant mark of the trade and named after the Coast. Both also flourished upon the slave trade to the plantations, and in 1715, after the French-Spanish war, the Royal Company took a share in the Spanish slave trade under the contract known as the Assiento. It undertook to export yearly 4,800 slaves to Spanish America. For this reason it is often called the Assiento Company.

Yet it failed. The Whig and Liberal revolutionaries of 1688, detesting all monopolies, would not renew its exclusive rights, and it could not compete with the free traders, as it

called them—small men with no overhead expenses, who came in rotten ships, sometimes with pirate crews, and often kid-napped their slaves.

The company, as it pointed out in 1749 when, already bankrupt, it asked Parliament for relief, could not fight such methods. It had to be on good terms with the natives who supplied its trade and its provisions. It had to keep up its forts.

The forts were not defensive against Guinea natives, who freely complained if they were deserted or left short of goods. They were aimed at the Dutch and the French. France, under the old autocratic monarchy as well as the Empire, was always a formidable enemy. It was not till the nineteenth century, in the reign of Louis Philippe and Napoleon III, that she began her great conquests in Africa, but already, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, she was preparing the way for that advance by her consistent and aggressive policy. British merchants already complained that they could not get the same support as did the French from their own government.

2. The Old Imperialism in Africa

IT WAS TRUE that the British Government never gave traders in West Africa the same encouragement as did the French. The old France had a centralized, autocratic government, accustomed to the idea of conquest wherever it suited her. British Governments, from the time even of Elizabeth, rarely looked outwards, but inwards; they did not seek conquest and prestige abroad, but their own security and popularity at home.

This was not from any special virtue in rulers or peoples, but because the people, protestant and insular, were used to criticizing and opposing authority, and because the rulers were not strong or rich enough to be tyrants.

The map of North-West Africa is a concise record of two different imperial histories, French and British. French West Africa is a great single territory under one central government. The British Colonies, scattered here and there along the coast, are islands, trading settlements, cut off from each other and from the interior.

English government of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may not seem to us very democratic, but it had some of the virtues and faults which mark all real democracy. It was representative of different groups and parties in the country and it responded, though crudely, to their pressure. So that the head of the State, at any time, was not an autocrat but a party leader who had to please his party, and who had to give place to any other party leader strong enough to turn him out.

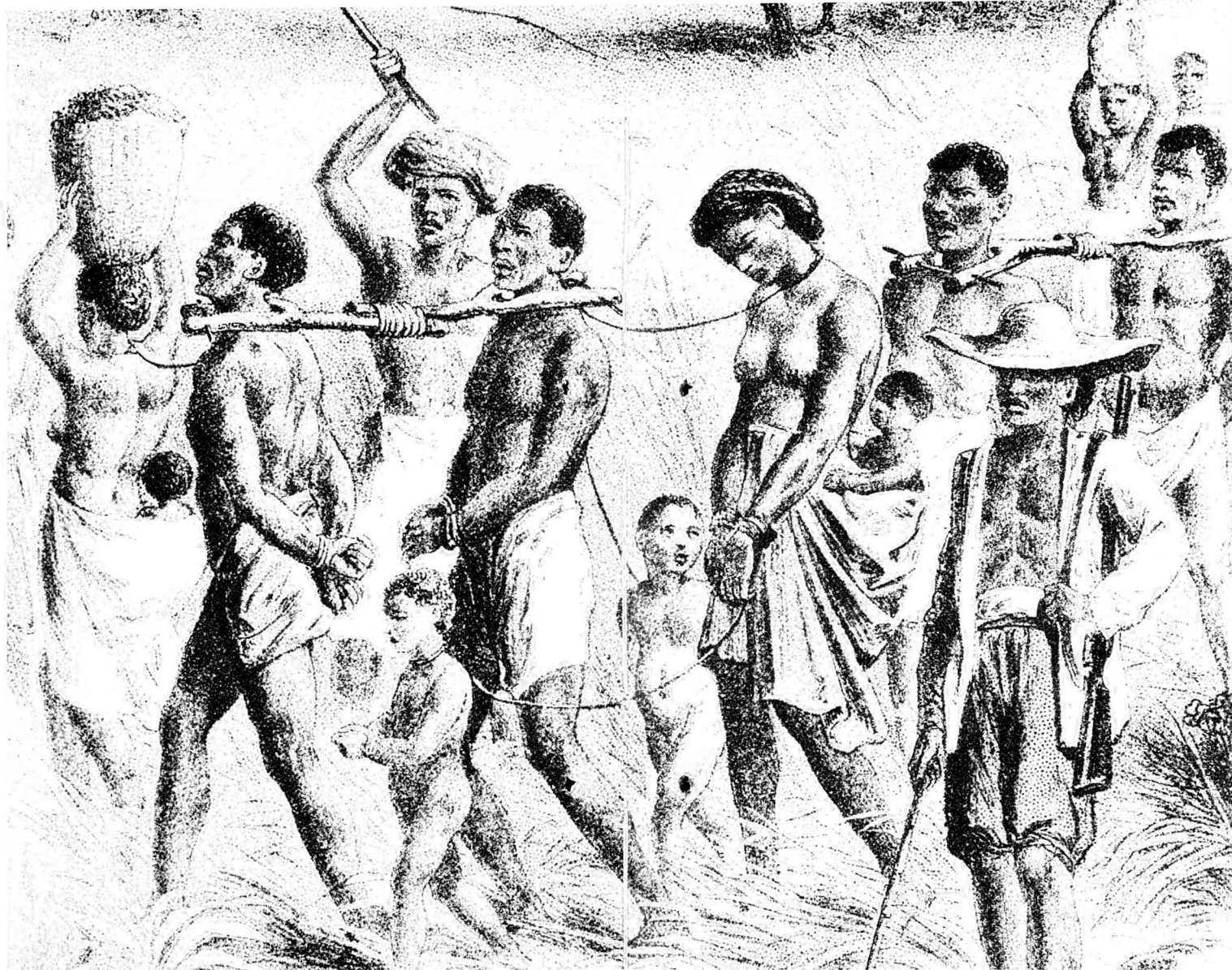
That democracy, in short, like all democracy, had the merit of choosing leaders whose power was based on some measure of popular consent. Its history was that of little revolutions, with less bloodshed.

Such a government combines the merits of revolution, energy, hope, and change, with the stability of a business firm which contrives always to have a popular line. It has also the faults of its quality. It cannot pledge the future, for that may belong to other rulers with other ideas. This again is not wholly a misfortune. It leaves the future free, and if that freedom carries with it uncertainty and conflict, so does all freedom, all growth, all adjustment.

The complaint therefore against British government, repeated every century, that it has never formed a consistent policy for the Colonies, has some truth, but not so much as many suppose. The facts are more interesting. Policy in a democratic government is reviewed by each new party in

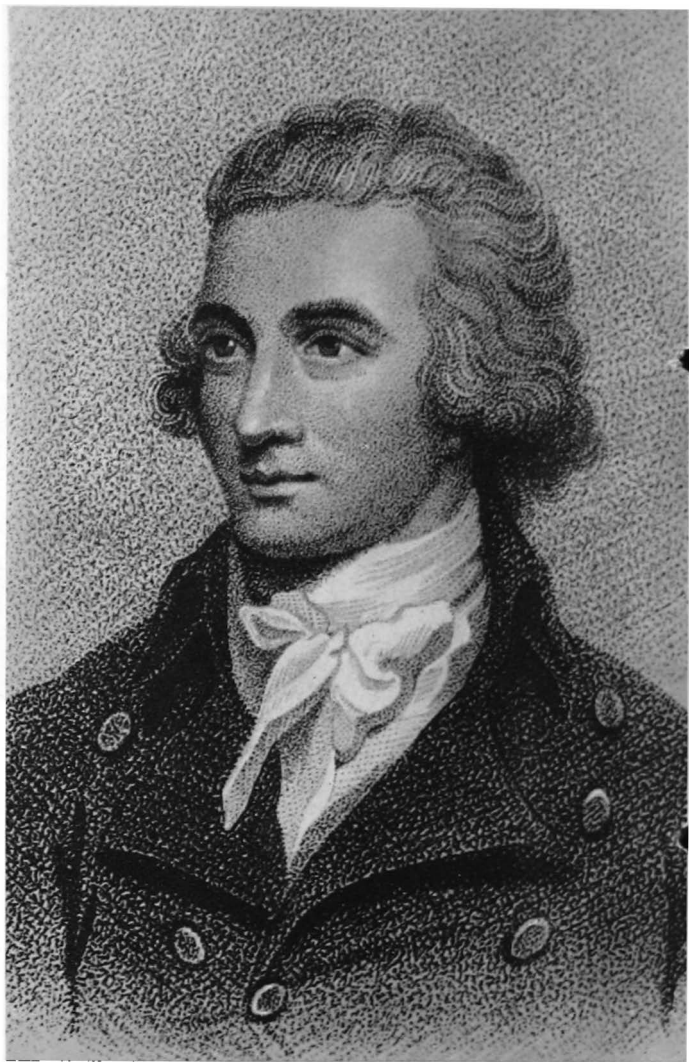


TRADE WAR. The seventeenth century was a turbulent time of European rivalry for trade with West Africa. Strong-points in that struggle were Cape Coast Castle, *top*, and Elmina Castle, *bottom*. From such early forts traders exported redwood, ivory, pepper, and gold-dust.



A TRADE RICHER THAN GOLD OR IVORY
Africa. Native families were seized in their
in thousands as slaves to the Americas. In

was developed by the first adventurers in West
villages, roped together like cattle, and shipped
1807 the British abolished this human traffic.



MUNGO PARK, Father of West African exploration, who lost his life while investigating the course of the Niger River. Not one of his party of 39 returned. Disease killed some, others were murdered, Park himself was drowned.

power ; but it may be, and often is, accepted and continued by the new party. Its consistency hangs therefore upon some degree of common belief and purpose in all the parties. Tory and Whig, for instance, might quarrel about religious toleration, but they both supported the Established Church. Their differences, therefore, never produced such violent changes of policy as we see in eighteenth-century France, when the revolutionary party tried to abolish Christianity.

Colonial policy, as we shall see, has suffered at different times from both deadlock of opinion and sudden changes of policy. But it did not do so in the eighteenth century. Successive home governments had almost the same views on Africa. They wanted a share of African trade, but even for that they did not choose to risk valuable lives or much money. And they had no wish for colonies on the unhealthy West African coasts.

End of the Assiento Company, 1749

The appeal of the Royal African, or Assiento, Company in 1749 opens a good picture of the workings of democratic government at that time, in face of a colonial question.

First, on the bad side, Governments had utterly neglected the company and the merchants, until they were ruined. The votes to be had by giving them help were not so many as those to be lost by a new charge on taxes. But now that the company was bankrupt numerous groups of citizens, many with votes and influence on votes, started up and exclaimed : " What is going to happen to our African trade without forts and stores and barracoons ? " The free traders who had helped to ruin the company now shouted for defence against the French, for safe harbours. The planters in America, and their friends in England, asked where and how they were to get good and cheap slaves without a company. And the Government saw that it must take action.

But since the different parties, though strongly divided in political and economic views, were not opposed on any funda-

mental moral or religious ground like, for instance, the Imperialists and the Little Englanders of the nineteenth-hundreds, they were persuaded to accept a common policy. And the policy became that of successive Governments for the next forty years.

There was as yet no Colonial Secretary. But the old committee of the Privy Council had given birth in 1695 to the Board of Trade and Plantations, which was now asked by Parliament to look into the mass of complaints and proposals brought before it.

I relate these proposals and their solutions because once more, at a time when the chief parties enjoy a measure of agreement on general principles, we have proposals for corporations which are neither State-owned nor privately owned, but seek to marry State responsibility with private energy and ambition. The experiment of 1749 may be worth modern study.

Experiment in State Partnership : Merchants Company, 1750

The Board of Trade and Plantations rendered down the schemes put before it to three, which it then, with its expert advice, sent back to Parliament. They were :

1. By the Royal African Company, the planters and some London merchants, for a new Joint Stock Company, with monopoly.

2. By some Bristol merchants, for an open, regulated company, that is, a company with settled establishments on the coast, but no monopoly. The Bristol merchants were not so rich as the Londoners.

3. By Liverpool merchants, for Government to take over the forts and put them under a committee of nine merchants.

All schemes required, of course, a subsidy.

Parliament, after debate, combined elements from the last two schemes. It set up a regulated company open to all British traders, and vested in it the whole property of the Royal

African Company. The company was to be ruled by a committee of nine elected from the freemen of the company, that is to say, from all traders who, having paid a sum of 40s., were entitled to trade from the company's harbours and forts. The company was not allowed to put any restraint upon trade, and it was not allowed to engage in trade on its own account, except with its fees which, of course, were not enough for its expenses. It received a subsidy of £10,000 a year, for which it was obliged to make annual account to the Treasury and annual appeal to Parliament, when its conduct came under review. Its forts and harbours were subject to inspection by any captain of the Royal Navy, who could then report direct to the Admiralty. Finally, no committeeman could be elected for more than three years running, and the Board could discharge any one of them for misconduct.

This new corporation was named The Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, and its charter was from Port Sallee in South Barbary to the Cape of Good Hope—about 7,000 miles of coast.* In practice it took over from its predecessor one fort on the Gambia and eight more, in a ruinous condition, on the Gold Coast and Slave Coast. Bunce Island at Sierra Leone had been abandoned in 1728. Cape Coast Castle remained the head station.

This odd plan worked apparently as much to general satisfaction as could have been obtained by any plan. The company was attacked, but never with success. Burke himself defended it, in 1772, on a charge of increasing the price of slaves and packing its committee. His defence, it is true, was, in short form: "any change would be for the worse, especially if it gave more power to Government. For that would mean more jobbery."

In fact, the appointment of the first Colonial Secretary in 1768 to sit as President of the old Board of Trade and Plantations, and the abolition of the Board itself in 1782, seem to

* An excellent book on this period is *The British West African Settlements, 1750-1821*, by E. C. Martin. Longmans Green, 1927.

have been changes for the worse. And the explanation given, which should be noticed by those who plan modern development companies on similar lines, is that the West Coast offered little patronage. There were not good enough jobs in the company to make it worth encouragement by a Minister of State. So that West Africa, under a Colonial Secretary, was more neglected even than before under the Board.

Such light as we have upon these lonely stations, perched on the beach between the everlasting pounding of the Atlantic and the salt swamps or jungles of a continent wider even than the Atlantic and much less known, show well why West African jobs were not good value for votes. We read of garrisons three parts made up of convicts, condemned to serve on the coast and treated often worse than slaves, because of less value ; of sickness which carried off half the station in a week.

Thomas Thompson, a missionary who left his comfortable living at Christ's College, Cambridge, to serve Christ, went first to the slaves of America and then, in 1751, to the West Coast. His diary records the completeness of his success and failure ; a warm and anxious welcome from some, dying or repentant, who needed to hear an English prayer ; the utter indifference of most ; the polite boredom of the Africans. In a five years' mission he converted fewer than a dozen, of whom, before his health broke, he sent three to be educated at home. One of these, Philip Quaque, son of a chief at Cape Coast Castle, was afterwards ordained in the Church of England and went back to the West Coast in 1769. He ministered there till he died in 1816, and baptised both black and white. But again, not many. And he complained to the company that the Europeans kept coloured mistresses and did not come to church, that some were violently against the church.

Tropical Africa, in short, then as now, tended to gather to itself men of independent character, good or bad. But there were prizes, then as now, for the strong, the bold and the lucky. William Mutter, who joined as surgeon's mate in 1752, was Governor of Cape Coast Castle by 1763. The fearful

death rate cleared the way for those who had the talent to keep alive and the nerve to keep sane. The company highly valued this attraction among the few it could offer. It made a strict rule that promotion should be by seniority. Also it allowed and encouraged private trade, as many companies do still in this century. So that a man could invest his pay in goods, and do barter for gold and pepper.

The fourth African Company lasted longer than all its predecessors, because the profitable slave trade continued to grow. By the end of the century it was presiding over an annual export of about 40,000 African men and women in their prime, out of a total Atlantic trade of about 80,000.

I say the company presided over this traffic, because it must be remembered that it was not in the first place a trading company. Its income was in dues from traders. Its responsibility for the trade was shared with the merchants, and each side felt it the less.

The cruelties of that trade have often been described. But of all stories the one that brings it most home to me is that of the captain who threatened the slave women on his orlop deck with the whip if they did not stop singing, for, as he complained, "the dolefulness of their songs will drive me mad."*

Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1807

Slavery should be distinguished from the slave trade, because many have defended one in the name of the other. Slavery has often been so mild that slaves refuse freedom, and domestic slavery has sometimes been benevolent. As lately as 1919, when I offered freedom to some African slaves, they refused it. They preferred to stay in their master's family.

But the slave trade has always been an abomination, especially in Africa where the Arab raiders, as late as this present

* *History of the Rise, Progress and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade by the British Parliament*, by Thomas Clarkson. London, 1839.

century, would seize a whole town, murder the old and the babies, castrate the young boys, of whom eighty per cent. died, and drive the remnant across country with such indifferent cruelty that half would die on the road. To the Mohammedans African pagans were lower than the beasts.

The original supply of slaves in Africa, as elsewhere, was from war captives. Francis Moore, factor at Fort James in 1730, describes their arrival "tied at the neck by leather thongs." But though war was the immediate source of slaves, as old as settled civilization itself, when the demand for workers for the plantations grew, local chiefs began to raid for slaves and to make slavery the punishment for very small offences. And even in those hard centuries, when, to the most civilized, pain and injustice were familiar acquaintances, when half the number of all children born died young, when the smallest operation was complicated torture ending usually in a miserable death, when prisons, even for debt, were black holes of filth and misery, the slave trade moved consciences and brought protests.

Nothing is more strange and interesting than the movements of the conscience and its impact upon the ideas and conventions in which men live and strive. Slavery and the slave trade were attacked from very early times. Plato rejected it for Greek, by Greek. The Christians and Christian fathers, for the most part, made it a sin. But slavery still continued, without a check, for century after century.

Slave dealers and owners were justified in thinking that it would go on for ever. Yet its abolition, within the British Empire, was completed in little more than a single generation.

In 1767, Granville Sharp, a man of strong Evangelical principle, brought an action against a slave owner who had imported a slave into England. He fought the case persistently until, in 1772, on appeal to Lord Mansfield, he got a judgment that no man in Great Britain could be a slave. As soon, therefore, as a slave set foot in Britain he became free. This freed slaves in Britain itself.

In 1785, at Cambridge, the Vice-Chancellor gave as subject for a prize essay in Latin prose, "Is it right to make slaves against their will?" Thomas Clarkson, aged 25, of St. John's College, won the prize, and the Master of St. John's advised him to publish the essay. He therefore published a translation, which brought him into acquaintance with Sharp, and soon afterwards Sharp, Clarkson, William Wilberforce and some others founded the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Clarkson gave his whole life to the cause.

These were energetic men, and they were soon joined by others as remarkable—Josiah Wedgwood, Zachary Macaulay, father of Lord Macaulay, and Henry Brougham. They brought not only vigour to their case, but experience in propaganda. They introduced Bill after Bill, and harried successive Governments until, in 1807, the trade was abolished in all British territories.

One point should be noticed, especially in these days of scientific positivism. It is sometimes said that the objection to slavery was logical, based on a mathematical idea of equality. This is not so. The statement that one man X equals another man Y is not a truism, nor even demonstrably true. It means only that, in the opinion of some people, X ought to be equal with Y before the law; and equal in opportunity to use his powers and to satisfy his ambitions. And this is not a truism. It is not obvious in logic, or fact. It is a moral statement, a creed, a belief, a conviction often held more strongly by free and well-off people than by the oppressed themselves. In short, the slaves do not owe their freedom to rationalism, but to a group of evangelicals and Quakers with strong leanings to theoretic anarchism.

This pressure group, as we should call it now, deserved all its fame. It owed much to a change in public feeling, long prepared by Locke, by Rousseau, and by almost all the writers of the century, but without its action the slave trade might have lasted another fifty years.

The Abolitionists, having stopped the British trade, set

about stopping the world trade—with the same success, arising from the same cause, a prepared public opinion. The trading countries, not indeed at once or all together, found themselves obliged to yield to public feeling.

The U.S.A. prohibited importation of slaves in 1807; the Congress of Vienna, in 1814, on the strong representations of Castlereagh, agreed that a general abolition was desirable; and in 1820 Great Britain paid £400,000 to Spain, in 1830 £300,000 to Portugal, as compensation for their giving up the trade.

Emancipation of slaves followed naturally upon the abolition of the trade. It had the same motive. It faced the same opposition from planters. It was achieved by the same means, continued agitation and appeals to Parliament, which passed the Act in 1833. £20,000,000 was paid in compensation to the owners.

The emancipation could not free the slaves in an Africa still under its own chiefs. But it made a general emancipation certain in the course of time. It also had one very important effect on the emancipators. It gave to national action a moral dignity, very rare in history, but enormously valuable to any people and any Government. Governments may perhaps think little of it, and trouble very little about it. If so, they are stupid. A great cause, in which a whole people can feel themselves honoured, is the prime secret of national unity and vigour.

Foundation of Sierra Leone, 1787

Lord Mansfield's ruling in 1772, that no man in Great Britain could be a slave, set free many negroes, who fell into misery. To these destitute poor were added, at the end of the American Revolution, those negroes who had fought for Britain and dared not remain in the U.S.A. at the mercy of the victorious planters. The British Government sent some of these loyalists to Nova Scotia, some to the Bahamas. But there also they were poverty-stricken and dissatisfied.

At this time, some philanthropists, including Granville Sharp, the Abolitionist, proposed a settlement in Africa for "free blacks and people of colour." This was in 1786, nearly fifty years before the abolition of slavery, and twenty before the abolition of the slave trade. A free settlement in slave-trading Africa was therefore a new and bold suggestion.

The Government, embarrassed by its duty to the discharged soldiers, fell in with the plan, offered transport and a ship, and Sierra Leone was chosen as the place of settlement. The first settlers sent out were four hundred negroes, and sixty whites, chiefly London prostitutes. They arrived at the Coast in May, 1787, and the naval captain in charge then bought from a native chief, Nainbanna, twenty square miles between the Rivers Sherbro and Sierra Leone.

It is often thought that this land was the first West African territory owned by the British Crown and the parent of the first colony. This is not the fact. For a few years, from 1763 to 1783, the Island of Gorée, and Fort St. Louis in the Senegal River, captured from the French in the Seven Years' War, were joined with old Fort James on the Gambia and made into a Crown colony, Senegambia, with a government on the American colonial model. But it did not last long. Senegal was given back to the French by the Treaty of Versailles in 1783; Senegambia was abolished, and the Gambia was returned to the Merchants Company, as the cheapest means of administration.

Senegambia has no importance except in date. Sierra Leone has much importance, both in its idea and its consequences.

The Government, wanting as little responsibility as possible for this strange thing that circumstances had forced upon it, a free settlement on the African mainland, left administration to Sharp, who designed a plan based on what he called the ancient English Frank-pledge. By this, roughly speaking, all males from 16 to 60 possessing their own arms acted as police and elected their own justices. There was no Governor.

But the first settlement was already in dissolution. Many

settlers, Africans unaccustomed to Africa, died ; others, to Sharp's surprise and anger, went off to get good jobs in the slave business. Sharp, unable to compete with the attractions of slavery, formed a company, to engage "in honourable trade."

A thousand new settlers arrived from Nova Scotia at the same time, a new administration was set up under the company directors, and, in 1792, Freetown was laid out.

The company governors, who included Zachary Macaulay, had still a very difficult charge. In 1794 the French destroyed their capital. In 1808 white agitators, raising the cry of negro nationalism, came out in rebellion. Troops arrived only just in time to save Governor Macaulay and his staff.

In the same year the company went bankrupt, and the Crown found itself once more responsible for a colony on the West Coast, and, what is historically more important, one that was difficult to get rid of. For its obligations to the settlers were recorded in the very name of Freetown.

But a few months before, in 1807, the slave trade had been abolished, and this now caused, along the West Coast, one of those sudden and complete changes of policy which, as you prefer flexibility or consistency, are either the chief virtue or chief fault of democratic government. The Abolitionists represented a powerful party with great command of votes. And the Government, which had once, at the demand of planters and merchants, set up a company to encourage the slave trade, was now even more eager to destroy that trade. This was already proving to be difficult. British merchants were forbidden to carry slaves. But Portuguese, Spaniards, Dutch and German, could still legally engage in it, and smugglers, including British and American, were extremely active.

All ships carrying slaves to the U.S.A. or to British plantations were subject to capture, but it was not easy to catch them.

Other Powers had condemned the trade ; Denmark had abolished it. But Britain and the U.S.A. were beginning to

see that putting down the traffic would have to be undertaken by their own Fleets ; in practice, since the British Fleet was much the larger, chiefly by British warships.

The Home Government therefore passed almost at a single step from regretting the burden of the West African settlement, now without economic value as a slave market, to congratulating itself on possessing some stations on the coast from which its frigates and sloops could hunt down the slavers.

As Freetown had then the only sheltered anchorage, it was made the naval headquarters. The Merchants Company lingered on for a few years. But it could not live without the slave trade. And in 1821 it was at last wound up. Its property and buildings on the coast came, by charter, to the Crown, which, not knowing what else to do with them, placed them under the Governor of Sierra Leone.

Foundation of the Gold Coast, 1843

The Gold Coast stations were not yet abandoned. They were useful still to traders, African and British. But in 1826 war broke out between the Fanti tribes on the coast and the rising empire of Ashanti in the hinterland. The Fantis, old friends of the company men, called for help, and Sir Charles McCarthy, Governor of Sierra Leone, and therefore now responsible for the stations and their local allies, came down with his small local forces. He was defeated and killed. The Ashanti chiefs cut off his head and carried it away with them. His skull became the royal drinking-cup.

The Home Government then sent out troops, and in 1826 won a local victory. But it was disgusted by this unexpected and expensive war. It resolved to abandon the forts, which, so long as they remained, would invite the Fanti to seek British protection.

Again the merchants protested. They offered to take responsibility for forts and Fantis. And again the Government, under various pressures, handed over the Gold Coast stations

to a committee of merchants, with a small subsidy of £4,000 a year.

These merchants, like so many of their forerunners and successors, now succeeded in finding a good man to serve them, George Maclean. He was not a trader, but a soldier, a member of the Royal Colonials, one of those colonial corps which, down to the time of Lugard, have always attracted young men of enterprise and ambition. Maclean was the true founder of the Gold Coast as it is to-day. With 120 African soldiers, and his own extraordinary prestige, he pacified the hinterland and made a treaty in 1831 with the Ashanti, which secured some independence and peace for the oppressed Fantis. Maclean's triumph ended in tragedy. He was attacked in Britain by those same groups of anarchist evangelicals, who, by a sardonic but perhaps a necessary consequence of their creed, have brought about not only the great glories of freedom, such as the abolition of the slave trade, but many of its disasters and oppressions, in refusing defence of liberties already established, or, as now, in attacking its pioneers.

For the same abstract idea of liberty which told them that all free action was good, tended also to assure them that all government was bad ; and all governors tyrants.

Anyone who wants to know what Africa was like before men like Maclean gave it law should read Mungo Park's *Travels*. Then they will know how, without justice, the mass of the people suffered their lives. Anarchy is the prime wretchedness of the poor and weak.

Maclean, with nothing but his own prestige and half a company of native levies, had brought peace and order, the beginnings of justice, to millions.

But he had made enemies of every local exploiter. He was accused at once of encroaching on native rights and protecting the slavers ; even of murdering his wife, a poetess then well known under the initials L. E. L. And all slanders were believed. Maclean was poor and far away, and he could not defend himself. Above all, he was a Governor.

Maclean was cleared at last by a Government Inquiry. But the Government dared not reinstate him. Neither could it desert the Fantis, now still more dependent on protection, without a scandal. So it again took over the coast in 1843, and made new treaties, in 1844, to confirm Maclean's understanding with the chiefs. To Maclean, since for fear of his enemies' influence at home they could not make him Governor, they gave a minor post as Judicial Assessor. He accepted it, with what feelings we do not know, and served in it for a few years until, in 1847, he died.

Then at last the Gold Coast chiefs and people had an opportunity to show, by mass demonstration, how great they held him, how deep was their gratitude. They gave him the funeral of an African king. Unluckily, like other heroes who have suffered the same injustice, Maclean could not see his vindication—his friends, since they did not know their own number, could bring fitting honour only to his coffin.

The Government now found itself with a new colony on the West Coast. But it did not want colonies. It did not know what to do with them. For since the Reform Bill, bringing new groups, especially the evangelicals, into power, British democracy was profoundly divided on fundamental principles. Possibly it could not have been worked at all if both sides had not been able to agree in one idea, that government's chief duty was to keep order as cheaply as possible, and let what were called economic laws have free swing. In fact all parties were agreed only upon the principle of *laissez faire*, which all parties now, with equal conviction, would reject and despise. And this principle could not deal with a dependent empire.

There had lately been a rebellion in Canada, and Lord Durham's report on Canada advised self-government for the whole territory. It was expected that Canada, like the U.S.A., would soon cut loose, and this idea exactly fitted the theory of *laissez faire*.

But Canada, it was believed, could look after itself. Colonies

on the African coast, which obviously could not do so, were therefore a puzzle. The ruling theory, on which alone British democracy was then able to work, found no place for them. The Government was forced to stay on the Gold Coast, but only as the best of several political evils. And it acted there with the greatest caution and economy. It wanted neither new annexations to offend the native-rights party, nor new expenses to annoy the taxpayer.

It escaped from the first difficulty by a Fanti Agreement, which made the protectorate requested by the Fanti, without calling it so. From the second it was partly rescued by the Gold Coast chiefs, who in 1858, being assembled by the Governor, voluntarily agreed to pay a poll tax towards the cost of the British administration. These two agreements with the Gold Coast tribes, by which they entered into voluntary contract with the British Government for the benefit of both parties, are important in the history of the Coast. But they did not, in the Government's mind, commit it to a permanent occupation. As we shall see, it was soon making a still more resolute attempt to avoid Imperial duty and trouble.

Lagos and the Oil Rivers, 1861

Lagos Island, in the Bight of Benin, had not been much used by British traders. It was too far away. It was not brought into the Empire by a trading company, nor, like Sierra Leone, as a settlement for freed slaves and discharged soldiers, but by the third cause which founded West Africa: by the Navy, upon its duty of suppressing the slave trade.

That is to say, as the merchant was zealous for his store and his native friends about the store; as the War Department was concerned for its discharged men; so the naval officer, seeking not only promotion but also occupation, eagerly hunted the slave trader. Lagos Island, occupied by runaways from the Kingdom of Benin, and governed by its own chiefs, was a nest of slavers. A King's Officer was sent to

put down the trade; the chief refused a treaty. The sailor landed, fought him and deposed him.

The Government then set up a new chief, and appointed a British Consul to make sure that the treaty was carried out.

At once traders and missionaries followed the Consul, who, since he had no powers, found himself in the same position as many a British official before him on the same coast: obliged to keep order and organize peace, without any authority but his own character, and an occasional call from the Navy. Also as before, in the Gambia and in Sierra Leone, his position became impossible and the Government was obliged to ask itself which it could do, with the least trouble and expense—go or stay. It decided to stay. The vigorous and reckless Palmerston, Prime Minister in 1861, took over Lagos and made it also a Crown Colony.

And while the abolitionist policy was bringing new responsibilities in Lagos, merchant adventurers, exactly like their Elizabethan and Georgian ancestors, were risking their lives and their capital in the Niger Delta behind and about Lagos, and therefore automatically creating new ties or troubles for the Government.

The attraction was no longer slaves, but palm oil, which was now becoming valuable in the European market. For this reason, the mouths of the Niger, not yet known to be those of the Niger, surrounded by the high rain forest in which the oil palm flourished, were called the Oil Rivers.

These pioneer traders of the Oil Rivers explored much of the Delta for themselves and made their own maps. But the interior of Africa was no longer a complete mystery. African exploration had begun some time before. In 1770, James Bruce went to Abyssinia and the Blue Nile. His stories were disbelieved, but excited all Europe. And in 1788 a group of British scholars and dilettanti formed an Association for the Exploration of Africa.

Thus a third element of the free spirit, curiosity, was added to those two others, ambition and restlessness, which had

already been at work in Africa. The Association, like the Merchant Adventurers, found plenty of brave and ambitious men in Britain ready to risk everything for the adventure.

In 1795 and again in 1805 it fitted out, by subscription from its members, the famous Mungo Park.

Park, on his latter journey, had Government permission to recruit an escort from the coast garrison. His plan was to march from the Gambia to the Niger, build a boat, and sail down to the Niger mouth. But of 39 in his party, all but eight died before he reached the Niger, and four more in the next few weeks. Park built a ship large enough for this party by joining two large dugouts together. Five Europeans, the guide, and three slaves bought by Park made up the crew. They were attacked many times, but each man had fifteen muskets ready loaded, and easily drove off all enemies until they reached the rapids at Bussa. Here they were attacked by the chief of Yauri, whose complaint was that Park had not sent him a present. Park had sent a present—one of his silver rings given as a present is still in Bussa—but it was not sent on to Yauri. Some subordinate chief, hearing that Park would not come back that way, kept it for himself. Yauri's men attacked the party at a narrow and dangerous rapid. They killed two slaves, and the boat, out of control, ran among the rocks. Park and the two other Europeans were drowned in trying to escape.

It was the African Association also which sent out Clapperton to Chad in 1827, and the Lander brothers, who explored the Lower Niger in 1830. Clapperton and Richard Lander both died in Africa, and of Africa.

Their work was taken up by McGregor Laird and a company of Liverpool merchants, which fitted out, in 1832, an expedition to continue Lander's exploration of the Lower Niger and, if possible, to establish the new oil trade in place of the slave trade.

Laird himself went with the expedition, which had no commercial success. Of forty-nine Europeans in this party, forty died. But Laird, like so many before him, was much more of



THE WITCH DOCTOR, symbol of the dark centuries of the African mind, wears a headdress of leather, sewn into little pouches, each of which contains a variety of secret charms.



GIRLS OF SIERRA LEONE in one of their elaborate tribal dances. They are dressed in vivid cotton skirts and hung with ropes of bells.



NIGERIAN BOY. He wears a fetich hat of carved and painted figures. The scars on his cheek are the distinctive marks of his tribe.

an explorer, an adventurer, an evangelist, than a trader. He continued to dream of opening Africa to civilized intercourse. In 1854 he approached the Government for a subsidy.

It was a good moment. The Government had sent out, in 1850, Heinrich Barth, one of the great African explorers, who spent four years in Hausaland, and wrote one of the classics of African travel. Livingstone, supported by the Royal Geographical Society, successor to the African Association, was now at work, and added to the new popular interest in African wonders and African cruelties a missionary zeal.

African exploration had become a popular cause, as well as scientific and mercantile speculation. Government was under pressure from many quarters to support it. It gave Laird a subsidy for his expedition, to be commanded by a naval doctor, Baikie.

Baikie made a record in African history that must not be forgotten. He gave his crew a daily dose of quinine; he took his ship 350 miles up the main Niger to Lokoja, and brought it back again without the loss of a man. That is, he proved in 1854 that a white man going to the Coast, and even into the terrible Bight, need not take odds of 5-1 against coming back alive.

The Government, impressed by this feat, agreed with Laird for a subsidy to keep a ship on the river for five years. Baikie set up a post at Lokoja, where he was Consul, and travelled through the northern lands as far as the great Mohammedan city of Kano, already described by Barth. But the whole enterprise depended on the characters of these two men, Laird and Baikie. When Laird died in 1861, and Baikie in 1864, the Consulship at Lokoja, and the post, were given up.

Yet private trade on the Oil Rivers was growing fast. This was the beginning of the *Earlies*, described by Aloysius Horn, where men of his kind, wanderers infected by a passion for the wilds and the solitudes, made their homes in stranded schooners, or moored hulks, along the lower river, and traded with the jungle tribes.

And these men too, like McCarthy, Maclean, Baikie, Laird, committed their country. For though one or other of them might be murdered without causing attention, their very presence was a factor in a political situation which was growing rapidly in complication.

This fact was not, however, noticed by a Home Government busy with the exciting and difficult politics of the day, the ambitions of Germany, the revolution in Italy, the complex instability of Napoleon III. It had little time for the obscure and troublesome problems of the West Coast. It called together, in 1865, a select committee, which advised, of West Africa, that the Government "should transfer to the native the administration of all government with a view to our ultimate withdrawal from all except Sierra Leone." This committee was appointed by the same Liberal Government of Palmerston and Russell which had occupied Lagos four years before. Again it is easy to accuse democracy of inconsistency, of having no colonial policy. In fact it had two or three, belonging to different persons or groups. The impulse for occupying Lagos came from the anti-slavery group, and from Palmerston himself, always ready to take positive action in the cause of freedom which he identified with British supremacy. The motion to withdraw came from the economy group, represented by Gladstone, combined with the anti-militarists. These differences may be food for satire, but they are the very stuff of integrity and freedom itself. Deadlock is the chief danger of free States. It may destroy them. Conflict on first principles held back social development in England throughout the century. Autocratic Germany surpassed it in organization. But authoritarian States have their own diseases still more fatal. Sooner or later, but inevitably, they rot and infect the world.

The Government, glad to escape from a dilemma, accepted the committee's findings and made a first step by placing the Gold Coast once more under the Governor of Sierra Leone. But the rest of its suggestions were found quite impracticable.

And the Colonial Office had hardly become aware of its commitments in the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Lagos, the Gold Coast, and the Oil Rivers, when it was once more drawn into an Ashanti war.

It had inherited from Governor Maclean his agreements with the Fantis, for protection, chiefly from the King of Ashanti. This King was the most powerful on the Coast. He had a large, well-organized army and a centralized Government. The tyrannies of that Government are too well known for description here.

The Ashanti had several times invaded the Gold Coast territories since the war of 1826. Now once again they were on the march.

The Dutch had decided to give up Elmina, their last fort on the coast, useless to them since the abolition of the slave trade. They sold it to Britain, who, in spite of the committee's advice, found it expedient to buy. But the King of Ashanti had an old claim to Elmina, and the Ashanti had always wanted access to a Coast station. They resented having to trade through the Fanti middlemen. They came down, therefore, with a large army, and besieged Elmina.

Unluckily for the Ashanti this was in 1874. Germany had lately defeated the Austrian Empire and the French Empire in campaigns of a few weeks each, and had declared its own unity at Versailles. Europe was startled. Every nation looked to its defences. In Britain, a new War Minister, Cardwell, set to work and carried through, between 1868 and 1874, a complete reform of the Army.

The British Government remembered old defeats on the Gold Coast. It dared not risk another, in the face of the new Europe. It sent out, under Garnet Wolseley, a force which was, for the first time in colonial history, properly equipped and trained. In six weeks it defeated the Ashanti and took their capital of Kumasi. After this the Gold Coast was again returned to colonial status with a Governor of its own. Thus, in spite of the committee of 1865, in 1874 Britain was more

firmly established, that is, more deeply entangled, in Africa than ever before. She was the sole European Power on the Gold Coast, with enormous prestige among the tribes which, for centuries, had trembled before the terrible empire of the Ashanti. She was settled at the Gambia, Sierra Leone and Lagos; and her independent traders were far up the River Niger. Her explorers, Clapperton, Barth and Baikie, had taken her name even to Kano, the capital of the Fulah emirs, and the trading capital of the Western Sudan.

Again it was shown that a first-class Power with any footing, even a single trading station, upon the coasts of one divided and confused, cannot avoid the growth of its connections, until it finds itself drawn into the politics of the continent. That is proved by the histories of India, China, South Africa, as well as the West Coast of Africa.

An expansionist policy had not been needed to entangle Britain in West Africa. But that policy, a true imperialism, now suddenly, from many different elements, precipitated itself, and finished in twenty-five years what had been hardly begun in three hundred before, the division of the whole African continent.

3. *The New Nationalist Imperialism, 1870*

LOUIS XIV, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon had all set out to make empires. But Napoleon III was beaten by a new imperialism, not so much dynastic and military, as popular. The nations of the past, made up of a despot, a small ruling class, a vast peasantry too poor and stupid to count in politics, had been replaced during fifty years of industry and education by a new kind of nation, in which a huge middle class of

traders, distributors, clerks and artisans exceeded the upper class in wealth and power.

This new nation set Governments of all kinds new problems of management. It was literate and had some historical imagination ; it was therefore at once more romantic than the old, more easily led by slogans, and more excitable, more difficult to drive by decree. The old cosmopolitan aristocracy, ruled by reason or interest, to which wars were a game, had gone for ever. The new dominant class had no common sense, but it had great technical ability ; its organized power was formidable.

Its first appearance on the battlefield in 1864 and 1870 shocked the world. For everyone felt, even if he did not clearly perceive, that world politics had turned a corner so sharp that history was no longer in one perspective with events. The future must be new and blind.

The brilliant little Ashanti campaign of Wolseley in 1874 was the first small effect on British colonial policy of this revolution. The second was more unexpected, and much more decisive.

Conflict of the Powers in Africa, 1876-1885

African exploration from east to west had now been almost completed by Livingstone, Speke, Baker and Stanley. The deep and cunning politician Leopold of Belgium, assessing the popular interest in Africa created by these discoveries, and the new force of mixed evangelical and scientific feeling, formed, in 1876, an International African Association, with himself as President. Belgium was weak, too weak to seize great colonies by power of arms. But Leopold, recognizing the new imperialist age, had devised a means of acquiring for himself, as King of the Belgians, at least a share of the African booty.

The Association was private. No Governments were officially represented among its members. But its expeditions, as

Leopold foresaw, gave it, and therefore himself as president, a first claim upon the territories explored. In 1878 he met Stanley, a British subject, and engaged him to open up the Congo Basin. Stanley made treaties with the Congo chiefs and when, in 1884, he was succeeded by another Englishman, de Winton, he was in fact Governor of an enormous territory.

He was Governor, by the letter, for the International Association; but in practice, for Leopold, the richest and by far the most powerful member of that Association, a reigning king.

Other nations of Europe, France, Portugal, Germany, and finally Britain, which had been, so to speak, holding their breath since 1870, and waiting for the immense dust of that campaign to blow away and discover to their eyes the new political landscape, now perceived that Africa was at least one part of it. And each considered, "If I do not secure my position, I shall be thrown out of it." That is to say, each separate Government feared a loss of prestige, now become so important in this new age of nationalist and romantic competition. As now the loss of a football match may ruin the manager of the club, so then a loss of face might bring down a Government or a Dynasty. The French quickly reached out towards Timbuktu and the Upper Niger. Their agent de Brazza competed with Stanley in the Congo. He took over the northern bank of the river. Portugal made great claims also to rights on the Congo. Italy took a port on the Red Sea. Germany occupied South-West, and in 1883 a German warship suddenly appeared on the West Coast. It seized Togoland and the Cameroons, which had long asked for British protection, and where British traders had been established for fifty years.

The British Government had sent a Consul to take over these territories, already in a British sphere of influence. He was in time to save the Oil Rivers, that is, the Niger Delta; but five days late for the Cameroons. So close was this famous race when, after several hundred years, it started.

European Ministers, under pressure from their peoples, were in violent competition. But none of them, certainly not Bismarck, wanted war over Africa. Bismarck, indeed, from the older generation, was contemptuous of the romantics who sought colonial expansion. He sought power over the peoples and wealth of Europe ; not over deserts and jungles, however large on the map. Nothing shows more plainly the force of the new popular nationalism than that the cynical aristocrat Bismarck had to give way to it. He sent his Consuls and his warships. But at the same time, to avoid bad consequences, he called an International Conference at Berlin and showed plainly how much he desired a peaceful settlement of African conflict.

The Berlin Conference, 1885, and the Partition of Africa

Bismarck's Conference recognized the Congo Free State and secured its neutrality. It declared that any Power wishing to occupy new lands in Africa should first notify the others. And it laid down that an occupation, to be valid, must be effective ; that is to say, roughly, that the Power in question must have actually entered on a territory, and acquired some standing there by treaty with the chiefs.

This ruling was to the immediate advantage of Germany herself and France, which had long encouraged the policy of penetration by treaty. Her agents, soldiers of fortune, had already made treaties to cover the greater part of North Africa. She was now able to cut off all the different British settlements from one another, and sometimes, as on the Gambia, from a natural hinterland. The Gambia is still a wasted river, because it is divided from the territory which should feed it with trade.

But in some other ambitions the French were disappointed at the Conference. They had, like the Germans, long coveted the Niger Delta. They had in the 'sixties and 'seventies given support to French firms which opened stations on the Lower

Niger and they would certainly have been able to claim the river, had it not been for the founder of the Royal Niger Company, Sir George Goldie. Goldie, who had seen the ambitions of France, and who, like Laird before him, and Rhodes afterwards, was moved more by patriotic ideas of empire than trade, in 1879 brought together all the small firms on the Niger into the United African Company, which was too strong for the French and at last bought them out. Thus at the Berlin Conference, Britain, thanks to Goldie, was able to claim as a sphere in her effective occupation the Lower Niger, which has since grown into the great Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria.

The Conference had avoided or postponed war, but it had not allayed competition. On the contrary, it had, in effect, thrown open Africa to the new popular imperialism. It said, "Take what you can, but don't fight about it." The Congo, after this invitation, did not long remain international. It became in the same year, 1885, the Congo Free State under the sovereignty of Leopold. That clever man had now his private empire. France, too, proceeded by annexation. She brought new African colonies under the government of the Republic. But Britain was still deeply divided. A strong party under Gladstone, which disliked all colonial adventure, was opposed by the new imperialist groups now rising to power. Traders and missionaries who saw the moves of France and Germany, who had seen the Cameroons snatched away from them and enclosed within a tariff ring, demanded vigorous action, and they could count now upon the support of millions, where, in the eighteenth century, they would have found indifference. They had a Press and a popular cry. The death of Gordon at Khartoum, in 1885, was still fresh to every mind, and no Government could forget the reaction of public anger against the ministry whose carelessness or neglect was supposed to have brought it about. Yet Gordon, too, had been a soldier of fortune. Leopold had offered him the Congo. And in the Sudan, as Governor for the Khedive of

Egypt, he had acted upon his own independent will, refusing to withdraw when ordered to do so.

Gladstone wondered at the enormous effect of Gordon's death upon public opinion. Gladstone saw him as a kind of buccaneer in the Elizabethan manner and resented the power of an independent egotist to divert the policy of H.M. Government. But Gordon had power because he appealed to the romantic and the religious feelings of the new age, so much stronger than economic or even logical argument.

The Government dared not risk humiliation in Africa. At the same time, it did not care for the risks and expense of direct annexations ; it preferred the tried method of the chartered company, and three new African companies were founded. The first of them, in 1886, was the Royal Niger Company, with Goldie as President. The other two were the British East Africa Company in 1888, and the British South Africa Company in 1889.

The Royal Niger Company, 1886

These companies differed fundamentally from the old merchants companies. They did not possess only trading posts and forts meant to protect the sea trade with Britain. They entered upon great lands. Their charters were not in the first place for a trade monopoly, but for administration of those lands. They undertook, therefore, the responsibilities of a government to establish peace and open trade routes.

Moreover, as before, obeying that rule by which an ordered state becomes entangled with its neighbours, either by attraction or repulsion, they soon found themselves drawn into wider engagements. No sooner had the Royal Niger Company established itself at Lokoja, on the Niger, than it came into conflict with the emirs of the north, who raided for slaves down to the very river.

France, which had now pushed forward into Dahomey, claimed Borgu, on the river bank, which was also claimed by

the company. The Royal Niger Company, like the old Gold Coast merchants, now looked round for an enterprising young soldier to lead its forces. It pitched upon Captain Lugard, who had already done brilliant service for the British East Africa Company in securing and pacifying Uganda. Lugard in 1894 led his small force of Niger Company police two hundred miles through unmapped bush to Nikki, suzerain town of Borgu, and made a treaty which justified the company's claim to Borgu and the right bank of the Niger. Captain Decoeur, the officer sent by the French Government to get the same concession for France, arrived a week later.

French public opinion resented this success, and two years afterwards, while the company's main forces were engaged in war with one of the slave raiders, the Emir of Bida, French troops marched across Borgu and seized Bussa, on the Niger. And now at once what every British Government had feared, to be drawn into European war by a quarrel over a few square miles of African bush, seemed close. For though the Royal Niger Company was the governing body in conflict with France, public opinion at home regarded British prestige, and therefore Government prestige, as offended.

Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, was in sympathy with that feeling. He represented the new imperialism of Britain, indeed, of all Europe, and he was not to be out-faced by the same imperialism of France. He guaranteed the expenses of two battalions of troops and three batteries, as the nucleus of a new West African Frontier Force, under Lugard's command.

At the same time British and French armed forces had met, gun to gun, on the Nile and in the Gold Coast hinterland, north of Ashanti, where British officers had also made treaties with the chiefs. The French and British peoples were in an angry mood. Excited crowds seemed to be eager for war. But their rulers hesitated. For the new democracies, though touchy and bellicose, were not designed or prepared for war. The French Government was no longer controlled, the

British Government never had been controlled, by its Army. Thus, while the popular Press was full of warlike threats, the ambassadors were anxiously seeking peace and, using a method already proved useful in dealing with the new democratic nationalism, part of the new technique of government, they prolonged these conversations, privately and almost secretly, until the people had found another diversion and the Press another sensation. It was then possible for each side to declare concessions, which, if they had been even suggested a few months earlier, would have caused riots, adverse votes, possibly the fall of governments, and the war which they were meant to avoid. By a convention of 1898 signed in Paris the new boundaries were fixed. France was given Nikki and a large piece of country bordering the upper north-western course of the Niger; Britain kept Borgu and about 35,000 square miles north of Ashanti. Each people was able to regard itself both as a victor and as a civilized member of world polity, unwilling to quarrel about trifles.

The new country north of Ashanti was called the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, and put under a British Commissioner who reported to the Gold Coast Government.

Foundation of Nigeria, 1900

The Royal Niger Company was now left in a strange position. The Government paid local troops, over which the company had no authority. At the same time it was criticized, as a company, for using its unique position, as an administration, to set up a trade monopoly on the Niger, a thing expressly forbidden by its charter.

Sir George Goldie, the pioneer who had formed the company, and who had been its only President, himself declared that this charter had been meant only as a step towards Imperial control, to which he himself had always looked forward.

The Government therefore resolved, in 1899, to take over

the whole administration of the company's lands, which by Goldie's policy of treaties with chiefs had been extended from the Oil Rivers Protectorate to Sokoto on the edge of the Sahara Desert, and Bornu on Lake Chad.

This large region, the south of jungle, the north of open bush, was divided into two Protectorates, of Southern and Northern Nigeria. Neither was yet fully under control. Many of the Mohammedan emirs of the north, some of the powerful southern tribes, still raided for slaves and carried on a regular traffic. But the territory, as a whole, included within the boundary settled by conventions with France and Germany, was acknowledged as British.

Thus at the end of the century, after thirty years of quick expansion, the British Government found itself in charge of the Gambia Colony, Sierra Leone Colony, Gold Coast Colony with the Northern Territories, Lagos Colony, and the two Protectorates of Nigeria. Of modern West Africa, only Ashanti was still independent.

All African chiefs had felt the pressure of the new forces and new ideas in Africa. Some gave way and made their peace. Some resisted. Ashanti, a military empire, which lived by slave raiding, whose religion demanded human sacrifice, would not or could not change its political system, even though it brought it into conflict with Protecting Powers, especially Britain. There were two more Ashanti wars, and at last, in 1901, Ashanti was annexed and placed under a Chief Commissioner.

Europe in Africa : Problems of Government

Europe had now occupied all Africa. And the popular idea of Africa was that of tropical forests full of rich and valuable products to be had for the gathering. In fact, Africa was poor, full of deserts and swamps. Its new owners found that it could barely pay the expenses of administration ; sometimes not even so much. Development, the opening up of the interior, was plainly going to be very expensive. In this difficulty, some

Powers had already followed the policy of giving large concessions to private or semi-private corporations. And this policy led to oppression and cruelty, which had a strong effect on African policy during many years.

The European occupation itself came to be looked upon as a crime. This was stupid, but it was a logical result of certain political changes in the democracies, especially British democracy, where new classes had risen into power—classes traditionally and religiously taught to be suspicious of all governing authority, and especially of imperial development, which they regarded as the exploitation of the African by foreign capital. Neither did they distinguish between one kind of development and another.

A planter's or forester's concession is quite different in effect from a trader's charter such as that of the old companies. Traders, selling or bartering goods with anyone who may choose to deal with them, can do little harm, and may do much good. A trader's store in the early days was often the only neutral ground for large territories. There, like animals coming to a water-hole, hereditary enemies could meet without flying at each other; and lonely storekeepers became often, by mere force of their independence, centres of freedom and peace. But the concessionaire who takes over native lands or forests is in quite another place. He is not the servant of the people, obliged to be of use to all comers, but the master, compelled by need to persuade or force an alien peasantry to work for him. This does not mean that all planters must exploit, or that no foreigner has the right to employ those of an alien race. Exploitation is a matter always of local standards, of conditions and wages. Good pay, fair conditions, for willing labour, is a boon whoever gives the pay, and whoever works for it. The greater part of the world, not only in Africa, cries out for such employment. But primitive labour, as Russia discovered, is usually bad. The peasant cannot or will not learn a new job. Thus the early African concessionaires found that their labour costs, their overhead expenses, were high. And fearful cruelties

were committed by desperate men seeking to grind profits out of labourers far more helpless and discouraged than slaves. All Powers, nowadays, if they still give grants to concessionaires, even to great modern companies, know that they will need close watch and strict regulation.

In 1900 the scandals of certain foreign concessions were fresh in mind, and the British Government would not risk grants of land.

The imperialism of the 'nineties which has now, by this same democratic process of representation that brought it forth, been thrust aside, was not entirely greedy or selfish. The force with which it drove European Governments, after three hundred years on the West Coast, so deep into Africa sprang as much from the missions as from private ambition and adventure.

Many of the traders were actually missionaries for whom trade was the best means of approaching the people and winning their sympathy. All emphasize the importance of friendship and fair dealing with the Africans. This motive, in various forms, recurs again and again throughout these three centuries of West Coast history. We saw it in Jobson, we find it again, strongly expressed, in McGregor Laird, whose expedition has been mentioned above.

Laird writes, as preface to his book of 1835, that the object of the Liverpool company was not only to "establish a commercial intercourse with Central Africa via the River Niger," but to open new fields of enterprise to the mercantile world and of usefulness to those who labour for the amelioration of uncivilized man.

A later witness to the value of the trader, apart from the slave dealer, was the celebrated Mary Kingsley who went out to the Coast in 1893. Her object was, in the first place, scientific—to examine and classify tropical fish. But she took a lively interest in all West Coast affairs, commercial and political. Her *Travels* and her *West African Studies* are well worth reading.

Mary Kingsley, expecting to find in the trader her chief enemy and the native's chief enemy, found him her best friend. She even supported the trader against the missionary, on the ground that he interfered less with native customs and did good where it was most needed, in bringing prosperity. She was a strong imperialist, feeling that trade expansion in Africa was good for both parties. "I think," she told the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, "that trade is the most important thing in Africa and the most interesting."

And it is interesting to see that when, in 1898, she came out in support of the eastern tribes of Sierra Leone which had risen against a new hut tax, she had strong support from the Liverpool traders. Both parties were against interference with native ways of life.

Mary Kingsley's views have appeared short-sighted; her imperialism, her romantic admiration of the bush native, belonged to her period. But nowadays her opposition to a purely bureaucratic and political government, her insistence that trade prosperity was more important to Africa than restrictive laws or Sunday-school teaching, her suggestion of a mixed government for the African colonies, in which the traders should give their expert advice on improving African conditions, have a very modern look. Mary Kingsley was an enthusiast and a Kingsley. An adventurer herself, she loved adventurous men. And one cannot read her life, or her letters, without feeling a very warm affection for a nature so brave, honest, generous and simple. She had no vanity, no conceit, and she loved justice. She was not only just, but understanding with the many enemies who attacked her, as they had attacked one of her heroes, Maclean of the Gold Coast, with the malignity of the sentimentalist. She was incapable of carrying on a feud, of bearing a grudge. And though her opinions were not so modern as they seem, though she was not, and could not be, a very good judge of political values, she was right at least in seeing that her friends, the traders, as pure traders, could be in Africa, as they had been in Ancient

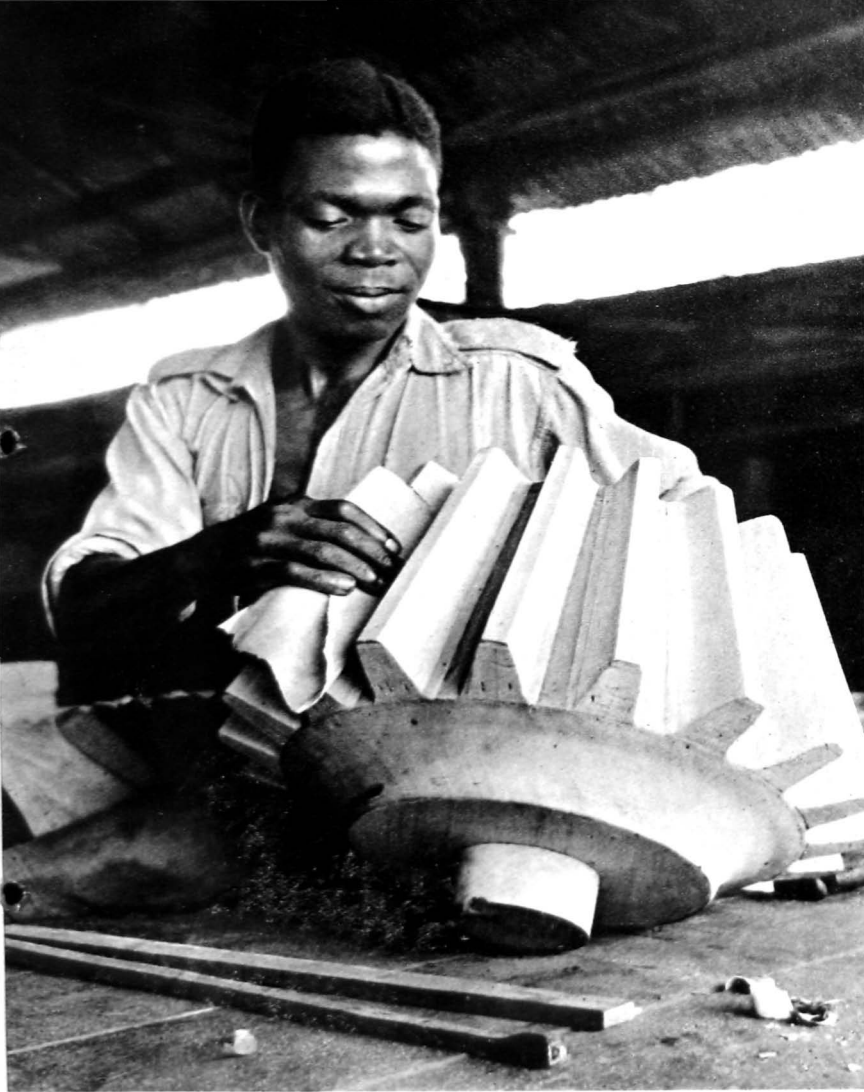
Greece, Asia, India, in every continent and age, a centre for the diffusion and mingling of ideas.

As she saw him, the trader was a civilizing force beyond either government or missionary, because he sought for the natives only the peace and prosperity which were also his own.

The partition of Africa, whatever the complex of motives behind it, was a blessing to the African masses. Its worst evils, even of the Congo under Leopold's concession, were not so bad as the perverse and ruinous cruelty of slave raiders and despots like the Ashanti kings. I rode once through a city gate in a mud wall. Half an hour later, I reached another gate and passed out from the wall. There was nothing between but grass. That whole great city had been wiped out, not many years before, by the Emir of Kontagora, whom I knew—a tall, grave man, handsome, and of most distinguished bearing. To him, a Moslem aristocrat, as to the early Dutch of South Africa, Christian patriarchs, the pagans were animals designed by God only to be hunted and enslaved.

Talk of the white man's burden is now a joke. Probably it is good that it should be a joke, for it was too easily used to cover a mean complacence and to breed that hypocrisy which of all vices most quickly corrupts a nation. But the responsibility of Britain towards her dependants was not a joke to the Whigs who impeached Hastings; to the men who fought the slave trade; to the church people who have always supported the missions; nor to a thousand humble officials in the British service, whose duty, as they were taught, was to the African people.

And behind this official policy there was a vast public opinion at home which from imperial pride, or vanity, if you like, demanded from those Empire servants the highest standards of justice and sympathy. We can call that public romantic. It made heroes of the pioneers in Africa. But it made them romantic heroes, and asked much of them; it made a policy of exploitation impossible for any British Government.



A PATTERN-MAKER at one of the manganese mines of Nsuta. Gold Coast manganese is an important element in British steel manufacture.



THE COCOA CARRIERS. Launched upon the surf and manned by stout African crews wielding their web-footed oars, these small boats are used to carry the cocoa to cargo ships standing off shore.



THE HILLS OF NORTHERN NIGERIA produce columbite—a complex ore used in aircraft construction. The miners are local tribesmen.

British West Africa, 1900 : Resources and Population

The new British West Africa had neither economic, racial nor political unity. The Gambia was simply two hundred and fifty miles of river, with a small area of forest and bush on each bank. Its whole area was about 4,000 square miles, and its population not much more than 100,000 all told. Bathurst, the capital, built on St. Mary's Island, with some fine old colonial buildings, had about 5,000 inhabitants. The chief export was groundnuts, and most of these went to France. The annual total of exports was valued at £240,705.

Sierra Leone had an area of about 27,000 square miles and a population of about 1,000,000, chiefly negro tribes, such as the Timni and the Mendi. But in the capital, Freetown, and thereabouts, the descendants of the original settlers, numbering over 30,000, represented over a hundred different tribes, and were regarded by the rest as a separate race, the Sierra Leonis. These were English-speaking Christians, many of good education. One of them, Sir Samuel Lewis, a pure African, had been Chief Justice of the Colony from 1882 to 1894. The exports of Sierra Leone were chiefly palm oil, palm nuts and ginger, valued at £360,000 annually.

The Gold Coast, with Ashanti and the Northern Territories, had an area of about 78,000 square miles and a population of about 2,000,000. There was no deep-water harbour. The old coast towns, mostly with ancient forts, such as Accra, Axim, Sekondi, Elmina, Anamabu, Cape Coast, Cormantine, were all small. The chief exports were rubber from vines, palm oil and nuts, kola nuts, gold and cocoa, valued at £885,000 annually. Gold in 1900 amounted only to £38,000.

Lagos Colony and Protectorate, and the Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria, amounted together to over 330,000 square miles, with every kind of climate from the delta rain forest, full of mangrove and oil palm, to the semi-desert edge of the Sahara. The population was estimated at from fifteen to twenty millions, of many great tribes speaking

different languages and ruled by different ideas of life. Exports from the north were as yet very small. From Southern Nigeria they had a yearly value of £1,130,000, chiefly of palm products and rubber.

The whole area of the new West African Empire was therefore about 440,000 square miles, with a population of about twenty million people. The area of Great Britain, that is, England, Wales and Scotland together, is 88,750 square miles.

4. *First Colonial Development Policy : Trusteeship, 1900-1929*

EXPENSE IS, as we know, the first problem of all government. Any kind of government costs much money ; and good government costs a great deal of money. It was the problem of financing a government which, in the major degree, brought Charles I and Louis XVI to their deaths. For people demand services that they do not want to pay for ; and each generation demands greater services.

In Africa the problem was ten times worse than in Europe. The physical obstacles to government, bad communications, bad climate, absence of educated help, were much greater ; and it was impossible for tribal natives with a total income probably of five pounds a year to pay the taxes required by a modern budget. That is to say, the new Empire could afford, by itself, only the crude government which belonged to its barbarous condition, an administration, let us say, like that of William the Conqueror, securing peace and rough justice. It could not afford great schemes of development or education, and those who criticize the small reach of government plans for Africa in those early days, must remember that no one at

that time dreamed of the Colonial Development Funds, of 1929 and 1940, set up to give subsidies to the Colonies. In 1900 both parties were agreed, when they agreed on nothing else, that a Colony should, as far as possible, pay its own way. And their grounds were not only economic, but ideal.

The conception was that of trusteeship. The Colonies, like children under a trust, were to have every kind of help and encouragement; but out of their own funds. The principle was not so selfish as it appears. It was argued that great development loans to the Colonies would put upon them debt charges too heavy for their resources.

In this difficulty the Colonial Office resolved to use all funds available in the different West African Colonies on opening main trade routes, especially railways and ports. In Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria, railways were quickly built to join chief towns on the coast, Freetown, Sekondi, Accra, Lagos and Calabar, with the interior, as yet undeveloped.

At the same time, ports were improved. Lagos was dredged to give water for large steamers. On the long and dangerous Guinea Coast, where the steamers of this century, like the caravels of the first Portuguese traders, were still forced to anchor at sea and ship their cargoes in surf-boats, Takoradi was begun. Its huge breakwaters, which protect an artificial harbour, were finished early in 1928. All was paid for out of Gold Coast revenue or credit.

This economic policy was attacked. It used almost all the surplus revenue of the Colonies. Officials had to live in mud huts, and all the services were starved in order that the railways might be built, the harbours dug. But I think it was a right policy. The first need in Africa has always been communications. Trade, order, peace, the intercourse which comes from trade and which is the very beginning of civilization and the education of peoples, all start from the free and safe harbour, the open river and the cleared road. Africa had never had them and could make no progress without them.

I am not saying that the other services, education, medical, veterinary, forest departments, were entirely neglected during this first period. Schools and hospitals were built ; new crops introduced and old ones improved. Some of these crops, like cotton and cocoa, seem on the face of it to have had more effect on the returns than the railway policy. Cocoa on the Gold Coast and in Southern Nigeria quickly became a main cash crop and made the growers rich beyond other Africans. Mines were opened. Between 1903, when modern machinery was set up in the Gold Coast, and 1927, production of gold was valued at twenty-six millions sterling. Cocoa exports, valued in 1899 at £16,000, were worth in 1926 nine millions sterling. In Nigeria, an export of 3,000 tons of groundnuts in 1900 became 127,000 tons in 1925, an increase of more than forty times. Tonnage of tin concentrates grew five times in the same period. And these figures mean an immense change in national wealth. In 1900 the currency of most of Nigeria was cowrie shells, at a rate of 2,000 to the shilling. Pay and standards of living were among the lowest in the world. By the 1920's money circulated everywhere, sustaining an internal trade of which these exports are only a fraction.

In Nigeria, the Naraguta¹ Plateau, rich in tin, was made accessible by a light railway ; and the Government opened, at Udi, a Government colliery which supplied not only the State Railways and the Marine, but also the steamer lines. In the Gambia, groundnut farming was so much improved that the crop was doubled. In Sierra Leone, the railway was pushed forward ; new roads were built ; and, more lately, platinum, gold and hæmatite were discovered.

Progress therefore, even on the old policy, was great. Critics tell us that it might have been greater. That is true. But the practical question is, could it have been greater having regard to the political and economic situation at that time ?

We have to remember again that democracy, for good or evil, is a representative government. It cannot act against the will of the people, or of any large groups of the people. And

the governing people, from the year 1906 down to the 1920's, were divided in mind ; powerful groups of voters were in direct conflict on every colonial question. No Minister could have carried an expensive plan to subsidize the Colonies at the expense of the British taxpayers.

This was not the fault of successive Governments. It was due to the nature of democracy itself, and an irreconcilable division in British democracy at that time, between two great bodies of opinion, which could agree only on the idea of trusteeship, because it did not involve legislation or dangerous quarrels in the House.

British Political Policy, 1900 : Indirect Rule and the Land

When Lugard was made first High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria in 1900 he had not only to bring this vast region to order, but to devise for it an administration. Some of the great slave-raiding emirs proposed to fight. But they were not popular with their own subjects. Lugard's campaigns were short and almost bloodless, and by 1903 the whole of northern Nigeria, except for the remoter pagan areas, was at peace.

A new administration had been built up at the same time upon a system already tried in Southern Nigeria under the company : that of Indirect Rule. The European magistrates, that is to say, did not govern the people directly, but through and by means of their own chiefs.

Sir George Goldie, in 1879, had laid down the principle for his officials : " If the welfare of the native races is to be considered, if dangerous revolts are to be obviated, the general policy of ruling on African principles, through native rulers, must be followed for the present."

Goldie was obliged, of course, to economize on staff. And Lugard wrote at a later date : " The staff of a tropical dependency must necessarily be small in comparison with its area and population." *

* *The Dual Mandate* (1922), p. 141.

But it is false to say that Goldie and Lugard, in setting up Indirect Rule, merely followed a line prescribed by necessity. They had a choice. A small staff of one race, ruling over another, of course, employs subordinates from the people native in that country. But such a staff, however small, can still give direct orders through its subordinates. It can set aside native tradition and rule absolutely. This, in fact, was the common practice in Africa. It had been followed by almost all the Colonial Powers so soon as they attempted any real government.

Goldie and Lugard, therefore, could have ruled directly. They chose the indirect system, not from poverty, but for ideal reasons.

The idea behind indirect government, briefly, is that any given civilization, however primitive, in Africa as in Europe, has a life of its own. It consists of people who have grown up with certain ideas, certain ties, obligations, expectations, and a certain relation with their own government. Any sudden and violent change in such a civilization, or its method of government, is like the dislocation of a human body. It breaks what was a living and homogeneous social unit, possibly crude and simple in form, but self-respecting and energetic, into a mere scattering of human units, despondent and usually corrupt.

And the principle of indirect rule as designed by its pioneers was to avoid these disasters by maintaining the power and prestige of native chiefs, and the continuity of native rule, as a system familiar to the people, and to the natural sphere of native local government.

Native Africans, it was said, would learn better how to govern themselves in the traditional setting than in one imposed from above and strange to local experience.

I cannot give here an extensive description of Indirect Rule. It varies greatly in practice. But I can describe, shortly, its working, as I knew it, in a Nigerian emirate.

The Emir, an old man, who had fought against us in 1903, lived in his palace with a large staff. He had his own Council,

his Treasurer, Chief Justice, Chief of Police, and Vizier, or confidential chief minister. He had his own police organization, treasury, prison, etc.

The British Resident lived about half a mile from the Emir's capital town, in the European station. He had here his own Residency, in my time a large mud hut, his office and court house, his European staff, that is, one Assistant Resident, a doctor, two African clerks, and a detachment of African infantry under European officers in charge of a mud fort. In the office was a safe with the petty cash ; in the fort, a cash-tank full of bags of silver.

The Resident, in this case, was one of three in a Province, under a Provincial Resident, who, in turn, was under the Governor of the Protectorate. The Emir, on the other hand, was a feudal monarch ruling over numerous district chiefs and village headmen, but he had no African superior. He came under the Governor, who had Africans on his Council, but as part of the British Government. Indirect rule, therefore, began, and begins, with the local chief, and the British Government is the paramount chief over all the emirs and chiefs.

Laws, financial estimates, were made at the centre, in consultation with the Secretary of State and Parliament, and referred downwards.

The Resident in each division promulgated the laws, and assessed the taxes in bulk. But the final assessment on each household, and the collection, was carried out by the Native Administration.

Taxes, when collected, were divided between the two treasuries, the Native Treasury or Beit el Mal, and the Government Treasury. This is an important point in indirect rule, for though the Government keeps check upon native expenditure, the Native Administration handles the money and pays its own officers. The Emir takes his salary out of the Native Treasury. Any surplus falls into the native reserve. Many Native Treasuries are now very rich and have large accumulated reserves.

The Government Treasury pays for the European administration. It is usually poor. But, of course, European salaries to civil servants, clerks, police and troops are much higher than those paid by Native Administrations.

The Emir's police kept order and controlled the prison. But if they needed help, they could call for the Government police, or troops. The Emir's prison is open to inspection by the Resident at any time.

Resident and Emir met at intervals to discuss public affairs ; but the real liaison was through the Vizier, who came every day to the Resident's office to bring reports, and to receive news or orders. The Resident also examined the Native Treasurer's books at least once a week, and, from time to time, checked his cash balances.

The Emir had his own courts administering native law—in this case, Mohammedan law. The Resident also had his court, administering English law. The Emir's court tried all cases concerning natives of the emirate ; but anyone could appeal to the Resident, who then reviewed the case, with the help of Mohammedan assessors. Cases concerning Europeans, or Africans not native in the emirate, came before the Resident's court.

Thus a typical morning's work in the Resident's office which I am describing might be :

From six to seven-thirty : office work ; the mail.

At eight, after breakfast : a call from the Vizier with reports that cattle disease had broken out in a certain district ; that certain highway robbers had been caught ; that the Emir wished to depose a district chief for incompetence, etc., etc.

The Resident would ask if stand-still orders had been given to the cattle men, and if the old grass had been burnt. He would suggest a meeting with the Emir to discuss the headman's case. (This particular Emir was autocratic and quarrelsome.) The Resident would then open his own business ; new roads were proposed—could the Emir's roadman come up to discuss labour and material ? And complaints had come in

from some village, of extortion by the chief—would the Emir look into this? Etc., etc.

After the Vizier's departure there would be complaints and petitions, usually lasting a long time. This Resident kept open house night and day to complaints. He made it a rule and he taught me the rule to receive anyone who approached him anywhere, and not to allow any junior official, clerk, orderly, or court messenger to stand between him and the people. The rest of the morning might be spent on court cases or office work.

The evening after four, if office work was finished, might be kept for a stroll through the town to see a new market, or a new sanitation ditch.

At least half of this Resident's time was spent on tour through the villages. He would spend a day and night at each village. Timid complainants, as I found myself, will often speak to an official in the small hours, especially if his bed stands out in the open, well away from servants or police, when they would not approach by day. A whisper out of the dark will often throw light on mysterious trouble and discontents. And a very important duty of a Resident is to know the people, to know what's really going on in his division or district.

This sketch of a Resident's work is taken from an Emirate. Among primitive tribes there would be differences in detail. A primitive chief has more limited judicial powers and a less experienced staff. He depends more on the Resident for advice. But the general principle is the same—to delegate responsibility to Native Authorities, to keep the traditional native system in working order, both as an actual government and a training ground for native officials.

As a policy, Indirect Rule was an immediate success. It won general consent, and the Nigerian experiment became a model.

As a practice, or an ideal to be aimed at, it has been brought in throughout the Colonial Empire. Native Governments have been everywhere strengthened and encouraged. After the last

war German East Africa, now called Tanganyika Territory, was allotted to Britain under mandate, and Sir Donald Cameron, because of his experience of the indirect system in Nigeria, was in 1925 chosen for its Governor.

Tanganyika, in one important respect, differed from Nigeria. It was a country of small chiefs. But Sir Donald, following Nigerian practice, looked for native organization, native social tradition, and set about building on these foundations. He was very successful. In Tanganyika, perhaps even more than in Nigeria, one finds among the natives and their chiefs not only trust in the District Officer, but a friendly regard for British administration as a whole. That is to say, there, as everywhere, it has produced a harmony between Government and people not common in a dependency.

Indirect Rule, like all popular successes, has now become suspect. It is said that it is merely a means of dodging responsibility for real government, that chiefs take advantage of their immunity, and officials of their vicarious position.

It is true that chiefs soon grasped the theory of the scheme. They knew that their prestige was to be maintained. Thus I, as a young and humble officer, at a public assembly of dozens of sub-chiefs and hundreds of their courtiers, summoned by the Emir and myself jointly to publish our agreement, reached privately over the tea-cups, that a certain feudal tyrant should be deposed, had the mortification of hearing the Emir announce, through his chief minister, that he, for his part, would prefer to give the rascal another chance. Bribery had been at work between the tea-party and the durbar. In this dilemma I was glad of my orders to do nothing to break the chief's prestige. I said therefore that the Emir, of course, should have his way, adding only that he would also have the responsibility for any crimes or follies that the sub-chief might afterwards commit. The Vizier was up at my bungalow the same evening to explain that his master could not really take responsibility for such a fool as the sub-chief. He was much agitated, and the reason was simple. The chief was in debt

and had asked for a rise of pay, which he could not get if I gave him a bad confidential report.

I describe this incident because, small as it is, it shows better than long analysis the real position under Indirect Rule, that is to say, the real power of the chief, the responsibility that arises from it, and also the power of the District Officer or Resident to make his will felt, if he chooses.

He has ultimate control not only of the force which lies behind every Government, but also of the purse. He can refuse to authorize payments out of the Native Treasury, just as the Secretary of State or Parliament can refuse to pass Government votes.

This does not mean that Indirect Rule is a sham. As anyone with political experience or imagination knows, government is finally a conflict or co-operation of forces, and these forces are largely personal.

One cannot set up a Native Authority and support its prestige without giving it the real power which arises from prestige and without which, in fact, no one would trouble about prestige.

A native chief, like any party chief, can appeal to the people, or to the District Officer's superiors, against him. In my own knowledge, an Emir who quarrelled with his opposite number, a Divisional Officer, threatened to go into voluntary exile with his whole administration. He conveyed this threat to the Provincial Resident and caused at once a political crisis. The Provincial Resident himself hastened to the spot and it was necessary to reach a compromise. A political crisis, however caused, does not please Provincial Residents and Governors. It does not assist District Officers in their careers.

Thus the relation between a Chief and a District Officer actually approximates to that between sovereign Powers, or their representative diplomats, in the essential point that each, openly or tacitly, and having regard to his real strength, brings to negotiation some power of making his will respected. And this depends largely on the characters of the two men.

In short, Indirect Rule, like every system of government, may be likened to a garden, of which the boundaries, climate and quality of soil are all to be considered by a buyer ; and yet, when he has bought his garden, and kept it for some years, he will begin to think that the only difference between one garden and another is the gardener. Indirect Rule, in practice, has quite different results even in different Provinces.

I have described one Resident's work and his determination to know the people. I might have described another whom I knew who did not care a pin for the people, and who was almost inaccessible to complaints. His aim was progress on all fronts. He was a driver in the modern style, who thought that some injustice was a negligible, or at least a necessary, price for rapid advance. A third was an enthusiast for education, for roads and markets, for the people ; but was reputed to be too innocent for the natives of his Province. They took him in. All these men did excellent work in their own ways under Indirect Rule—as they would have done under any other system. What we have to consider is the nature of indirect government as a principle : that is, the soil and climate of the garden. And this inquiry had better wait until we deal with another fundamental question—the land.

The Nigerian Land Ordinance

Africa is still an agricultural country. The enormous majority of its people are farmers dependent on the land. Land ownership and regulations, the Land Laws, mean more in Africa to the people than in Europe. Yet nothing in Africa has been more mishandled. The first settlers in Africa, the trading companies, even the Sierra Leone Company of Philanthropists, had assumed that African land, like English land, was owned by persons, either individuals or governments. These companies all bought or rented land from chiefs, as they would have bought or rented land in England from a large proprietor. They had no notion of tribal or common ownership, with all

its complex and often mystical roots in the African past. The companies were followed by the colonists and their assumption of British land rights was succeeded, of course, by British land law. The new Colonial Supreme Courts brought in British tenures, freeholds, leaseholds, with right of sale. Anyone who chose could buy from native owners lands which really belonged, not to them, but to the community or the chief, and great evils followed: the land speculator; the absentee landlord; the waste of good land in neglectful hands.

Lugard's Land Ordinance was founded on the same root principle as his theory of Indirect Rule—to defend as far as possible native life and native customary law from violent and harmful disruption. He laid it down that the land should belong to its native people, under their own customary law, but that it should not be saleable to foreigners. The Government might give leases to foreigners—for instance, to missions, to storekeepers; or develop, for public good, lands not in use; but the amounts leased should be small and be strictly controlled. And the increment value of leased land should return to Government. In short, this law, for the first time, secured to Africans their own land. It absolutely prevented alien speculators from buying them out. Above all, it set a precedent and showed an example, which together, I think, have had quite as important an effect on colonial history, not only of West Africa, as Indirect Rule. Much of the Nigerian land law is still in advance of that in Britain. This is an achievement of which the Nigerian Government has a right to be proud.

Criticism of Indirect System

The Land Ordinance, like Indirect Rule, has been sharply attacked on the same grounds of standing in the way of progress. Many say that the policy of leasing large tracts to companies, so that they can lay out plantations in the most modern style, would pay Africa far better in the end than peasant ownership. The smallholder, they say, is always inefficient.

He wastes most of his labour. Where large landowners with much capital and machinery do not exist or have disappeared, they must be replaced, as in Russia, by the collective farm, with State or company management.

We have again a conflict between two fundamental points of view about the duty of government. For there is no doubt that the indirect system, as a whole, has been a success in producing that result which was intended. It has brought peace and harmony. And the tranquillity of the State, the good feeling between ruler and ruled, is not, as sometimes represented, superficial, due only to the repressive powers of the chiefs. It is felt by the people themselves, the masses. It arises from the sense of continuity, which makes everyone feel he knows where he is. No unexpected or mysterious acts by an alien Government will throw his life out of gear. He sees that Government as a friend.

Shortly before I was sent to take over in one remote district, the people rose, murdered sixty members of their own local Government, and then rushed out of the district—not to escape from a white Resident, but to find one, and tell him their case. Their complaint was that, in the absence of a District Officer, the Emir had been making them pay double taxes.

Again I tell this story to compress a volume of argument into a paragraph. The critics of Indirect Rule will welcome it. "Here," they say, "you have a people kept back by a primitive tyrant. They do not value that tyranny even for its tradition. They are much more concerned with the taxes. They want, like all proletarians, to get on in the world. And they know that the white man can help them. Your Indirect Rule is not only a weight upon progress, but a fraud. It keeps in poverty and subjection, for the sake of a theoretical local culture and tradition, people who do not care a farthing for culture or tradition, and only want modern civilization, comfort and security as fast as they can get it."

This, of course, is also the standpoint of the critics of the

land policy, who say: "Peasant ownership and the small-holding are out of date. They get in the way of all real progress in African agriculture. Already, plantation-grown palm oils are beating the wild forest products."

This criticism is important and must be answered, for two reasons. The first reason is that if this system stands in the way of modern progress it is in direct conflict with the new colonial policy. The second is that since it is now the approved system for all the Colonies, the Colonial Government would find itself opposed in its new policy, at every point, by the open or silent enmity of local Governments; and that opposition, as every official knows, can be ruinous. We have seen that colonial economic policy did secure, even in early years, great progress in all the West African Colonies, especially in Nigeria, so that Indirect Rule certainly did not prevent progress. The questions are: Was it a hindrance—did it hold Africa back and keep it primitive? Will it do so in the future?

Lugard saw such a danger. He instructed all his officers that their duty was not to keep Africa primitive, but to press the chiefs forward. He laid it down that chiefs were not to be regarded as absolute rulers of their people, but colleagues in the new Government.

Yet Sir Donald Cameron, on his return to Nigeria in 1931 as Governor, remarked upon a tendency "to what I can only describe as reaction in dealing with the affairs of the Emirates."* He writes also that: "the absence of public opinion in Nigeria, and the extraordinary seclusion in which it was attempted to maintain the Native Administrations . . . undoubtedly encouraged stagnation."

Sir Donald fought that tendency. But I think it may be a fault innate in the system. Every kind of government has its special faults. All totalitarian systems tend to cruelty and injustice. They are, so to speak, an element in the climate and soil of a centralized and abstract government, run by

* *My Tanganyika Service and Some Nigeria*, 1939, p. 15 and p. 182.

experts from an office. So in Indirect Rule, with its devolution of power, its respect for traditional attachments, there is an easy-going quality of the air which affects the gardener as well as his work.

The danger of *laissez faire* under indirect rule is therefore real, and some critics of it are fair and valuable. Others are not fair, who forget the deep split between the political notions of this generation and the last. The pioneers who founded West Africa lived under Chief Secretaries and democracies who conceived their duty thus : to ensure peace, justice, tolerance, to make the way open for trade, and to do all this without putting upon each Colony a weight of debt beyond its power to pay.

They had to be economical, and they were not to make any drastic change in the life of the people.

But already, before the last war, in Europe and especially in Britain, new ideas began to eat into this ancient and simple conception of a ruler's duty. The people asked of government service as well as local justice ; not only roads for trade, but the fostering of industry. This was an idea of government quite new in the world, and whether it affected autocratic or democratic systems, it divided them from all before. The Russian Revolution, the organization of two continental wars, deepened that split into a chasm. It is impossible for anyone who has not lived in that old world to pass to it now, except by an effort of the historical imagination. Those critics who complain of Indirect Rule that it did not develop Nigeria, Uganda, Ashanti with enough speed, are often making the mistake of judging the past by the light of the present. And that past is dead. For good or evil, the new ideas rule the world. All Governments acknowledge their power ; and when the British Government in 1929 opened the Colonial Development Fund, it began a policy so different in conception from those which had, up till then, disposed its relations with the African peoples, that I am not very sure it has yet realized or faced the consequences. Partly because the new departure,



ABSORBING NEW WORLD. Students of Achimota College listening to a lecture on geography by their African master. Later they too will become teachers.



AFRICAN MOTHER. Dark head on white sheet, masked nurse, trained in midwifery, has seen she lies in the Maternity Hospital, Accra. The the birth through. The babe is doing well.



A CHANGE OF ROOF. The mud huts, *above*, look picturesque; but they are cramped, airless and disease-ridden. The modern house, *below*, is part of a workers' estate in Accra. It has wide windows and a flowering garden.

like the source of a great river at the top of a watershed, was a small stream. It was seen only long afterwards to belong to a different line of country.

5. *The New Colonial Development Policy: State Partnership and the Colonial Development Acts, 1929 and 1945*

IN 1929 the Colonial Development Fund made it possible for any Colony to receive from the British Government a grant, free of interest, for schemes of capital development. Thus a Colony could build a port or motor road free, but it would have to maintain it. The last clause perhaps tended to hide the real meaning of the new step. For the free grant is not one of a trustee's duties. It begins a new relation and a new responsibility. It says in effect, "I am going to set you up in life," and, as every student of politics knows, such an offer creates an expectation on the other side which changes the whole balance.

It was inevitable that the Colonies should ask for more and greater help: that in Britain strong groups should press the Government to give more help and would accuse it of neglect of duty if it did not do so.

This pressure was the stronger because almost all parties were agreed, as they had not been agreed for a century, on general political aims. The confusion of the 'sixties, when *laissez faire* wished to abandon the Colonies, the deadlock of the 'seventies and early 'eighties between the old Gladstonian economists, still chary of all Government action, and the Disraeli new Conservatives, eager to intervene at home and

abroad; the conflict of the first ten years of this century, when powerful new parties detested the Empire, simply as an Empire, had been resolved in a completely new idea of the functions of a Government. It was regarded no longer by one party merely as a policeman; by another, as a tax-gatherer; by a third, as an enemy—it was to all the universal provider. Both sides of the House of Commons were at one on the need for a constructive policy, for social services; they differed only on the amount and cost of the services. And the most convinced lover of liberty had perceived that freedom was not merely a matter of equal laws, but that a man with money in his pocket and skill in a job had more freedom of action than an illiterate pauper.

It was the Colonial Office itself which recognized the new political idea, and accepted it. It demanded new powers, not only to subsidize capital works, but to assist any development or research likely to promote the welfare of the colonial peoples. And Parliament and people being once more united in their conception of a Government's duty, they willingly passed, in 1940, the new Colonial Development and Welfare Act, which gave £10,000,000 for liquidation of debt, and £5,000,000 a year for ten years to start new welfare schemes and to encourage local industries. A further half a million pounds a year was to be spent on research.

In 1945, a second Act allotted £12,000,000 for welfare and research during the ten years up to March 31st, 1956.

The war has, of course, prevented much of the development proposed. Material, and especially men, are not available for the new schemes. But plans are made and more are being made. And the all-important point is that the whole idea behind the Fund is new and positive. It says, in effect, that Colonial Governments are no longer merely protectors, trustees, guardians, for the colonial peoples. They must plan for the future on the widest scale; they must, therefore, form some kind of idea of what they are aiming at in Africa: what kind of civilization is desirable for Africans.

New schemes of education, of industry, of town planning will profoundly affect that civilization. Is such an idea of positive development compatible with Indirect Rule? Many say that on the face of things they are directly opposed in idea and in practice. And certainly some of the pioneers of Indirect Rule did think of it as a means of allowing African civilization to grow, rather than as a method of imposing new ideas on Africa. But I have shown how flexible it is as a system. And I think that there is a danger that just as it was once too uncritically admired, it may now be too hastily damned. Its principle, local self-government, should be a powerful help in development. For in any new government policy there is nothing more valuable to the innovator than the sympathy and understanding of the people. And there is more chance of getting that support under Indirect Rule than under direct. What we have to remember is that though great changes are to take place, they need not appear as violence done to a way of life. A people can be driven to school, but they will hate it and close their minds to teaching. Or the instruction can be brought to them, through teachers of their own race, and through their own administration, so that they will welcome it as something that gives them valuable help in their own African interests, their farming, their households, and their trade.

People can be forced to work in a collective farm or factory, but their work will be unwilling and inefficient. Or they can be brought into co-operatives, and have all the benefits, the machinery, the expert advice, of the large farm, without more loss of freedom than that involved in a contract. What we have to remember is that statistics of any social group, especially in the modern world, are very delusive. They show certain facts, but only facts. They do not show the real conditions of life among actual families, covering in their ages anything up to seventy years of history; they do not show the complication of old and new; the overlap of ideas; the assimilation and transformation of one culture by another, which goes on all the time.

The word plan, applied to great schemes, calls up the notion of a blueprint. But blueprints apply only to machines, and people are not machines. They never behave like machines. Thus we must be careful, in criticizing a system founded on respect for living people, not to argue as if we were dealing with robots. Africans at any time, like ourselves, are grown men and women attached to a society. The society may be in decay, like tribal society everywhere in Africa, or it may be in rapid change, but it is still quite unlike a factory full of machines. It is a nexus of personal attachments, of tradition, experience, feelings.

A primitive society, brought into the presence of modern civilization, faces two great dangers : of complete breakdown ; of artificial preservation, when it quickly becomes mummified. We see in Africa plenty of both, town slums full of wasters and parasites ; tribes preserved, by natural isolation or by local policy, in primitive stagnation.

Indirect Rule has the merit that it can put a brake upon disintegration ; the fault that it can lead to mummification. And the fault must be guarded against, especially where powerful native kings govern large territories.

But if this fault can be avoided, its merits are great. It can help very much to give native life some innate coherence during a period of rapid change.

Statistics of Development, 1900-1937

How rapid that change has been can be read from the table on page 69, which shows that the wealth of the Coast as a whole since 1900 has multiplied more than ten times. And though we have to remember that this progress, as in Russia, starting from a very primitive agricultural economy, cannot be compared on equal terms with that of the pioneer industrial and organized nations which are obliged to invent, as they go, the new techniques of which beginners can borrow and use the results, it is a remarkable success for the old colonial policy.

The Gold Coast, for instance, now produces much the greater part of the world's total cocoa crop.

Such an economic revolution in forty years means great social changes, and a stress far greater than any felt in Europe, except Russia, during the same time: a stress which continually increases. Figures of imports and exports do not mean by

		Imports * (less bullion and cash)	Exports *	Total Trade *
		£	£	£
GOLD COAST	1900	1,099,000	864,000	1,963,000
	1937	12,306,555	15,949,533	28,256,088
NIGERIA	1900	1,735,000	1,887,000	3,622,000
	1937	14,623,674	19,242,197	33,865,871
SIERRA LEONE	1900	553,000	318,000	871,000
	1937	1,691,930	2,820,178	4,512,108
GAMBIA	1900	194,000	241,000	435,000
	1937	705,165	665,000	1,370,165

* Figures for 1900 from *Capital Investment in Africa*, S. H. Frankel, Oxford University Press, 1938. Figures for 1937 from *An Economic Survey of the Colonial Empire*, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1937.

themselves a general prosperity. Africa is still a very poor country, and Africans generally have a standard of living far below European poverty lines. But I think that the improvement in average conditions of life has been widespread, at least in West Africa. On the other hand, this economy has become more insecure in the last fifteen or twenty years, and the insecurity tends to grow. A fall in commodity prices affects the West Coast as powerfully as London or Paris.

And the African has found not only his income unstable.

His social order, hung in the vast gap between a Bronze Age culture and that of modern Europe, is still more dangerously placed.

He cannot go back, so he must go forward. The only way to deal with the modern world is to have modern knowledge, a modern apparatus of living.

The Future

In a modern world, where ideas are carried in a few minutes from one end to the other, and where already the remotest places are more easily reached, by air, than great capitals before, the forces of ambition and invention which drive forward society have very great and strong effects. They could not be kept away from Africa even if Governments wished it. That is to say, West Africa could not even be defended from European culture. But she does not want to be defended. She is anxious everywhere for a modern civilization. She wants to learn English, as a lingua franca, as the key to a world literature ; she wants modern education as well as modern services.

She wants it though it might destroy her. And she will now be able to get it quickly. The British Government, therefore, in its new policy of education, of modernization, is acting like a man on a runaway coach, who picks up the reins and takes upon himself the duty of steering the horses over a very rough road, and down many dangerous hills. And like such a driver, it will find that often the only safety is in speed, in urging the horses forward, before the wheels overrun them.

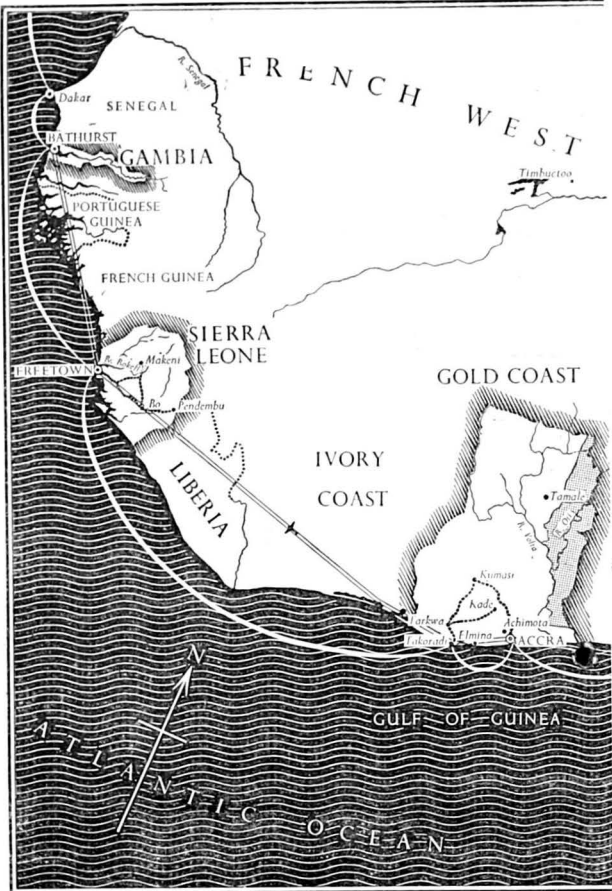
I think, that is, that the new policy of a general all-round development is the only means in West Africa of keeping the social balance: of giving stability to a new set-up.

As for those who fear that Africa, in gaining a modern equipment, will lose by that its own quality, colour, humour, its exuberance and native dignity, and, above all, that positive affirmation of life, which in extremest misery and oppression

has been the strength of the Negro and the Bantu, one can only ask if any great and rich culture ever weakened a race. Did Greek scholarship ruin Italian art in the fifteenth century? Did the Renaissance destroy the French architecture and English poetry of the sixteenth? Did English philosophy and science bring decadence upon the France of the eighteenth century, or the painting of Turner and Constable discourage the native genius of contemporary Paris schools?

The secret of a rich local and national culture throughout the world is not the shutting out of foreign ideas and arts, but their assimilation. The process can be seen already in Africa. The great co-operative societies of the Gold Coast have had profound effects on the real structure of society and the position of chiefs. But the new forms of Society are still local and indigenous. They are full of that energy which, like the sap of the growing tree, springs from roots deep in their own native soil. The new Africa is no longer that of the primitive tribe but neither is it an imitation culture taken from Europe. It is as racy and native as it has ever been.

You could not make an imitation Europe in Africa if you tried. Freetown, I suppose, was such an attempt. It was formed of refugees, without African tradition, and speaking only English. It was Christian from the beginning. It is still a small town, grouped about the old tree which shaded the slave dealers and which is still called the Slave Tree. Its parishes are St. George, St. James's, St. John's, St. Paul's. Its suburban villages, Wilberforce, Regent, Gloucester, Leopold, Bathurst, Charlotte. But these villages, with their European names, and Freetown itself, have a character, a quality, so intensely their own that it stays in the mind long after that of up-country villages, more primitive but more bare, has faded quite away. And that quality seems not only richer but more African. There is no fear that tropical Africa will lose its local qualities when it is permitted to take its place in the world; rather it will bring to the world a new African civilization, new arts, new religion.



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