

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

PRESENT PEACE,

As far as it is relative to the

COLONIES,

AND THE

AFRICAN TRADE.

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Footnote anchors are denoted by ^[number], and the footnotes have been placed at the end of the book.

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All changes noted in the [ERRATA](#) on page 68 have been applied to the etext. The erratum for p. 21 should have said l. 34, not l. 3.

Some minor changes to the text are noted at the [end of the book](#).

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COLONIES,
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AFRICAN TRADE.

Magna est veritas & prævalebit.

LONDON:
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[Price One Shilling.]

TO THE
BRITISH PLANTERS.

GENTLEMEN,

AN uninterested desire of rendering service to the public, and not an idle whim, or vanity to appear in print, has induced the editors of the following facts to publish them. Author is a title they lay no claim to.

By their unornamented energy alone is meant to gain the reader's attention, and to enforce the facts advanced; therefore, without further apology, they are presented to you in a plain dress, to point out some measures that were taken to mislead the legislature, whereby the African trade, in the year 1750, was put upon such a plan, as, by the event, has proved extremely detrimental to the British colonies. On that account, the following sheets can be addressed to none so properly as to you.

We flatter ourselves it will evidently appear by the contents of the following pamphlet, that the forts on the coast of Africa, are by no means upon a proper establishment; likewise that the present method of carrying on the African trade to those parts where the forts are situated, by the very high price given for Negroes there, which occasions the profit arising to be divided between the *European* merchants and the *African* traders, but must become extremely burthensome and disadvantageous to you, we believe every *real planter* will allow.

We cannot admit certain individuals to be esteemed *real planters*, notwithstanding they may have *one* or *more plantations*, when at the same time they are concerned as merchants in the colonies, who procure the ships from the coast of Africa to be consigned to them; of which it is

conjectured (and not without foundation) many of them are part owners; for these apparent reasons, it being their interest to keep up the price of Negroes so consigned to them, as all such advance encreases their commissions. Therefore, in our humble opinion, no attention ought to be paid to any remonstrance from people so much interested, or from those merchants who reside in Europe, that are connected with them, against any proposals that may be offered for the general utility of the colonies, which has been the case; and in consequence, very detrimental measures have been pursued through the misrepresentation of such opponents.

Should such destructive measures be continued, an absolute diminution of the annual income from your estates in the colonies must inevitably ensue, whether from the want of Negroes, or your purchasing them at too high a rate. In either case, it will prevent your being able to raise as much sugar, and other plantation-product you would otherwise do, or to take off as great a quantity of the manufactures of the mother-country, as were you to have a sufficient number of Negroes at reasonable prices. Relying upon the above allegations, with those you will find in the course of the following pamphlet, the editors presume you will think it most expedient and conducive for your interests, without loss of time, to apply to the legislative power, in order that some speedy and effectual measures be taken and carried into execution for *retrieving*, better *regulating* and *extending* that valuable branch of the *British* commerce, the *African trade*.

The present seems the most proper time for so great a national purpose, in order to prevent the *French* getting the start of you, which they will exert all their *power* and *abilities* to *effect*; for they are now not only making great preparations to carry on that trade themselves, but they have already made several *contracts* with *British* merchants to supply them with *Negroes*. So intent are they to secure, by every method they can contrive, as great a number as possible of those useful people, on which the prosperity of the *French* colonies depend: besides, as *peace* is concluded, his majesty's ministers, in whose department it is, will have leisure to examine minutely into the reasons that induced you to make such application.

Therefore there cannot be a doubt from their known *abilities*, and willingness to promote the *public good* by their care of the *trade* and *commerce* of these *kingdoms*, but they will give their most serious attention to any proposal you may lay before them for so good a purpose, as the *extending* and *preserving* the *African trade*; and will be as desirous as yourselves to pursue such plan as appears to them most reasonable for promoting the general advantage of the *British colonies*, and consequently the *mother-country*. The editors will not intrude farther on your time, than to hope something will be done to secure that valuable branch of commerce to the *British subjects*, they being very desirous to promote the prosperity of the *British colonies*, and to assure you that they are with great respect,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient, and most

Humble servants,

London,
11 April, 1763.

The EDITORS.

Considerations on the Peace,

As far as it is relative to the

Colonies, and the African Trade.

SINCE the preliminary articles of peace were published by authority, we have heard many persons in coffee-houses and other places, censure and blame our negotiators, for their not having obtained better terms.

They say, that our acquisitions in North America are of little consequence: yet when these acquisitions were in possession of our enemies, they thought them of inestimable value. Can the mere alienation of any property cause so sudden a diminution of its original worth? Surely then pique or dislike to some of our peace-makers, or private interest to have the war continued, must have hurried these men beyond the bounds of reason. For if they would give themselves the least time to reflect seriously, and judge dispassionately, they would find, that by retaining our conquests in North America (which are extended beyond our most sanguine expectations) the greatest benefit and utility must arise to this the mother-country; inasmuch as we have put ourselves in such a situation not only in the north, but also in the southern parts, that it is to be hoped our inland settlers will live in a perfect state of tranquillity; and his majesty's subjects carry on and cultivate that great branch of the British commerce, without dread of the Indians, or interruption from the subjects of any foreign nation. This good effect surely must be allowed to be of immense importance and advantage to Great Britain; and would not have been the case if we had kept the sugar colonies ceded to France, instead of part of our continental conquests.

What was the occasion of the war but the negotiators of the last peace not settling the distinct limits and boundaries of the territories we and the French were to have in North America?

We rejoice those limits are now settled, and hope so effectually as to prevent future disputes.

Among the many altercations concerning the preliminary articles, and the abilities of our negotiators, it must be allowed, with respect to the commercial interest of this country, there is a noble Lord in high office, and of the cabinet, whose acknowledged capacity, great application, and long experience, at a board where he so judiciously and eminently presided, made him a most competent judge what measures were proper to be taken for the security, improvement, and extension of the trade and commerce of Great-Britain and her colonies. Therefore, we cannot doubt, but his majesty has been well and faithfully advised as to that part of our pacific negotiations; because the patriotic spirit, honour and integrity of that nobleman are universally known and approved. It is not amiss to lay down as a maxim, that in general the information of merchants is not to be depended on by the legislature, with respect to trade and commerce, for many other, besides this principal reason; to wit—A trade may be very profitable to a particular merchant, city or town, and, at the same time, be very pernicious to the general interest of the nation, is a most notorious fact. Have we not heard many falsehoods asserted, and seen many erroneous calculations laid before the public, with an interested view of obtaining such private ends, and of defeating in some very essential points the public welfare?

Whatever self-interested people may clamour to the contrary, there cannot be a doubt but his majesty and his ministers, in their negotiations, have given the most serious attention to the universal good of this country, without confining their views, or partially regarding whether *North America* is more valuable than the *Sugar Islands*, because each merited their notice and care, being both of inestimable value to the mother-country, and reciprocally so to each other; and all three so essentially connected, that whatever happens to the disadvantage of the one, must in proportion affect the other. For the West India islands depend upon *North America*, in a great measure, for provisions, mill, and other timber; as well as for horses, cattle, and many things absolutely necessary for the use of the plantations; which are paid for in *specie, sugar, rum,*

melasses, and other plantation-produce: moreover, the melasses being distilled into rum in *North America*, are of great advantage to the merchants there, in carrying on the African trade directly from thence, which enables them to make returns for those manufactures, &c. they receive from hence with greater facility. All possible care should be taken to prevent his majesty's subjects purchasing sugar, rum, and particularly melasses, in the French islands, by prohibiting their importation into North America, by laying a higher duty upon those articles than that laid by an act, made in the sixth year of his late majesty's reign, entitled, "An act for the better securing and encouraging the trade of his majesty's sugar colonies, &c." whereby such high duties were laid on all foreign sugars, rums, and melasses, to be imported into any of his majesty's colonies in America, as, it was thought, would answer all the ends of a prohibition.

But experience has shewn that law, and also those passed in the 12th and 15th *Car. II.* are too weak to answer the purposes for which they were designed; and that some more effectual remedies must be found to prevent the British traders of North America importing foreign sugar, rum, and melasses, which was a great trade carried on by them from the French islands before the war; and by that means the commodities from North America, wanted in the sugar islands, were greatly advanced to the British planters. And as the northern traders often refused to take any thing from them but ready money, which drained them of almost all their gold and silver, for want of which they were often brought into great distress; therefore all the money the North American traders used to receive from the British planters, was carried to foreign sugar colonies, and there laid out in the purchase of sugar, rum, and melasses, which were carried to our northern colonies, and there supplied the place of sugar, rum, and melasses from the British sugar islands; and consequently robbed them not only of the consumption of so much of their product, but also of their gold and silver too.

Whereas if the planters in the foreign colonies were obliged to purchase what they want from the British subjects with ready money only, and not allowed to give their sugar, rum, and melasses in barter for the same, it would make the balance

of that trade for the future much more in our favour than it has been against us; because we having so greatly extended the British dominion on the continent of America, the French in their sugar islands cannot be supplied with what they want from thence but by the English; therefore the British traders may chuse to be paid for their merchandizes in such manner as they shall please, which the French will be under a necessity of complying with.

It is well known to those who are acquainted with the sugar islands, that the profits of the planter depend upon the vent he finds for his rum and melasses; for if sugar only, and no rum and melasses could be produced from the sugar cane, it would hardly pay the expence of culture, and manufacturing it into sugar. Therefore as the consumption of rum and melasses is stopped or increased, the sugar colonies (whether English or foreign) must respectively thrive or decline. And as rum is not allowed to be imported into old France, or any of its colonies (because it interferes with brandy, which is the product of the mother-country) this evidently shews how much it is in the power of Great-Britain to check the progress of the French sugar islands, and advance that of her own. For if the bringing French rum and melasses into any of the British dominions, can be effectually stopped, all the profits made by rum and melasses, in the French sugar colonies, would be lost to them; because they could find no vent for it in any other part of the world.

This point strictly attended, and invariably adhered to, and the African trade secured to the British subjects, to the extent of their natural and undoubted right, would diminish the growth of sugar in the French islands, and increase it in our own; and might, with the addition of our new acquisitions, very probably in the course of some years, be a means of enabling the English to undersell them at all foreign markets in Europe, and confine them to their own consumption. Therefore it is humbly submitted to the consideration of the legislative power, whether this trade, so apparently hurtful to the national interest of this kingdom, (which will most certainly be carried on in the same manner it was before the war) ought not to be stopped without delay; and the importation of foreign sugar,

rum, or melasses, into any of the British colonies in North America, prohibited under such penalties, and with such encouragements to inform and seize, as may be adequate to the crime, in order to put an effectual stop to such a pernicious and destructive commerce.

From what has been before observed, it will, it is presumed, evidently appear how necessary it must be for the advantage of the British sugar colonies, to promote as much as possible the sale and consumption of rum and melasses, upon which, in a great measure, the well-being and prosperity of the planters depend. On that account, and in order to promote such desirable purpose, suppose the duties on melasses, and the excise on rum, were to be lowered, such procedure would favour our plantations in their rivalry with France, and the lessening these duties will, in a great measure, prevent the smuggling of foreign brandy to such a degree, as may probably augment the revenue arising therefrom, by a greater quantity of rum and melasses being disposed of, which consequently must considerably encrease our navigation; and the disadvantage to our rivals in trade will be in proportion to our success. Besides, rum, if it can be got at a reasonable rate, will greatly increase the consumption of malt spirits, by mixing them in such proportion as are suitable to the palate of an infinite variety of people. This is evident from the great quantities, and the various prices that spirits are sold for under the denomination of rum, which are from 5*s.* or 7*s.* to 10*s.* *per* gallon.

The trade carried on between Great Britain, Ireland, North America, the West India islands and Africa, is of greater advantage to this country, than all our other trades whatsoever, arising from the great exportation of *British* manufactures, *East India* goods, provisions as well as *linens* from *Ireland*, which are paid for with *specie*, *sugar*, *tobacco*, *rice*, *cotton*, and other plantation-produce; and with the commodities of *Africa*, such as *gold dust*, *bees wax*, *elephants teeth*, *gum Senegal*, various sorts of *dying woods*, and particularly *Negroes for the plantations*; whence it manifestly appears, upon the African trade, and the invaluable commerce of our colonies, above two-thirds of the British navigation depends;

and for this very obvious reason it may be asserted, that in the vessels employed for said traffic, the most useful sailors for manning his majesty's navy (the great bulwark of this nation) are bred; because they are inured to the manner of living on board ships, as well in the hot as in the cold climates; which is not the case of sailors taken out of coasting vessels, colliers, and traders to the north seas, as hath been frequently experienced by the many (very useful) lives in our expeditions to the East and West Indies being lost; and that fatality was chiefly owing to their not having been accustomed to live on salt provisions, and to bear the excessive heat of the climate, which they were unacquainted with, and unpractised in.

To prevent the like catastrophes hereafter, when occasion shall require, we would propose the chusing out of the several ships that may lie in the harbours of Great-Britain, such sailors only as shall have been a voyage or more to the hot countries, to man such expedition fleets for those parts of the world, where the sun's power is strong, as the more probable means of preserving the lives of a great number of those valuable sailors, who may not have had a seasoning, and have been mostly employed in the coasting trade and short voyages.

We have been induced to throw out this hint, in hopes that it may engage the attention of some more able pen, to form a scheme for such a good, humane, and noble end, before the commencement of another war.^[1]

It must be allowed by those who have a general knowledge of the trade and commerce of *Great-Britain* and *Ireland*, that the *Negro-trade* on the coast of *Africa*, is the chief and fundamental support of the *British colonies*, by supplying them with that race of useful people called Negroes, to be employed in cultivating the lands. But when there is either a deficiency of them, or that they are purchaseable but at high prices, then such checks must greatly impoverish our British planters; and in consequence, considerably diminish the wealth, power, trade and navigation of these kingdoms, the encrease of which has been, in a great measure, owing to the extensive commerce to and from our colonies and plantations: therefore their not being properly supplied with Negroes, must

be extremely detrimental to them; which induces us to make some observations upon a memorial taken notice of in the *Public Ledger*, of the third of November last, wherein it was asserted, that sir *William Meredith*, one of the representatives in parliament for the town of *Liverpool*, had presented a memorial to the right honourable the earl of *Egremont*, one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state, "setting forth the great advantages of the trade of *Guadaloupe*, where they received 334,605*l.* 11*s.* 2*d.*^[2] for 12,347 slaves, the cargoes of 41 ships, purchased in Africa with British manufactures; praying that the possession of that island might be thought of in the negotiation for peace, if not incompatible with the general scheme of affairs." This memorial we could not have expected from that quarter, recollecting that the great *Hardman* is no more. Had he been living, it would not have been wondered at, as he was noted for his contriving, and being industrious at procuring and presenting, memorials and petitions. He even influenced some *merchants* of the town of *Rippon* in Yorkshire, to petition the parliament, when that great and important trade to Africa was under its consideration. He likewise prevailed on many other towns to petition, all as little interested and connected with the trade of Africa, as *Rippon*; and said *Rippon* was never famous for any other manufactory, that we could hear of, but that of making spurs; and the cream of the jest is, that not a single pair, as a commercial article, was ever sent to Africa; at the same time many other measures were pursued, very singular methods taken, and absolute untruths asserted as facts, to mislead the legislature, in order, as it is supposed, to prevent the forts and settlements being put upon a proper establishment, that were all as inconsistent as the *Rippon* petition.

It was at that period boldly advanced at the bar of the house of Commons, and with great industry propagated among the members, that the forts in *Africa* were only useful, as marks of possession and sovereignty; which, if true, why has 19,565*l.* 14*s.* 2*d.* sterling been expended in building part of a fort at *Anamaboa*, to the 30th June, 1756, as appears by the African committee's accounts to that time, when the further building of that fort was put under the direction of the board of

ordnance^[3]? which sum has been since paid by the public more than the annual grant of 10,000*l.* then insisted as sufficient for the support of the forts. But we have been informed, those prevaricating advocates have since altered their opinion, and think it a very inadequate sum for such purpose: and it appears by the votes of the honourable house of Commons, application has been made to parliament to enlarge the annual grant; and there was granted for the year 1761, 13,000*l.* and for the year 1762, the like sum, by which it is conjectured the said advocates have found it absolutely necessary that the forts ought to be kept in a better state than that of marks of *possession* and *sovereignty* only.

But that cannot be done, when we consider in what manner the money granted by parliament to the African committee, is appropriated in Africa, which the government never receives any account of.

The great argument made use of to the then ministers^[4], to obtain a dissolution of the late African company, by the advocates for the present system, was, that 10,000*l.* was quite adequate and sufficient for the support and maintenance of the forts. This, we believe, was one of the strongest reasons for those ministers adopting their scheme, which had as much truth in it, as many other assertions at that time made use of.

The late company, from their experience, insisted that sum was very insufficient; which it really was, even to give in presents annually to the principal natives, to cultivate such an interest as is not only necessary, but absolutely essential to support and promote the honour, power, jurisdiction, and trade of Great Britain on the coast of Africa. However, there has been granted, since the forts were put under the care of the present Africa committee for their support, from 2d February, 1751, to 2d February, 1763, 136,000*l.* which is 11,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* *per annum*, exclusive of what was expended in building the fort at Annamaboa. Notwithstanding said grants, the forts have not been kept even^[5] as marks of possession and sovereignty; which undeniable truth the editors are ready to prove, if called upon.

Mourn! mourn! O *Liverpool*, for the loss of thy great hero and champion, who was at all times ready to enter the lists in defence of thy trade and commerce. But, Britain rejoice; for what may have been for the advantage of the town of *Liverpool*, might be greatly detrimental and prejudicial to the general trade and commerce of this country and its colonies; which surely must clearly appear from the beforementioned memorial. For we believe it will be allowed, if we were to encrease and extend the number of our colonies in North America, and the West Indies, it would be disadvantageous to Great Britain, unless they can be supplied with a sufficient number of people for their defence and cultivation, at as reasonable an expence as possible; without taking the hands that are useful and necessary in husbandry, and the several manufactures of the mother-country.

Then surely, as Guadeloupe was surrendered by capitulation to the British arms, no longer than since the 4th day of May, 1759; and as the merchants of *Liverpool* had imported 12,347 Negroes into that island some months ago, which must have been the case, or they could not have had so exact an account; we may well conclude that a great number of Negroes have also been carried to *Guadaloupe*, and the other conquered islands, by the merchants of *London*, *Bristol*, and other ports, that carry on a trade to *Africa*, and have been carrying negroes from the time they had the last accounts, which we may suppose to be at least six months preceding the merchants of *Liverpool*'s memorial being presented to lord Egremont.

This must be undoubtedly of great advantage to the *French* planters, and extremely detrimental to our North American and West India colonies, for want of the *Negroes* that have been sold to those conquered islands; which must consequently cause a scarcity, and enhance the price of those carried to the real colonies of Great Britain. Because the merchants of *Liverpool*, and others concerned in the *African* trade, must be truly sensible, that they can find beneficial markets in our colonies for treble the number of Negroes they can purchase with *British* manufactures. So that the consumption of those manufactures is not encreased, as they would insinuate, by their selling Negroes to the *French islands* (for so we must

call them while they have *French inhabitants*) when the selling such Negroes is so apparently disadvantageous to our colonies that are inhabited by British subjects; on which account we submit, whether as we are to give back to France *Martinico, Guadaloupe, Marigalante, Deserade, and St. Lucia*, orders should not be immediately sent to the governors of such islands, to prevent *British* subjects selling any Negroes to the *French*, which it would be impolitic to do, even were we to have kept possession of them.

The ships that have been fitted out, and are upon their voyages with an intention to sell Negroes on the *French islands*, may dispose of them in the adjacent *British colonies*, where they will meet with purchasers for any number, at such prices as will make their voyages profitable. Therefore such order will not be hurtful to the merchants, but of great advantage to the *British planters*, and consequently so to this country.

It is for that reason we insist it was our interest to return those islands to France, to whom (if proper steps are pursued by us) they must and will become a continual expence, burthen and incumbrance; nor would our retention of them have been an advantage to us: for as the inhabitants are *French*, we must always have kept a military force there at a very great expence, of which recruiting would be no small part. And one great consideration ought to be, the *number of British subjects that would die in that unhealthy climate*, if they were only the soldiers that must annually be sent to complete the regiments necessary to be kept on that service. That service alone would be productive of a great expence; and the loss of so many subjects would prove very detrimental to *Great Britain*.

Besides, for argument's sake, let us suppose we had kept *Martinico, Guadaloupe, St. Lucia, Marigalante and Deserade*, it would have been highly disadvantageous to the *British planters*, and must prejudice them much in their circumstances, so as in a short time to reduce the old *British* sugar islands, now so populous and flourishing, to such a state, that it made us tremble to think of it; because the *British African* traders would supply those islands taken from the French with Negroes, in preference to the old *British* colonies;

which fully appears by the number they have been supplied with already; and as those islands are now ceded to France, will be of great advantage to the planters therein, by their having been in our possession, on account of the Negroes they have purchased to cultivate their plantations. And had we kept said islands, as soon as they had been sufficiently stock'd, they would have carried on a trade for the redundant Negroes with their countrymen at *St. Domingo*. Hence it appears, that great care must be taken to prevent their having it in their power so to do after those islands are restored to France; as we do not in the least doubt, but from the intercourse our countrymen have had with them for the sake of profit, contracts will be made for such anti-national purpose. And such a commerce would enable them and the planters of *St. Domingo* to cultivate sugar and other plantation-produce sufficient to supply all Europe; and by such means prevent Great Britain's reaping the advantage that she derives from the exportation of the produce of her colonies: which is so essential a benefit to her, and is one of the first causes of our receiving a balance of trade from foreign countries, and in which the landed interest, merchants and manufacturers of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, as also the *planters* and *merchants* in our *colonies*, are so materially concerned and interested. For the lands in Britain must always rise and fall in proportion as our manufactures and navigation prosper or decline, and the national revenue encrease or diminish, as the trade of our colonies is in a more or less flourishing way.

Therefore is it not evident, that there is not a man in this kingdom, who, in proportion to his possession and property in the community, does not partake of the benefits and advantages accruing from the *African*, *North American*, and *West Indian* trades; and who would not be a sufferer in proportion to his situation in life, should they diminish, by falling into the hands of people belonging to any other nation? where, supposing it to be the case, the profit of those valuable trades must consequently center.

For notwithstanding the advantage the French inhabitants would have had by our retention of those islands, they would take nothing from us for the use of themselves, or their

plantations, but what they were obliged to out of the greatest necessity; as we have no wines to supply them with, which are proper for that country: so that they would have their wines, and every thing else they could possibly procure, from France; having been accustomed from their infancy to wear French, which they would ever look on as their own native manufactures. And sorry we are to say, too many of them are used in the British colonies, as well as in this country. For which reason they would always have a dislike to British manufactures, and that would induce them to pursue every measure to smuggle their own into those islands; and for the sake of profit, many English traders would be induced to carry them from the Isle of Man, Guernsey, Jersey, and other places, in preference to those of their own country, which has already been the case. But supposing it not so, the real profits of those islands, while possessed by French inhabitants, would not center in Great Britain, but in France; because, on account of the difference in religion, they would send their children thither for education, and make provision for themselves to retire there, always looking upon it as their home. Even so our planters do in regard to Great Britain; for all those who go to the West Indies, or are born there, have no intention to end their days in that climate, but are always aiming to lay by a sufficiency to go home, as they call it; that is, the *English* planters to come to *Great Britain*, and the *French* to *France*.

By what has hitherto been advanced, surely it will evidently appear to every impartial reader, that had we retain'd the French sugar islands, they would not have been of any advantage to this country, but on the contrary. It is not the number of islands, where sugar, tobacco, rice, and other plantation-products are raised, that will be advantageous to this or any other country, without they can be supplied with a sufficient number of Negroes for their cultivation; the land being all tilled by hand-labour with the hoe, as there is no ploughing with oxen and horses in the West Indies, except in Jamaica, where two or three planters have used the plough to some part of their plantations, where the soil was light, and of a sandy nature; and all other work is done by *Negroes*, as Europeans cannot do any laborious work there.

Their field *labourers*, *sugar boilers*, *distillers*, *coopers*, *mill-wrights*, *carpenters*, *masons*, *builders*, *smiths*, and *house servants*, are *blacks*; therefore it is not the number of islands, but the greatest number of the *best Negroes* that benefit the mother-country, *which sort* we can make appear, the French since the year 1729, in times of peace, to the commencement of the present war, have been constantly supplied with. That is one of the true causes why they have produced such quantities of sugar, and other plantation-product; that for several years before the war, they were become our rivals at foreign markets, so far as to draw from thence a great annual balance of trade in favour of France.^[6] But this *effect* would have been prevented, if proper measures had been pursued by us for the preservation of the *African* trade, to that part of *Africa* where the hardy Negroes, who are inured to labour in their own country, were to be purchased.

The French, from the year 1729, to the end of the year 1738, carried from the *Gold Coast*, *Popo* and *Whydah*, *fifteen* or *seventeen thousand* of those valuable people annually; when *four thousand*, in any one year during that period, were not carried to the British plantations; which is the truest reason that can be assigned for the prosperity of the French colonies, and the main spring of the great increase of their product. For they do not understand the cultivation and management of a plantation in any degree equal to the British planters: therefore their advantage and success has been owing, in a great measure, to the good and hardy labourers they have had to till their land, and manufacture the product of it.

We doubt not but the merchants trading to Africa will say, they have imported since the year 1729, more Negroes into the *British* sugar islands, than the *French* have to theirs in time of peace (to the commencement of the present war). We admit they have, of Negroes from *Gambia*, *Calabar*, *Boney*, *Benin*, the *windward coast*, and *Angola*. But we take upon us to assert, they cannot with truth say, they have imported to the colonies as many Negroes from the *Gold Coast*, *Popo*, and *Whidah*, which are the most valuable for the laborious cultivation of the sugar cane, and other plantation-product, and manufacturing it into sugar and rum, for the following seasons.

The *Gold Coast*, *Popo*, and *Whidah* Negroes are born in a part of Africa that is very barren; a small bullock carried thither from another part, when fatted, will sell for near 3*l.* a sheep for 20*s.* four small fowls for 4*s.* sterling, and all other provisions in proportion, except fish; and their coarse kind of bread, which is their chief food. On that account, when able to take the hoe in hand, they are obliged to go and cultivate the land for their subsistence. They also live hardily; so that when they are carried to our plantations (as they have been used to hard labour from their infancy) they become a strong, robust people, and can live upon the sort of food the planters allow them; which is, bread made of Indian corn, and fish, such as herrings and pilchards sent from Britain, and dried fish from North America, being such food as they lived upon in their own country. Indeed they live better in general in our plantations; and they are always ready, on their arrival there, to go to the hard work necessary in planting and manufacturing the sugar cane.

On the other hand, the *Gambia*, *Calabar*, *Boney*, and *Angola* Negroes are brought from those parts of *Africa*, that are extremely fertile, where every thing grows almost spontaneously; and where a bullock may be bought for less than 20*s.* a sheep for 1*s.* and a dozen of fowls for the same. They have every other necessary of life in great plenty. On that account, the men never work, but lead an indolent life, and are in general of a lazy disposition and tender constitution; for the necessary work among them is done by the women, which is little more than fetching wood to dress their victuals: so that when those people are carried to our sugar islands, they are obliged to be nursed, to be taken great care of, and brought to work by degrees.

The planters, when the *Gold Coast* and *Whidah* Negroes were carried to the sugar colonies, before the *French* interfered in that trade, found there was not a sufficient number to extend their cultivation, by carrying on all the different planting business, and therefore were accustomed to purchase those tender (the worst sort of) Negroes, and employ them for household servants, to raise corn, aloes, look after cattle, bring

them up to trades and easy labour, knowing them unfit for the hard work necessary in sugar-plantations.

The Negroes of the river *Gambia* are better than the last-mentioned; both of which are much more proper for the North American planters, as they have plenty of provisions at a small expence, and, on that account, can use them to gentle labour, and inure them, by degrees, to work with the same sort of food they were accustomed to in their own country.

But that is not the case of the planters in the sugar islands; which sufficiently proves how disadvantageous it must be to have such imported there, in preference to those that would be so immediately useful and serviceable, or to let the French purchase the better sort.

Yet such has been the case, it being for the interest of the African merchants to supply the *British* planters with the inferior sort, as each Negro costs much less on the coast of *Angola*, &c. than those from the *Gold Coast*, &c. which saves a great deal in the outset of the cargoes sent to *Africa*, and consequently greatly encreases the net profit on the voyages, as the tender and worst sort of Negroes will sell in the sugar islands for near as great a price each as the best, provided there is none of the latter at market; and a greater number of the former being subject to die, must encrease the demand.

This we thought proper to take notice of, to shew how necessary it will be for the interest of this country, that the French should not for the future be allowed to trade in *Africa*, at cape *Appollonia*, or between it and the river *Volta*, where, and at *Popo* and *Whidah*, to the eastward of that river, the valuable Negroes beforementioned, adapted by their natural constitution for cultivating the sugar plantations, are to be purchased; otherwise in times of peace, they will be constantly making encroachments as heretofore; so that when the late company's governor at *Cape Coast Castle* saw a *French* vessel upon the *Gold Coast*, he used to order an officer to go on board with a message to the following purport.

“You are ordered on board the *French* vessel, to tell the master, the governor and council do not make trade

with the subjects of *France*,^[7] nor do they suffer the natives to trade with them. But as there subsists a good friendship and alliance between the king of Great Britain and the French king, if the master should be distressed for water, or such like necessaries, he might have it upon application, by admitting an officer on board, to prevent his having intercourse with the natives, or others, till he should have received such supplies; but that he should not be allowed to trade to the westward of the river *Volta*, which if he attempted, proper measures would be taken to prevent and obstruct his commerce. Therefore, should he neglect those orders, and receive any damage thereby, it would be his own fault; as the governor and council held the trade of the *Gold Coast*, the indubitable right and property of THE ROYAL AFRICAN COMPANY OF ENGLAND.”

This warning sometimes had the desired effect; at others, the governor and council were obliged to arm vessels to drive them off, which occasioned the masters of French ships to protest against the said governor and council. The protests were sent to them by the chevalier *Glandeuves*, commodore of *le Content* and *Oriflamme*, two French men of war, in his letters dated *Annamaboa Road*, the 9th and 12th of February, 1751, wherein he insisted that the French had an undoubted right to trade to any part of Africa, out of gun-shot of any European fort.

How far the then governor and council were justifiable, in arming private ships to defend and preserve the trade and commerce under their care in time of peace, or any future council may be for exerting themselves in a like manner, we will not undertake to say; but are fully satisfied the French will go thither, and that the governor of the fort at Annamaboa will not be able to prevent their having intercourse with the natives, but by arming vessels to see them to the eastward of the river *Volta*. For we are of opinion, property and right are not to be tamely given up in that part of the world, in hopes of relief from our administration at home; it being so remote from the giving of immediate redress, and distant from appeal; or at

least, it has happened so in all complaints made to former ministers. Many instances thereof can be given, which induced us to lay before the public the foregoing observations, as the present seems the most proper time to have such rights settled, to prevent future disputes between the subjects of both nations, which if not prevented in an effectual manner, by putting the forts upon an establishment, that the officers commanding them may be in such situation, as to protect the trade under their care from the encroachments of any foreigners, will inevitably happen.

It is also necessary to remark, that the French should not be permitted to re-settle a factory they had before the war at *Abreda*, about a league below *James Fort*, in the river *Gambia*, which was destroyed by that gallant sea officer, and brave commander Sir George Pocock, in the year 1744, but settled again after the peace; and again destroyed this war by Capt. Marsh, commander of his majesty's ship *Harwich*.

If they are not permitted to re-establish that factory, and the trade of *Gambia* and *Senegal* rivers are pursued in a proper manner, *Goree* will be of no consequence, but an expence to France, for many good reasons we think it improper at present to enlarge upon; knowing there is a work in hand that will soon be published, wherein all the advantages of the *African trade* are fully considered from the time LETTERS PATENT were granted by king Charles the second, the 27th day of September, 1672, to establish and incorporate the late royal African company of England; shewing how the trade was carried on by that company, and the true cause of their having been rendered unable to support their forts and settlements without the aid of government, with the ill consequences that attended the decay of that valuable branch of British commerce, on which the prosperity of our colonies, and so many branches of our manufactures, depend; followed by observations on the qualities of manufactures sent thither, and the regulations that it is necessary should be made regarding the same. To which will be added, a plan to revive and extend that trade to the inland parts of *Africa*, so as the most valuable Negroes may be secured for the British planters, as the only means to prevent the growth of the French colonies, or at least

to make them extremely expensive and burthensome to their mother-country; and, on the contrary, ours to become of the greatest benefit and advantage to Great Britain and Ireland.

Senegal is most certainly a great and valuable acquisition to this country, if put upon a proper establishment, as it will secure to us all the gum trade, so useful in our manufactures, and will greatly encrease the slave, gold and ivory trades in *Gambia* river. For when Senegal was in possession of the French, by means of a fort they had at *Gallam*, about five hundred miles from the sea up that river (since the decline of the late Africa company, by no factory being kept at *Fatatenda*, about the same distance up *Gambia* river) intercepted the greatest part of the slave, ivory and gold trades, that came from the several inland countries to the north east of those rivers: therefore, if proper steps are taken, those trades may be greatly encreased and extended at an inconsiderable expence, not having the subjects of any foreign nation to interest themselves against such a scheme.

The African merchants, to vindicate themselves in carrying on the trade for the *worst Negroes* in preference to the other, give out, that the better sort are not to be come at. But there is no other grounds for such an assertion, than that the roads to those great and populous inland countries lying at the back of the forts and settlements on the *Gold Coast*, have been stopt since the year 1738, which has prevented all intercourse with the natives, except those who live within about fifty miles of the sea-coast; whereby a stop was put to that great trade which came down, when the roads were kept open by the power and influence of the company's officers, and by their alliance and friendship with the several princes and people in power, living in the different *countries near*, and in the *towns* on the said *roads*, that were opened and settled by the late company's officers at a very great expence.

One great reason for the decline of their power and influence was, by the masters of private trading vessels putting in practice every measure they could invent to vilify and render the company's officers insignificant and contemptible to the inland people and Negroes under their command.

By which sinister machinations, they lost that weight and authority so necessary for them to act as protectors of the injured, and mediators in adjusting and deciding disputes that frequently happen between *African* princes; which if the company's officers cannot accomplish by policy, presents, or amicable measures, they should be maintained in such a respectable situation, as to be able to join the injured party, and to compel the refractory to accommodate matters^[8], so as to procure peace, and bring the country to a state of tranquillity.

For it is a mistaken notion, that the company's officers (during their command) created wars between the *African* chiefs, in order to purchase the prisoners, which should be made on either side. This falsehood was propagated also at a certain time, to serve particular purposes. On the contrary, slaves are bred in the inland parts of *Africa*, and sent for sale, according to the want those people are in for *European* manufactures; the same as an ox or horse is taken to market, when a farmer in England wants money to pay his rent, or for other purposes. Every man in Africa is looked upon to be a man of property and power in proportion to the number of Negroes he is possessed of.

When such disputes as above glanced at happen, the consequence is an immediate stoppage of the roads by those people nearest the sea-side, to prevent their adversaries getting guns, powder, or any other necessaries for war; which in 1738 occasioned the king of *Warsaw*, and his allies, to draw a discriminating line along the *Gold Coast* for that intent; and this hath ever since prevented all intercourse and trade with the inland natives in the direct way; as also any gold or slaves for sale coming from them, except a few stolen away by the king of *Warsaw*'s soldiers, with a little gold; and an inconsiderable number of slaves brought from the great kingdom of *Ashantee*, in a very difficult and dangerous way, by the traders of that country, in order to purchase guns and powder at the *British*, *Dutch*, and *Danish* forts at *Acra*.

These traders are obliged to come and return in arm'd bodies, many miles round about through strange countries, where they are afraid of being plundered by the natives of their

European goods, and are themselves in danger of being seized upon, and sold as slaves, which prevents their bringing the trade down as usual.

Consequently, whenever the proper roads are open, and protection given, there will be a great number of slaves, gold dust and elephants teeth brought down to the sea-side, to purchase British manufactures for supplying the inhabitants of those extensive countries, that have stood in need of them so many years.

The obstructing of such intercourse has occasioned our planters being deprived of fifteen or twenty thousand of the best and most useful Negroes yearly for their plantations,^[9] and Great Britain has thereby also been prevented from receiving *fifty or sixty thousand ounces* of gold dust,^[10] besides thirty or forty tons of elephants teeth annually.^[11]

It is highly probable that *Africa* abounds with gold mines, richer than those in the Brazil, or in any other country; for the late African company, in the infancy of their trade, imported from their settlements on that coast, from the year 1675 to the year 1690, as much gold as was coined at the Tower into 400,000 guineas^[12], exclusive of what was sent and brought home by their officers and servants, who were always paid their salaries and commissions upon the trade they made in that commodity, which must have been no inconsiderable quantity; because, as the company extended their forts and settlements upon the Gold Coast, their gold trade increased so much, that they were used to take in exchange for British manufactures, and East India goods in *Africa*, upwards of two thousand ounces of gold weekly, which can be proved from authentic vouchers, and continued so to do until such time as the private traders made incroachments upon them, and overstocked the country with goods by their competitions with each other, which the natives took the advantage of, and insisted upon the traders lowering the price of European merchandize, and raising those of Africa, by keeping their slaves, gold and ivory up to an exorbitant price, and thereby getting as great a quantity of goods, for a few slaves, as was sufficient for their consumption; and was the cause of fewer

being brought from the inland countries, as by the high prices, before observed, the Negroes got what goods they wanted for the small number sold, which also prevented their bringing gold to market, and by which means that valuable branch of the *African* trade, of such importance to this country, was in a great measure destroyed, and the profits thereof centered with the natives of *Africa*.

We believe the private traders will admit they have not altogether imported from *Africa* into these kingdoms two thousand ounces of gold annually^[13]; and that since the act of parliament for dissolving the late company, and putting the forts and settlements under the management of the committee of the company of merchants trading to Africa, the officers commanding there, have not taken gold sufficient to pay the annual salaries of their servants, though they are fewer in number than those that were kept by the late company.

From what has been stated, we conjecture it will appear, that the *British* forts in *Africa* are not upon a proper plan; if they were, the commanding officers for the committee of the company of merchants trading to *Africa*, would, in eleven years and upwards, have opened those roads (which have been so long stopt) that the colonies and mother-country might receive those great benefits and advantages beforementioned, by having the trade brought down to the forts without interruption, from the remotest parts of *Africa*, as it was in the time of the late company's prosperity; but that has not been done, and as the *British* traders declined that trade many years before the *French* seized the opportunity of stepping in, and reaped so great advantages thereby, as to have carried to their colonies, not fewer than one hundred and fifty thousand of those useful people, from the year 1729 to the year 1739.

This induces us to think, that the *British* merchants forsook that trade, and made the opposition they did to the late company, to get the forts and settlements under their management, to prevent other people putting them upon a proper establishment, that might hinder the *French* making the encroachments they have made in time of peace (and consequently carrying to their plantations those most useful

people) in order to follow their more favourite trades to *Benin*, *Calabar*, and the coast of *Angola*, because there they can purchase three hundred Negroes with a cargo of 3600*l.* value, when that number upon the Gold Coast would cost in March last 4950*l.*^[14]. Therefore we fear the private interest of said opposers rather gained an ascendancy over them, to the great prejudice and disadvantage of the British colonies and the mother-country, and to the great emolument of the French; which we thought proper to observe at this juncture, and to hint also, that it will be more fully set forth in the description of the African trade beforementioned.

We hope to see a minister at the head of the administration in this country, devoid of faction and corruption, that no private pique or prejudice against person or party will so far influence him, as not to pay a due and impartial attention to what is laid before the legislative power, relative to that valuable branch of British commerce, the *African* trade.

We shall rejoice that such enquiries will not for the future be prevented by ministerial direction, as happened at a certain period, when it had cost great pains and expence to bring a matter of the utmost importance to this country to a hearing, which was frustrated, by putting a previous question in a great assembly on purpose to prevent such enquiry; notwithstanding several persons had been examined with respect to the *African* trade, as well as the expenditure of public money^[15]; and for no other reason, as we could learn, or can conceive, than^[15] that one of the greatest planters in the world (who at this time so worthily fills the first office in this metropolis) promoted said enquiry; which, under a wise and able minister, would have been a sufficient reason for examining minutely into an affair of such national consequence.

For what must be prejudicial to that planter's interest, must in proportion be so to every other in the sugar colonies: and those of small property must feel the effects of being supplied with the worst sort of Negroes at exorbitant prices, more than those of affluent circumstances.

We have the honour to know that gentleman well, and are fully satisfied he was induced to exert himself in behalf of that

enquiry, not from a motive of private interest, but for the general good of all those interested in, and concerned for the prosperity of the *British* colonies.

We therefore hope he will long live to employ his great abilities in promoting all good, and opposing all bad measures, with that zeal and spirit he hath always done, as also to prevent, to the utmost of his power, any minister (hereafter) daring to smuggle accounts into a certain assembly, although great objections had been made to them, before those objections were canvassed and cleared up; and that he will ever oppose the issuing public money intended for other services, till a satisfactory account is given, which has been the case^[16]. However, we shall not at present enlarge further upon this head, because we know an abstract of the report of the committee, appointed by the honourable house of commons, will soon be published, to which we beg leave to refer our readers.

When the enquiry, relative to the *African* trade, was under consideration before the honourable house of commons in the year 1758, Mr. Pitt, that wise, great and able statesman, who has done his king and country so many eminent and good services, was pleased to declare, that he believed the then method of carrying on the *African* trade wanted alteration and amendment. He also added, that when we should be so happy as to have a peace, he would be at all times ready to examine into it, and give all the assistance in his power to put it upon such a footing, that our plantations might be supplied with the best and most valuable Negroes at reasonable rates. We doubt not but he will make good his promise to lend his able assistance, and also to recommend it to the administration to begin such an enquiry, and continue it, in order to amend the present, or form such other plan, as will preserve and secure that valuable trade to the *British* subjects, as the only and certain means to encrease the produce of the *British*, and lessen that of the *French* colonies. For, with the islands we already possess, and those which it appears by the preliminaries are to be ours, we shall have a sufficient number to raise sugar, &c. for the consumption of all Europe, if our

British planters are properly supplied with the best sort of Negroes for their cultivation.

When that gentleman has assisted in doing this further service to his country, we sincerely wish him a long series of uninterrupted health, to enjoy the fruits of an honourable and permanent peace; and that he may be held in that esteem, reverence and honour, he so justly merits from all lovers of this country.

Should such an enquiry be made, we hope some method will be found out, to examine all persons at the bar of the house of commons upon oath; for if that could be done, it would save the house a deal of trouble, and prevent their receiving false information in matters of the utmost consequence to this nation and its commerce. Because we have heard people assert at that bar, what, to our knowledge, they at the same time knew to be intirely false; which we most sincerely wish could be remedied; or at least that persons examined there, upon matters of importance, should be informed they will be examined with respect to the same matter upon oath, at the bar of the house of lords, which we presume may be done; and if done, will be attended with great and good consequences to the whole community.

We cannot omit observing; that it was industriously reported, propagated, and even urged as an argument in a great assembly, when the state of the sugar islands was under their consideration in the year 1758, that the British planters had formed a scheme for a monopoly, by agreeing only to cultivate such part of their lands as would produce but a certain quantity of sugar, in order to raise the price, and exactingly to obtain as much for a little as a great quantity; which was as true and likely to be the case, as if the farmers of *Great Britain, Ireland, France, Sweden, Poland* and *Denmark* were to enter into a combination to leave such parts of their lands uncultivated, with an unfair intent of raising the price of grain; which we believe any person will readily admit can never be brought about, although a correspondence may be easier, and in much less time carried on between the farmers of those nations, than the planters of our sugar colonies, as those of Jamaica cannot correspond with Barbadoes, or any other part of the sugar

islands, sooner than by way of *Great Britain* or *North America*, which would at least be six months before they could hear from each other; that impediment alone is sufficient to shew, that people thus separated, though ever so well inclined, can never form a monopoly.

Besides, would it not be absurd, even to suppose that the farmers of Great Britain, and other nations, who inhabit corn countries, do not raise as much grain upon their farms as they possibly can procure servants at reasonable wages, and can stock them with horses, cattle, &c. at a cheap rate?

But if they are obliged to pay great wages to their servants, and extravagant prices for their stock, they can then only put in execution the cultivation of their lands by degrees, which is exactly the case of the British planters; for had they a sufficient supply of the proper sort of Negroes at reasonable rates, they would not let any of their land lie idle that was worth being cultivated.

Therefore the true reason why some lands may lie unplanted in the sugar islands is, it would greatly prejudice any planter in their circumstances, to attempt to make new plantations with those tender sort of Negroes, who have been carried to them in great numbers for several years past, and sold at the extravagant prices from 50*l.* to 54*l.* and upwards each; whereas the best sort of Negroes, at the time the late company cultivated and preserved the trade on the *Gold Coast*, *Popo*, and *Whidah*, so as to prevent the French carrying the best sort of Negroes to their plantations, who therefore were sold in ours at the moderate prices of 20*l.* to 25*l.* a head the highest; which was a very great encouragement to the planters to clear their lands, and cultivate new plantations, enabling them thereby greatly to improve and encrease the product of the islands, which it must be their interest to do to the very extent of their power, if their lands are situated with any sort of convenience for water, or other carriage, to convey the product of their plantation to the sea-ports, notwithstanding what was at that time advanced to the contrary, to serve particular purposes, and in order to divert the attention of the legislature from the real causes.

For whatever people may think, who are not well acquainted with the colonies, because they see some of our planters come to settle here in great opulence; that is no reason why those remaining in the colonies are all rich; for if they were, few of them would stay there: on the contrary, they are obliged to cultivate their lands with the greatest pains and industry, in order to raise as much sugar and other product as they possibly can, to pay the debts they owe: for there is not a sugar island but what is considerably indebted to Great Britain; so that whatever disadvantages the planters of our colonies labour under, they must terminate by being prejudicial to this country.

We cannot help once more observing, it is not having the most sugar islands that will be the greatest benefit and advantage to the mother-country, unless such islands can be supplied with a sufficient number of the best Negroes for their cultivation; therefore as *Great Britain, France, Spain, Holland* and *Denmark* have encreased their number, and extended their colonies to such a degree, that Africa cannot sufficiently supply them all with Negroes, including those that the Portuguese want and carry off. On that account, in our humble opinion, the contest ought to be, not who has the most islands, but who can secure the trade to those parts of Africa, where the best and greatest number of those useful people are to be procured, as the only means to promote the interest and prosperity of their colonies who may be so lucky to succeed in doing it, but will be very disadvantageous to their competitors.

From what has been before observed, we presume it will be admitted that every equitable method ought to be pursued and put in practice by Great Britain, to secure to herself as much as possible the African trade, in order to prevent the French purchasing Negroes. For the same reason we take all the measures we possibly can, to hinder the smuggling of wool, or any of our artificers and manufacturers going to France. It cannot be too much insisted on that the Negroes are of as much consequence and use for the cultivation of our colonies, as the wool is to our manufactory, for these obvious reasons; that the Negroes are the artificers, manufacturers, and labourers in the colonies; because the whole process, from clearing and preparing the ground to plant the sugar cane, and

manufacturing it into sugar and rum, and the putting it on board the ships, is the work of Negroes; therefore it surely must be very prejudicial to our interest to sell any of those useful people to the French, even were they to pay gold or silver for them: there are, besides, much more cogent reasons to be given why we should exert ourselves to prevent the French, as much as we can, carrying them from Africa.

If there should at any time be more Negroes brought to the British colonies than are necessary for the cultivation there, which we have great reason to believe is seldom, or perhaps will never be the case, then such Negroes may be sold to the Spaniards or Portuguese, because they would pay gold or silver for them; and moreover, the slaves so disposed of, would be employed in the mines of America, and not in cultivating sugar and other plantation produce, as would be the consequence if the French were allowed to be the purchasers; by which means they would be effectually enabled to become our rivals in trade, as well on account of their national encouragement and advantages peculiar to them, by which they may be capacitated to sell the product of their plantations considerably cheaper than we can ours at foreign markets^[17].

In order to remove the prejudices of many worthy and tender-minded persons against the Negro-trade, which from a delicacy natural to civilized nations, they declare to be quite contrary to all dictates of humanity, and a disgrace to the professors of the christian religion, we shall lay before them and the public a true state of the case. As there is no occasion to enlarge how essentially and absolutely necessary it is to have Negroes for the cultivation of our colonies, which is explained in the foregoing sheets; therefore we shall only beg leave to observe, by the best information that could be obtained, Africa in general is divided into little kingdoms and states, which, when at peace, the natives thereof breed slaves for sale, as our farmers do stock on their farms, and sell them as their necessity requires, which was a traffic carried on among themselves before Europeans traded thither; and when overstocked, their practice was putting to death (often with great torture) the prisoners taken in war. Those that are bred slaves, are always very desirous to be purchased by white

people, as they are infinitely better used than by their black masters, who allow them but a bare subsistence, and treat them with the greatest barbarity; and were used to put several to death through custom, when they buried persons above the common rank, and oftentimes merely through wantonness, which is prevented by their having found an advantageous and lucrative market for them.

Those Negroes taken in war, or prisoners for feloniously committing crimes in despite of the laws, made by the officers commanding the European forts, such laws having been agreed to by the natives under their command and protection, also by those laws made by the kings and princes in the inland countries, are now sold, but often unwilling to go on board ships; perhaps, on account of having lived in a better situation in their own country than those who have been bred up in slavery from their infancy; therefore they often contrive to make their escape, and by speaking the language, persuade others to join and assist them to take the ship from the Europeans, of which we have had too many fatal instances, and is entirely owing to their ignorance in not knowing the place they are destined to; and also that they will be much better treated and looked after in our colonies than they ever were in their country; so that when bought by Europeans, they are in a manner rescued from a state of misery as to treatment; for in the colonies, when they are sick, they have great care taken of them, and physicians to administer proper medicines for their relief; which, on a similar occasion, their black masters would give themselves no care or concern about them.

Besides, many of them are instructed in the principles of religion, and become christians and men of property, which, from experience, we know to be true, having talked with several who had no desire to see their own country, living much more comfortably in our colonies. And we think it would be politic to send two or three Negroes on board every ship that goes to Africa, that can talk the different languages of the countries the master of such ship intends to trade to, that they might inform their countrymen how they had been treated. Such measures, we are convinced, would prevent the loss of many lives, by the Negroes being satisfied they were

going where they would be better treated than in their own country; and, at the same time, to eradicate that opinion many of them have, that they are going to be fed and eaten, which, if effected, would be a means to quiet their minds, so as not to attempt rising on board of ships.

In all fluctuating societies, such as merchants trading to a country so remote and little known as Africa, many more than the majority are liable to be imposed on, even in the trade they intend to support, a misfortune owing to the want of local knowledge, and personal experience.

What chance for truth do those merchants in general stand, whose ears few other accounts reach, than the imperfect relation of some master of a ship, mariner or traditionalist, little to be credited, and less to be depended upon? As to the former (if capable) he has little time or opportunity to speculate into the *trade, manners, customs, and temper* of the *natives*, which they are seldom long enough at a place to do; and who, from motives of immediate profit, pursue measures they think most conducive to make a quick voyage, which is all they turn their minds to; yet many of them, when they arrive in Europe, will take upon themselves to give information in the most interesting matters; which, without having lived in the country for a considerable length of time, it is impossible for them to do with accuracy and any degree of truth, notwithstanding such impositions being propagated, have in general prevailed and influenced the minds of people to such a degree, that those of certain boroughs, far from having, as has been before observed, the least connection, interest, or so much as acquainted in the most minute manner with the African trade, presented their petitions to the honourable house of commons to lay open the same; though many of the said boroughs have not since sent the most trifling adventure to Africa, which at that time, and before, when the forts were under the direction of the late royal African company, the trade was much more free and open than it has been since under the management of the committee of the company of merchants trading to Africa, which we conjecture will appear from the following extract of letters, certificates and affidavits^[18], we think it highly necessary, and even our

duty, to lay before the public, thereby to shew how far they have been imposed on by false pretenders to knowledge.

Extract of a letter from on board the Fly sloop at Bristol, Alexander Graham, master, dated 16 March, 1750, to the late royal African company's governor at Cape Coast Castle.

“I write this to acquaint you, that the French vessels sailed two days ago; I acknowledge myself obliged to you for the method you have taken to send them off, am very much obliged to you for your advice; have sent my armourer to alter some handcuffs, your permission will much oblige, &c.”

Extract of a letter from six British masters of vessels, dated on board the Polly in Annamaboa Road, 20 March, 1750. To the same.

“Your favour of yesterday we received, and thank you for the promise of assistance, in protecting the privileges of the British subjects trading to this place, too much invaded by the French, and too little protected from home, but at this time shall have no occasion to trouble you. The French ship is sailed, &c.”

Extract of a letter from Richard Haskins, master of a ship from Bristol; dated Annamaboa Road, 27 Dec. 1750. To the same.

“Am much obliged to you for your kind intelligence, and all other favours; I shall be obliged to you to dispatch the carpenter as soon as possible, being in great want of him. I am, &c.”

Extract of a letter from John Jepson, master of a snow from Rhode-Island, dated Annamaboa Road, 3 July, 1751. To the same.

“I am sorry you are going off the coast: but however, as I can do no more for you, beg to return you my hearty and sincere thanks for your many favours from time to time, not only from your willingness to supply us with any thing in your power of tradesmen’s work, or any other thing; but also for your pains and vigilance in protecting the trade, &c. which will always be justifiable, and hope will redound to your honour and credit, which is the sincere wish, &c.”

Extract of two letters from Henry Ellis, master of the ship Hallifax, from Bristol, dated Annamaboa Road, the 13th, and 28th July, 1751. To the same.

“The boards you sent me were of real service; I hope you will not omit charging any expence I put you to, as I can discharge that, though not so easily your good offices: we cannot help the death of the slaves, they are mortal; but do not think it adviseable to give them rice, as that kind of diet first gave them a swelling.”

N. B. He landed all his sickly slaves, which were kept and taken care of in the castle.

“We are not a little astonished at the pains these new agents take to prejudice the shipping here, by settling factories ashore to intercept the trade, and by giving equal prices with us, in order to distress us the more; it has already been some money out of the merchants pockets; we have been obliged to raise the price, or lie idle, under the hardships we endure. I cannot help observing the chagrin of the Liverpool captains, who loudly complain of the new management.”

“I entirely join issue with you, that this new-fram’d project will become an errand job, though but for a season; for I look upon it, the physic of commerce, which, though it may disorder, as at present, will in the end work its cure. I am, &c.”

Extract of a certificate of eight British masters of vessels, dated Annamaboa Road, 3 July, 1751. To the same.

“We being informed that a report hath been spread, that the late royal African company’s governor commanding on this coast, hath, during his command, acted in an arbitrary tyrannic manner, both to Europeans and natives on this coast; do hereby, in justice to the reputation of that gentleman, voluntarily certify, that we never heard of, or experienced, any part of his character or behaviour but what was humane and good, tending to promote the British interest and trade in these parts. And farther, that he has, from time to time, readily assisted us with all things each or any of us stood in need of at cape Coast Castle, during his command there, to the utmost of his power, as we sincerely believe. In witness whereof we have set our hands, &c.”

Certificate from Capt. Thomas Derbyshire, of Liverpool, relating to the use granted him of Tantomquery fort.

“This is to certify whom it may concern, that during my making a voyage to the Gold Coast of Africa, and my lying at Annamaboa, I settled a factory at Lagoe; where from a disturbance there seemed likely to be in the country, I did not think my goods safe in the factory-house I had taken: and on my being at cape Coast Castle in the year 1750, and intimating the same to the then governor, he offered me the use of Tantomquery fort to carry on trade therein, which I accepted; and ordered my gunner to take my goods from the factory at Lagoe, and lodge them in Tantomquery fort, which he did, and continued in the same for upwards of three months to carry on his trade. And Mr. John Clifton, chief of said fort, had orders to render him every service and good office in his power, without fee or reward; neither did the said governor receive any benefit, profit or advantage in any shape or manner, in consideration for

my having the use of the fort aforesaid. To certify which, I set my hand this 16 Aug. 1751, &c.”

Extract of a certificate, dated 28 Dec. 1753, from seven masters of ships, that in the late company's time traded to the coast of Africa.

“That the late company's governor, during the continuance of his authority and command on the coast of Africa, did every thing in his power to promote the British interest and trade there: and from time to time assisted in doing us such service as our occasions required. In witness whereof we set our hands, &c. &c.”

We think it unnecessary to trouble the public with any further proofs relative to the conduct of the late royal African company and their officers, to shew that they did every thing in their power to promote the trade of the British subjects in Africa, as we shall reserve them for a work that is in hand; therefore will only state some facts regarding the African committee, their governors, and officers by them appointed to have the command and management on the Gold Coast and Whydah in Africa, for the public to form their judgment from.

That by an act of parliament, passed in the 23d year of the reign of his late majesty, the trade to Africa was intended to be made free and open to all his majesty's subjects, without distinction or preference. But contrary to the intentions of the said act, that trade has been engrossed and monopolized by the officers of the committee on the Gold Coast and Whydah, by their entering into a confederacy or joint stock, and intermixing the government supplies with their own merchandize, and by that means assorted themselves so as to command said traffic.

Those officers have many other great advantages over free merchants and traders, such as having a considerable part of their private merchandize sent to them freight free, their extraordinary influence over the natives, by the command of the several castles to deposit their effects in, salaries,

maintenance, European servants, artificers, doctors, castle-slaves, canoe-men, canoes, medicines, stores and necessaries of all sorts, being under their management and direction. Besides, the presents to princes, caboceers, and great men of the countries, being defrayed by the public, together with the said benefits arising from the government supplies; and many other advantages which they have taken, whereby they acquired such a superiority over the free traders, as obliged the merchants of Bristol and Liverpool to apply by memorial in the year 1753, stating therein the foregoing facts to the lords commissioners of trade and plantation for redress, which will appear by said memorial, supported by the following affidavits.

“Affidavit of William Brown, master of the Bristol, sworn 16 June, 1753, saith, that when he was last in Africa carrying on trade, was informed by Brew, chief of Tantumquery, and Withers, chief of Winnebah, that they were engaged in partnership in the slave trade with Melvil, Young, and the other officers at cape Coast Castle.”

“That Melvil and others told deponent, they expected a ship from Holland with a Dutch cargo, which ship they had some time before sent to Jamaica with slaves.”

“That he was in company with Dacres, chief of Accra, who informed him Young was coming to turn him out of the fort, by reason he would not enter into partnership with Melvil and Young; that Dacres declared he should have been glad to have continued his employ, but rather than be uneasy he would quit it, and soon after did so. That deponent could not purchase from the chiefs of forts, slaves under an ounce and half, or two ounces a head more than he gave for those of equal goodness to the Negro traders, occasioned by the trade being carried on by the chiefs of the forts.”

“That deponent was informed by the Negroes at Annamaboa, if he wanted to trade under the forts, he must take canoes and canoe-men; for the canoe-men

under the forts were overawed by the chiefs, and they durst not assist him in trading; and deponent did so, and should have been under difficulties if he had not so done; and deponent found the Negroe traders under said forts, cautious and fearful of trading with him, lest the chiefs should know thereof, and sent to deponent in a private manner, when they had slaves to dispose of.”

“That cape Coast, Tantomquery, Winnebah and Accra were used by the chiefs as repositories for their market slaves, and saw them lodged in said castle and forts; that Negroes will bear a high price as long as the chiefs are permitted to trade in them, which will destroy the trade with all persons, but the chiefs and those settled at the forts.”

“Affidavit of James Hamilton, chief mate of the Polly of Bristol, sworn the same day as above. Swears to the same purport and effect as above set forth by Brown, in regard to the chiefs copartnership conversation with Dacres, and his being displaced, and the high price of slaves, and the reasons, &c. And then saith, that during his voyage, he hired a factory at Lagoe, and endeavoured to purchase slaves; on which Brew sent Negro traders and goods thither to oppose deponent; and Brew told deponent, it was impossible for him to trade to same advantage as Brew could, as he had so good assortment of goods; that if deponent gave eight ounces a head for slaves^[19], Brew would give eight and half; and to intimidate deponent, declared he would send the servants of the forts up the paths, and prevent the trade coming down, and accordingly did send them with liquor, and carried the traders to his own fort. That Brew refused to sell deponent slaves; and his reason was, Melvil had wrote him not to sell, as he could get a better price at cape Coast. That Young at Winnebah refused deponent slaves at ten ounces per head, unless deponent would give him the very best of his cargo, which would have unsorted him.”

“That Young refused him water for fifteen slaves, and deponent was obliged to give the natives fifteen shillings for forty gallons. That he went on shore with his gold taker at Succondee to trade, carried some checks with him: that Hipposly, the chief there, took the gold taker on one side, whispered him, and threatened to whip him if he ever saw him bring goods there to trade with the natives.”

“That the natives and canoe-men at all the forts were fearful of trading with deponent, and declared they were afraid of being seen by the chiefs; that the forts were used as repositories for slaves, and that the trade will be hurt by the chiefs trading, as set forth by Brown.”

“Affidavit of Alexander Graham, master of the Fly, sworn the same day, saith, that when he and Jenkins, commander of the Silvia, were trading at Annamaboa, they at first bought slaves at five ounces and half, and from thence to seven and a half per head, and went on in a good way. On a sudden found a stagnation, enquired the occasion, and were informed the prices were raised at the neighbouring forts; and this deponent was obliged to give an advanced price; that if the chiefs trade, the prices will be high, and the trade hurt.”

On the foregoing affidavits, and other allegations and facts, “the merchants of Bristol and Liverpool presented a memorial to the lords of trade, setting forth among other things,

“That an act was passed in the year 1750, for making the trade to Africa free and open, for which end the management of the forts and affairs were trusted to the care of nine persons, a committee, as there set forth; that the said committee had the power of appointing officers and servants for managing their affairs in Africa, and discharging them at pleasure for not obeying their orders, or other misdemeanors; and they were to take care that the orders given their servants did not extend to public detriment, or the hurt of the free traders.”

“That officers were appointed, and leave given to trade (but not with foreigners, except Portuguese, for gold and tobacco)

so that they became the regulators of the market. The committee, by the act, are annually to lay before the general meeting of the company of the chambers of London, all resolutions, orders and instructions given their servants previous to such meeting, and copies to be sent to Bristol and Liverpool; but they have not so done.”

“That the committee’s chief agents, instead of regarding the interest of their constituents, have acted opposite thereto, as soon as in power. Instead of assisting the free trader, they entered into a joint stock copartnership, and attempted a monopoly more formidable than any could have been at home, as they were on the spot, and had the whole power.”

“That the merchants of Bristol had advice of the chief proceedings from their commanders, which on their return they found too true; and that by the attempts of the chiefs to engross the trade, the prices of slaves were raised much higher than ever known. Also that the commanders were denied what strangers were always before assisted with, *viz.* canoes, canoe-men, wood, water, &c.”

“That a memorial was laid before the committee for their relief, but, to their great surprize, they found their complaints were treated as groundless surmizes, and unjust aspersions of the character of their officers, arising only from personal prejudice and party interest; a second and several repeated applications were made, and the committee at last informed the managers, that they had referred the matter to the lords of trade.” Accordingly their lordships heard the matters in dispute between the merchants of Bristol and Liverpool, and that of the committee.

“And were of opinion, that the officers and servants employed by the committee, ought not to be allowed to trade for Negroe-slaves further than the amount of the salaries allowed them by the committee; and that such slaves should be disposed of for ivory, gold, bills of exchange, or other proper returns to England only.”

The committee paid no regard to their lordships opinion, consequently we conjecture, no regulation or orders has since been given by them to their servants; or if there has, the execution of such orders have not been enforced; for it is a truth which cannot be contradicted, that governor Melvil to his death, and the other officers of the committee, during his command, carried on the Negroe trade, and sent them from Africa to America for their own accounts, without the least reserve or restraint; also that governor Senior, and the officers under his command, did the same; and that governor Bell, who commanded at cape Coast Castle, when the last advice came from thence, did carry on a trade for Negroes, and continues to send the Negroes so purchased, to America, in the same manner his predecessors had done; which the gentlemen of the African committee must know was, and is the practice; and also that it is most certainly contrary to the true *spirit, meaning and intention* of the *act of parliament*, passed in the 23d year of his late *majesty's reign*, for *extending and improving the trade to Africa* (by which the African company was established) and the opinion of the lords of trade and plantation; for the legislative power could mean no other than to put all his majesty's subjects upon an equal footing.

But lest the gentlemen of the African committee's memories should fail, we will remind them of some things that surely could not have happened without their knowledge; (to wit) the committee appointed Mr. *Richard Brew* in the year 1761, to the command of *Annamaboa* fortress; although at the same time they could not but know that he had fitted out the *Brew*, a large ship at Liverpool, and another in the river Thames; the former with a large cargo for Africa; the latter went to Holland for Dutch merchandize, to compleat her cargo, to the manifest disadvantage of this country, because it prevents so much of our manufactures and East India goods being exported; and the *Dutch brandy* and *Geneva* interfere with the exportation of *British spirits*, besides being of great disadvantage to the rum trade from the *British colonies to Africa*. Said ship returned from Holland, and arrived at Portsmouth in or about the month of July 1761, where Mr. Brew went on board; and also Messrs. Westgate and Flemming, who had been in the committee's

service upon the coast of Africa: but, as we have been informed, they are now gone out in partnership with said Brew. We have also been informed, that the cargoes of the said ships were landed in Africa, and deposited in the fort of Annamaboa; and that Negroes were purchased with said cargoes, and sent from thence to Jamaica for the account of Mr. Brew, and those concerned with him.

It is also as true that Mr. Samuel Smith, merchant, in the Old Jury in London, one of the committee of the company of merchants trading to Africa, was the acting agent for Messrs. Brew, Westgate and Flemming, during their residence in Africa; that he received their consignments from thence, and acted for them by commission after their arrival in England; likewise during their stay there, and since their arrival in Africa; and also that Mr. Smith lately fitted in the river Thames a large ship with a great cargo: and we have reason to believe from good authority, that said ship and cargo was fitted out for the account of Mr. Brew, and others concerned with him; which ship is now on a voyage to Annamaboa; but whether any of the African committee are concerned or interested in said ship, besides Mr. Smith, we cannot take upon us to say.

We conjecture it never was intended by those gentlemen who prepared the act of parliament, which appointed there should be a committee of nine persons, who were to have the care of the forts in Africa, with the charge and application of the monies granted by parliament for their support, that any one of those persons should supply merchandize to be paid for with the public money under their care and management. However, such has been the case, as appears by the committee's accounts laid before parliament. The following is an abstract of their last account for the year 1761, so far as it relates to any of the committee-men furnishing merchandize; by that our readers may form a judgment on their other annual accounts, they being nearly the same as to the amount of what the African committee supplied the public with. Abstract of the beforementioned account as follows:

Messrs. Touchett and company *l. s. d.*

for Manchester goods	1774	14	9
Smith and company for Irish linen			
and provisions	796	12	11
Aufere and company for East			
India goods	349	1	6
Cust and company for ditto ditto	250	2	6
Mr. William Boden for tobacco	39	0	6
	<u>3209</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>

The following are clauses of the act of parliament that provides for the election of the African committee.

“Page 550. And it is hereby further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that in all future elections, the said committee of nine persons shall annually, on the third day of July in every year, be nominated and chosen as follows; that is to say, three of the said committee shall be nominated and chosen by the major part of the freemen of the said company, admitted to the freedom of the said company in London, who shall assemble for that purpose at London; three other persons to be of the said committee, shall be chosen and nominated by the major part of the freemen of the said company, admitted to the freedom of the said company in Bristol, who shall assemble for that purpose at Bristol; and three other persons to be of the said committee, shall be chosen and nominated by the major part of the freemen of the said company, admitted to the freedom of the said company in the town of Liverpool, who shall assemble for that purpose at Liverpool.”

“Page 554. And be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that no person shall be capable of being chosen, or acting as a committee-man above three years successively.”

By the foregoing clauses it was most certainly intended that the election for committee-men should be free and uninfluenced, but that has not happened; for there was great

interest made by those who were chosen committee-men the first year after the act passed, for establishing *the company of merchants trading to Africa*. After which, the several tradesmen employed by the African committee in London, and by their friends in Bristol and Liverpool, took up their freedom of the new company, in order to vote for committee-men; so that, at the expiration of the first year, when the committee-men that had been chosen for *London, Bristol* and *Liverpool* for the preceding year, could act no longer, then, or at the expiration of the three years (which we cannot now take upon us to say) three new committee-men were chosen instead of three that went out, which nine committee-men so chosen, continued to act for three years, when the three other were again elected; by which means there are twelve persons who take it by rotation alternatively, to be of the committee or not, as they agree among themselves; on which account it is a folly for any person, not being one of the twelve, to attempt getting elected a committee-man for either *London, Bristol, or Liverpool*; there having been as great interest made against such persons who have offered themselves, as hath happened on some occasions preceding the election of a member of parliament; therefore we have the greatest reason to believe, there is not any person who will again attempt to stand a candidate in opposition to one of the twelve persons who have had the direction and management so long, of which number those gentlemen are, we have mentioned in the account of the merchandize supplied by the committee-men, page 51.

The several articles of merchandize purchased in Holland, are paid for in money, or bills of exchange, which is very disadvantageous to this country; and such goods may serve to make an assortment with those paid for by the government, and sent to Africa for the support of the forts there; which has been proved to have been the case before, consequently may be so again. That fact being admitted, and indeed it would be folly to think otherwise; what chance can any private traders have, when the committee's servants have such a glaring emolument, besides so many other advantages over them? Were there any reason to ground the least supposition, that all things in Africa are carried on upon the square, and no

methods practiced by the officers that command the several forts to monopolize the trade; can any one think even in such case, that private merchants, or matters of ships, who are obliged to pay *customs, house and warehouse rents, servants,* and all sorts of other contingent expences, can possibly carry on a trade in any degree of equality with those persons, who are, as hath been before observed, exonerated from every article of expence?

The committee's servants having such advantages, can it be supposed any private trader can stand any chance in trade with them, as said trader must settle in a negroe town, in a mud house covered with thatch, there being no other sort of dwelling to be got, without carrying tradesmen of all sorts from Europe to build it, which would be attended with too great an expence and risk for any private adventure to undertake? Therefore, on account of the frequent fires that happen in negroe towns, persons well acquainted with them, would not insure any property lodged therein for twenty-five *per cent.* annually. That alone is sufficient to deter any one from settling, except some of the old or new companies discarded servants, whose narrow circumstances discourage them from returning to Europe, not knowing what else to do with themselves; for there has not one of the young men from Bristol or Liverpool, &c. that were to have been intrusted with cargoes by their relations and friends, to go and settle under the protection of the British forts in Africa, has yet made a single attempt to do it, though that was made use of as an argument, and enforced with great energy by gentlemen, to obtain a dissolution of the late royal African company (and in which they succeeded). But no such boasted consequence has taken place, because the people of those places were not to be lulled on to adventure their property, under the notion of a free trade. They very well knew what hardships must attend those who were necessitated to settle in a negroe town, from a knowledge, as soon as they did, they must become subservient in a manner, and brother citizens with the negroes. It is a joke to think they can make use of the forts to lodge and defend their properties in; for the very persons who (we should imagine) by the spirit and intention of the act of parliament,

ought to be their defenders, will take every measure, in proportion as they rival them, and curtail their trade, to exercise their power over the natives, to prevent the private trader succeeding with them, which will create disputes between the officers commanding the forts and the towns people under them, in which every private trader must bear a part; for no man can settle in a negroe town without paying his *freedom*, and entering into a league to become a *native*, and partake of that *township's misfortunes, advantages and customs*. Is there any difference then between a European trader and an African? None! one is a native black Negroe, and the other is become a white one: so that whenever a dispute happens between *the natives* and the officers aforesaid, the indenized European will be under the compulsive necessity of joining his black fellow *townsmen* against his *countrymen* and *fortress*, which the *British* nation intended for his *preservation* in time of *danger*, and last *resort*.

From what we have before advanced, our readers may naturally wonder if the trade to Africa, where the forts are situated, is carried on so much to the disadvantage of the British traders, and so greatly for the benefit of the officers of the African committee, why said traders do not continue their complaints, in order to have their grievances redressed. We conjecture one reason for their not doing so, is the difficulties they had to encounter when they presented their former complaint to obtain satisfaction, which arose from the opposition raised against them by the African committee, who refused to give their officers such orders, as would have obliged them to put in execution the *lords of trade and plantations opinion*. Being defeated in their first attempt, it is natural to suppose they were fearful of applying again to the legislative power, lest the methods pursued to carry on that valuable branch of commerce, since it has been under the management of the African committee, should be maturely and attentively enquired into; for there has been, and is now, as much reason for such examination, as there was in the year 1753, 1755, 1756 and 1758. But then it began to become too serious; and if continued fairly, might have been a means of putting the forts upon a new and respectable establishment,

such as would have enabled the officers commanding them, to have secured the natives under their protection from the danger they may be in from enemies of their own colour, and the arbitrary injustice often imposed upon them by the officers of our good friends and allies. The Dutch residing in Africa, to have prevented said *Dutch officers*, by their superior power, from wresting violently and unfairly any part of the territories belonging to the *British forts*, or detaining and imprisoning any of the natives living under their protection, both which they have illegally done since the decline of the late company's power, and confined a number of them, notwithstanding all remonstrances made by the British officers, till that *noble and gallant* commander, the present honourable lord *How* arrived in his majesty's ship *Glory*, with the *Swan* sloop under his command, upon the Gold Coast, in the year 1751, who soon after his arrival, did examine with the greatest attention, all the original papers relative to the cause of the dispute that happened between the officers of the English and Dutch companies. After such examination, he demanded from the Dutch general the prisoners he had confined during said dispute in the castle of St. George's D. Elmina, the principal Dutch fort upon the coast of Africa in that noble manner which it has ever been the invariable rule of that judicious, worthy, and great commander to pursue in the service of his country^[20].

It is to be hoped that the British forts will be put upon such an establishment, that the officers commanding them will be sufficiently empowered to hinder the Dutch officers from exercising that arbitrary power they have done, and continued to do, over the *Portuguese* upon the *Gold Coast of Africa*, to prevent their trading at the British settlements, in open violation of a treaty concluded between the English and Dutch principal officers in Africa, and ratified by both *companies* in *Europe*^[21].

If the African committee has not represented that affair in a true light to the government, we are surprized they have neglected it, as it is a very valuable commerce now wholly engrossed by the Dutch; who will not suffer the master or supercargo of any *Portuguese* vessel to trade at the English

forts, or with the *British* subjects, notwithstanding the beforementioned treaty, which, perhaps, might be deemed obsolete, since the dissolution of the late company. If that should be the case, then, in our humble opinion, it ought to be renewed, as well as many other regulations made between the English and Dutch in Africa.

If the British officers should once again obtain that influence and power so essentially necessary for them to have, in order to open the trading roads to the most distant inland countries of Africa, so long stopped, which would be of immense advantage to this country, and, at the same time, to prevent the subjects of France hereafter carrying to their colonies the most valuable Negroes, as we have observed they did before the war, and which will in a great measure be proved, by the extracts of the following letters from the captains Strange and Wyndham, commanders of two of his majesty's ships war, dated Africa, 20th Sept. 1740, and 30th Aug. 1742.

Capt. Strange writes to the following purport:

“The French, by the advantages of their goods, especially Brandies, occasions a great price they give for their slaves, which has brought the English and Dutch trade to the lowest ebb.”

Capt. Wyndham writes as follows:

“This concludes the present state of the royal African factories; and as to the Dutch factories, they, as far as I can learn, make no great hand of their trade any more than the English; the French, who has ten ships on the coast to our one, seem to flourish and carry all before them.”

We think it necessary here to observe, that notwithstanding almost all the trade had been for some years before, and at that time, carried on by the French on that part of the coast where the most valuable Negroes were to be got; the separate British traders made no application to the legislative power to prevent

such pernicious commerce, though several remonstrances were made for that purpose by the late royal African company to the government; who also did lay before the public, in several letters inserted in the daily papers, as well as by pamphlets, the danger of the French incroachments.

Yet as soon as the private traders found the said company applying to parliament for money, to put their forts upon a proper and respectable footing, to prevent foreign innovations upon the territory and trade under their care, they took the alarm, awaked from their lethargy, strained every nerve, and put every scheme in execution their invention pointed out, to prevent the company's succeeding, and to obtain their dissolution, which they compleated in the year 1750. But how far the African trade has been improved thereby, in upwards of twelve years that the African committee have had it under their direction and management, will appear from the facts and truths we have before stated, to which we beg leave to refer, and to the judgment of our readers.

Thus far we can undertake to say with truth, notwithstanding the great noise and clamour raised at that time by the African merchants for an open trade; it was then much more open and free for all British subjects trading thither, than it has been since under the direction of the African committee, and the national grants of money more regularly and fairly accounted for, as the late company had, for some years before, sent no ship to Africa, but freighted the merchandize, stores and provisions purchased with the money granted by parliament on board private ships; nor were their officers or servants permitted to trade otherwise than to barter to the best advantage. The merchandize purchased with the *public money* for the better support of the *forts*, out of which said servants could neither make embezzlement or advantage to themselves, according to the established rules laid down by the company, and the method by which their principal officers and other servants were to account for the same, who were obliged to give ample and sufficient security, strictly to adhere and conform to such rules. All persons in the late company's service, of what station soever, that were entrusted with any of their or the government's effects, whether the value was much

or little, they were obliged to keep a true account of all their receipts and disbursements in writing, and at the end of every two months at farthest, to render to the council, which presides at the principal fort, two originals signed by said person so intrusted, and attested to be true by some other of the company's servants, who had been privy to his transactions. That the then accountant residing at the principal fort, examined and made his remarks upon the account so rendered; and required vouchers in writing for such transactions as were therein mentioned to have been had with Europeans, it being impracticable to have written vouchers for dealings with the natives^[22].

That said accountant laid all accounts so rendered, with his remarks thereon, before the said *council*, who *examined*, *allowed*, or *disallowed* such accounts, &c. made such *deductions* or *abatements* to as they saw cause. That afterwards every such account was returned to the accountant as one of the vouchers from which he was to compose the general books to be sent home to the company. That by general Books is meant, journals and ledgers, where the collections, arising from the vouchers beforementioned, were reduced into order and method. That the council abroad had not power to pass, or allow any *account* or *voucher finally*; every thing being subject to the *company's* future *examination* and *approbation in England*.

That each journal and ledger contained the accounts of six months, which after having been duly stated and balanced abroad, they were sent home to the company by the first conveyance, together with all the original vouchers from which they were composed and signed; duplicates thereof were deposited in the principal forts, in case of loss or accident. That as soon as possible after the arrival of the said journals and ledgers in England, they were compared by the company's accountant general (who was one of the first accountants in Europe) with the vouchers, and the said vouchers themselves were examined; that objections and deductions were thereupon made by the company, when due cause was found for so doing. It must now surely clearly appear, that so many examinations of the books and accounts,

made by persons whose private interest had not the least connexions with each other, must render it extremely difficult for the late company's servants to *embezzle* or *misapply* any of the effects committed to their charge with *impunity*, or without being *detected*.

That after the examinations aforesaid of the accounts, they were delivered to the *auditor* of his *majesty's imprest*, and after they were examined and compared by the deputy-auditor with the vouchers, and certified by him they were right, then the company obtained a *quietus* to discharge them from any *sum* or *sums* of *money* so accounted for, that they had received from the *public*; having first sworn to the truth of such part of said accounts as had been transacted under their own inspection, in Europe before one of the barons of his majesty's exchequer.

The following is the copy of a clause from the act of parliament *for extending and improving the trade to Africa*, directing in what manner the committee are to account for the monies they receive from the public for the support of the forts in Africa. In page 556.

“It is enacted that the committee shall, within one month after the expiration of the year, for or during which they shall have been chosen committee-men, lay before the cursitor baron of the exchequer, an account of all the money received by the committee during the preceding year, and of the application thereof, upon oath. And the said cursitor baron shall, within one month after the said account shall be laid before him, examine, pass, and audit the same; and for the better discovering of the truth of such account, the said cursitor baron is hereby empowered to examine any of the said committee-men, and such other person or persons as he shall judge necessary, upon oath, touching the articles or particulars in such account expressed, or such of them as the said cursitor baron shall think fit; which account, so audited and passed by the cursitor baron, shall be final and conclusive, and shall be a full and absolute discharge to the said committee-men, without their

being compelled to give or render any further or other account thereof.”

By the foregoing clause, the African committee is only obliged to account for the application in *Europe* of any monies they receive from government, or otherwise, for the support of the *African forts*, by laying their annual account before the cursitor baron, how they have appropriated said monies, whether by purchasing and shipping merchandizes, stores, and other supplies for the use of the forts, or of any other manner they might have disposed of the same^[23].

By said clause, the cursitor baron is obliged to audit and pass the committee’s account in one month after it is laid before him; though he should have objections thereto, as he had to their accounts for years 1754, 1755 and 1756. However, he passed them, but submitted it to the house of commons to allow some charges in said accounts, or not, that he certainly thought were charged contrary to act of parliament, or he would not have objected to them. But that would have appeared as well as many other facts, with respect to their management and accounts, if the report, consisting of 87 pages, of the committee, appointed by the honourable house of commons to examine into the state and condition of the forts in Africa in the year 1758, had been examined into. All we can take upon us to say with respect to that affair is, said report was prevented being taken into consideration by the house, in consequence of a *motion* being *made* and *seconded* for such *purpose*, by the *African committee’s friends*.

We can with truth undertake to say, that many irregularities in the African committee’s accounts were pointed out during the examination before the several committee’s appointed by the house; upon which they desired leave to bring in subsequent accounts to clear up such objections as had been made, one of which was presented to the committee the 22d April, 1756, wherein the African committee deducted from the balance of a former account they had presented 1891*l.* sterling. We shall only quote this one instance, to shew how necessary it is that the African committee and their servants should be accountable to the public in the same manner the late African

company was, for any monies they are intrusted with by government, for the application of said monies on the coast of Africa, before they should obtain a discharge for the same, which would lay them under a necessity to examine minutely into the accounts they receive from their officers in Africa, of the application of said monies there; which, as they are now no-ways accountable for, we may, we hope without being thought severe, presume is not done; which will, in a great measure, appear by the subsequent account before quoted: besides, we fear people, who have accounts of their own to look after, seldom give themselves much trouble about those of the public, unless obligated thereto.

When the officers, who have the application of the public money in Africa, are once satisfied that their accounts will undergo a strict examination by the committee, and also at the auditor of the imprests office; that it will induce them to be careful how they dispose of the merchandize, &c. committed to their charge; as such *officers* and their *sureties* will be liable to make good any deduction there, may be made from their accounts. It will likewise be very advantageous to the inferior servants of the committee; for such good purpose, a method can be pointed out to prevent the merchandize purchased with the public money being made use of by the superior officers in trade, for their own account and emolument, to the great injury of the others, many instances of which we have to produce; also that the soldiers, under-servants, and company's slaves have been paid out of the refuse goods that the commanding officers had taken in the course of their trade.

A single instance of such inhumanity to the inferior servants we think sufficient to trouble the public with, which happened during governor Melvil's command; and that we should not now particularly take notice of, but as it fell under our observation when we were upon the spot. It also was a charge urged against Mr. Melvil when living, which he never attempted to contradict, to wit, that John Sweidger, a Prussian, and Gardiner at Cape Coast, desired his discharge, wanting to go to his own country. Mr. Melvil, the then governor and treasurer at Cape Coast Castle, whose business it was to give written orders upon the warehouse (or storekeeper) to pay the

servants, gave said Sweidger a note upon the warehouse-keeper, for wages due to him, amounting to 28*l.* gold value, which is about 27*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* sterling, which said warehouse-keeper offered to pay in guns, that would not even purchase the poor man a little fresh provisions for his voyage. After repeated applications to the governor and warehouse-keeper, finding he could not obtain any thing else, he offered the governor's note for 28 *l.* to sale to several of the servants in the castle; and at last sold it to James Hinch, the overseer of the slaves, for eight pounds. That oppressive transaction fully points out how necessary it is that some other method of accounting for the government's supplies should be adopted, and carried into execution, which surely there cannot be the least objection to.

For example, we will suppose any gentleman in England to have an estate in Africa, and that he was to order Messrs. Trueman and company, or any other respectable merchants in the city of London, to send out a steward to superintend and take care of the improvement of such estate; and that they were to take security from said steward for the value of any monies or merchandize, &c. that he may be entrusted with, to pay the servants residing thereupon, and other expences; also charges of building and repairs. Is it to be supposed said gentlemen, notwithstanding he had the greatest faith in, and opinion of the integrity and honesty of said merchants, would be satisfied with their giving him an account only of their having sent such steward, merchandize, stores and provisions to his estate, without an account from the steward, properly vouched, of the application thereof in Africa? Surely no! then if a private person thinks it necessary to have such an authenticated account, we submit it to the judgment of our readers to determine, whether they think it reasonable the public should expect the same or not. We, for our own parts, are inclined to believe, that people intrusted with the application of public monies, at so great a distance as Africa, when they can make such immense advantage of it as the committee's officers can, will be induced to embrace the opportunity, however disadvantageous it may be to their country, when they are

satisfied little care will be taken how they account for the same.

We shall conclude this pamphlet, with inserting a copy of a petition, signed by the planters of the island of Barbadoes, in the year 1710. The reasons and observations contained therein, in our humble opinion, fully point out, that they foresaw what has in effect since happened; therefore we beg leave to submit it to our readers to form their own judgment upon.

To the queen's most excellent majesty,

The humble petition of several planters and others, inhabitants of your majesty's island of Barbadoes,

Sheweth,

“That the tender care and regard your majesty hath constantly had of all your subjects, encourages your petitioners, who are deeply concerned in the trade to Africa. The constant supply of Negroes at moderate prices, being the chief support of this colony; whereby we can only be enabled to preserve the staple of sugar, and other commodities, and to afford them in greater quantities, and cheaper than other nations; most humbly beg leave to lay before your majesty, that for many years, while the royal African company had the sole management of that trade, this island was duly supplied with a sufficient number of Negroes at moderate prices, from 10 *l.* to 20 *l.* per head the highest, which was a very great encouragement; and enabled us greatly to improve the manufacture of this island. But for several years past, since the trade has been laid open, the number of Negroes imported by the royal African company, and separate traders together, have not been sufficient to supply this island; and those which have been imported, have been sold at extravagant prices, from 20 *l.* to 40 *l.* per head, especially those which are tolerably good; which your petitioners conceive to have been occasioned by the different interests of the separate

traders, each bidding upon the other; of which the natives upon the coast taking advantage, have raised the price of their own commodities, and sunk the price of those of Great Britain, and this island; which is an unspeakable damage, and discouragement to your petitioners, tends to the ruin of this trade, the lessening your majesty's revenue, and the navigation of Great Britain."

"Therefore your petitioners humbly pray, that the British interest on the coast of Africa may be preserved; and the trade put upon such a foot, that a sufficient number of Negroes may be had upon the coast, on moderate terms, and your petitioners supplied at reasonable rates here.

"And your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray."

Barbadoes,
Aug. 1, 1710.

"Robert Vaughan,
"Thomas Carney, &c. &c. &c."

F I N I S .

E R R A T A .

[Page 10, last line](#), for *this I*, read *this we*; [p. 11. l. 19](#), for *editor is*, r. *editors are*; [p. 14, l. 2](#), for *made me*, r. *made us*; [p. 20, l. 5](#), for *this I*, r. *this we*; [p. 21, l. 3](#), for *induced me*, r. *induced us*; [p. 23, l. 30](#), for *assertions*, r. *assertion*; [p. 26, l. 28](#), for *that*, r. *those*; [p. 27, l. 18](#), for *those kept*, r. *those that were kept*; [p. 35, l. 7](#), for *I have*, r. *we have*; [p. 37, l. 37](#), for *ben*, r. *been*; [p. 46, l. 12](#), for *taken*, r. *taker*; [p. 49, l. 10](#), for *committee*, r. *company*; [p. 56, in note, l. 1](#), for *this ship*, r. *the ship*.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] It is here humbly meant, not to send those sailors that may be pressed out of colliers, or coasting vessels, directly on southern voyages, till they have been used to live upon salt provisions for some time on board ships of war in a cold climate.

[2] Supposed to be paid for in plantation-produce.

[3] It appears by the accounts of that board, there has been expended by them to the 31st March, 1761, in finishing said fort 15,024*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.* so that rebuilding it has cost 34,590*l.* 12*s.* 5*d.* sterling, which fort is only useful for the defence of the Negroes in the town under it, and to protect them from their enemies of their own colour, who have no cannon or mortars, and to defend the landing-place, that no ship of force can get near.

[4] His grace the d—e of N——le, s——y of st——e; the right honourable H—y P—lh—m, first lord of the t——y, and c——r of the e——r.

[5] The African committee have also received to the end of the year 1756, 1620*l.* 8*s.* 8*d.* for some of the late company's effects, and for admissions into the new company.

[6] For several years before the war, the French received from foreign nations above 1,000,000*l.* sterling for the article of sugar only; besides a large sum for indigo, and other West India products; the loss of which will induce them, without delay, to push on their trade to Africa with the utmost vigour, which, we know, they are making great preparations to do, that sufficiently points out the necessity for some measures to be speedily taken to prevent their succeeding.

[7] The officers commanding the out-forts, had absolute orders not to trade with the French.

[8] For mercenary troops are to be hired in Africa, as well as in Europe, and at a much cheaper rate.

[9] In case the French were not permitted to carry them away, as they did before the roads were stopt.

[10] 50,000 ounces of gold dust at 3*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* an ounce, is 193,750*l.*

[11] 30 tons of ivory, on an average worth about 220*l.* a ton, is 6,600*l.*

[12] Which was upwards of 26,666 guineas annually.

[13] We think it proper to observe, which we conjecture the merchants will not attempt to deny, that they only put on board their ships such cargoes as the masters judge will be sufficient to purchase the number of Negroes each ship will carry, which when compleated, they will sell any small remainder of their cargoes for gold or ivory, if to be got: but they often find a difficulty in doing it, for the reasons before advanced; and they have many times been obliged to carry them from Africa for want of purchasers, entirely owing to their giving such great prices for Negroes.

[14] If the French are allowed to trade on the Gold Coast, a cargo to purchase 300 Negroes, will cost, if we may judge by former times, above 6000*l*.

[15] As would have appeared by the report of the committee of the honourable house of commons, in the year 1758, had it been examined into.

[16] There was issued to the African committee, by warrant from the right honourable the lords commissioners of the treasury, in the year 1751, 7140*l*. 14*s*. 3*d*. out of the vote of credit for 800,000*l*. notwithstanding several objections were made before the committee of the honourable house of commons that such sum was not due.

[17] Because it will employ a great number of French ships and sailors, and be a market for their manufactures, which they sell, and also their East India goods, cheaper considerably than we can purchase ours, which must consequently be hurtful to our navigation, lessening at the same time the consumption of our manufactures.

Besides, the competition between the traders of both nations would give to the black dealers an opportunity of raising the price of their Negroes, which advance the French can better afford than we, as must appear from what is beforementioned, as well as from the following fact; which is, they pay an anchor of brandy or two, and at some places three or four, in the price of a slave, at the rate of four pounds each anchor, containing about eight gallons, and costs in France but from eight to ten shillings. Whereas there is not any article can be bought in England so profitable and vendable a commodity among the blacks for thirty shillings (as French brandy) that will pay in the purchase of a slave at four pounds.

This observation is chiefly meant to point out how necessary it is to hinder, as much as possible, the French from trading to Gambia, Senegal, or between cape Appolonia and the river Volta, where the British forts are situated, and where much the greatest numbers of the most valuable Negroes are to be procured, which surely we have a right to do, and may be effected, if proper measures are pursued for so desirable a purpose.

[18] The original letters and certificates, with authentic copies of the affidavits, are in the hands of the publisher.

[19] An ounce is a nominal value set upon goods, which cost about 40*s*. in Europe; but sold in trade on the coast of Africa at 4*l*.

[20] He came to an anchor nearer to Elmina fort, with the ship and sloop under his command, than any merchant ship ever had been, and sent an officer on shore to demand the prisoners, which the Dutch general immediately complied with, to the great joy of their countrymen residing under the British forts, at their being restored to their liberty.

[21] “That such Portugueze ships as shall come to anchor in any of the English roads belonging to any of the English forts or factories, shall not be molested by any Dutch ship or ships belonging to the said company, nor be blocked up by them in the said English roads, nor attacked and seized at their going out of the said roads; neither shall they offer to seize any ship or ships, that have first put themselves under the protection of any British fort, or being in possession of any English vessel, they having one of the said royal African company’s servants on board certifying the same.”

“That on the other side, none of the English forts, or company’s ships, shall attack, or seize, any Portugueze which were first in possession of any Dutch West India company’s ships; neither shall the English general, or chief director for the time being, grant passports to any Portugueze ships, going to or from Brazil, or any of the Portugueze islands.”

[22] What was paid to the natives for ground-rent, or water-custom, or to the company’s slaves, which appeared by their lists, or to canoe-men, or other free Negroes, each article was particularized in the late company’s officers accounts in such manner, as that no fraud could be committed.

[23] By such mode of accounting, the committee may obtain a discharge for the money granted by parliament, before the ship or ships that have the merchandize, stores, &c. on board said money purchased, sails out of the *river Thames*. Therefore, if said *merchandize* or *stores* are never landed in *Africa* for the use of the *forts*, we presume the *committee* are no farther *accountable* for *them*.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE

Footnote [15] is referenced twice from [page 29](#).

Obvious typographical errors and punctuation errors have been corrected after careful comparison with other occurrences within the text and consultation of external sources.

Some hyphens in words have been silently removed, some added, when a predominant preference was found in the original book.

Except for those changes noted below, all misspellings in the text, and inconsistent or archaic usage, have been retained.

[Pg iii](#): 'above allegagations' replaced by 'above allegations'.

[Pg 1](#): 'meer alienation' replaced by 'mere alienation'.

[Pg 3](#): 'many falshoods' replaced by 'many falsehoods'.

[Pg 4](#): 'make the ballance' replaced by 'make the balance'.

[Pg 6](#): 'to undersel them' replaced by 'to undersell them'.

[Pg 11](#): 'For I believe it' replaced by 'For we believe it'.

[Pg 12](#): 'for so I must' replaced by 'for so we must'.

[Pg 14](#): 'a ballance of trade' replaced by 'a balance of trade'.

[Pg 15](#): 'sorry I am to say' replaced by 'sorry we are to say'.

[Pg 19](#): 'houshold servants' replaced by 'household servants'.

[Pg 23](#): 'inteterest themselves' replaced by 'interest themselves'.

[Pg 24](#): 'villify and render' replaced by 'vilify and render'.

[Pg 25](#): 'intercourse and trade' replaced by 'intercourse and trade'.

[Pg 26 Footnote 11](#): 'on an average, is worth about' replaced by 'on an average worth about'.

[Pg 31](#): 'such an equiry' replaced by 'such an enquiry'.

[Pg 34](#): 'I presume it' replaced by 'we presume it'.

[Pg 34](#): 'the smuggling wool' replaced by 'the smuggling of wool'.

[Pg 35](#): 'them frm Africa' replaced by 'them from Africa'.

[Pg 37](#): 'crimes in despight' replaced by 'crimes in despite'.

[Pg 47](#): 'The committe, by' replaced by 'The committee, by'.

[Pg 48](#): 'the mananagers, that' replaced by 'the managers, that'.

[Pg 54](#): 'were ncessitate to' replaced by 'were necessitated to'.

[Pg 55](#): 'indenizend European' replaced by 'indenized European'.

[Pg 56](#): 'become to serious' replaced by 'become too serious'.

[Pg 60](#): 'two original signed' replaced by 'two originals signed'.

[Pg 61](#): 'stated and ballanced' replaced by 'stated and balanced'.

[Pg 62](#): 'the committe are to' replaced by 'the committee are to'.

[Pg 64](#): 'from the ballance of' replaced by 'from the balance of'.

[Pg 66](#): 'improvemeut of such' replaced by 'improvement of such'.

[Pg 66](#): 'committe's officers' replaced by 'committee's officers'.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK
CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PRESENT PEACE, AS FAR
AS IT IS RELATIVE TO THE COLONIES, AND THE
AFRICAN TRADE ***

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