

most commanding position at the entrance of the Bay of Bengal; its locality rendering it an eligible depot both for naval and land forces, capable at all times of being transferred to any point in which our Eastern possessions might be assailed, or a necessity arise for our carrying war into the territories of our neighbours ; it requires but little foresight to arrive at the conclusion, that whenever our domination in the East shall cease, or even the power we at present exercise shall be on the wane-whether as being the most advantageous and secure position. 'on which we might retreat for our own safety, or for the purpose of thwarting other nations who might hereafter attempt to assume the influence we have now over Asia generally,-the advantages to be attached to the possession of the island of Ceylon, as well as to its retention as an appendage to the throne of Britain, are incalculable.

The sovereignty of this island, from the subversion of the native dynasty in 1815, became entirely vested in the crown of England ; and so subdued is the feeling of opposition to our rule since the quelling the rebellion of 1817-18, that no fear is now entertained of any attempt, on the part of the people, to rise or disturb us in the quiet possession of the country ; the influence of the native chiefs is completely destroyed, and the Candians themselves are neither so bigoted to their religion, or to the paraphernalia attendant upon royalty, as to wish the restoration of the times in which they were taxed in their labour and property, to keep up that show and parade which alone was the support of either. They have been relieved from every species of oppression ; enjoy a just, impartial, and prompt administration of the laws ; their feudal services have been dispensed with ; the tithes on their grain-produce have been commuted on most liberal terms; each man is free as a native of England ; the poorest are protected equally with the rich, and he who was, previous to our conquest, the slave of every satellite of power, is now in the free display and appropriation of his own honest gains,* and in the comfortable and undisturbed possession of all the blessings attendant on the peaceable enjoyment of his own home.

The population of this valuable territory increases most rapidly ; by the census taken in 1832, its inhabitants were ascertained to be 1,009,000 souls; in 1834, 1,167,700; in 1837, 1,256,019, being equal to an increase of one-fourth in five years. So salubrious is the country, especially the maritime districts, from being more cultivated,

* The subjects of the native rulers of India are reduced to the necessity of hiding whatever wealth they accumulate, in order: to evade the rapacity of the powers that be.

and subject to the fresher gales from the sea, and the inroads of that worst of scourges in a tropical climate, the small-pox, being subdued by wise and salutary measures for the general introduction of vaccination, coupled with colonial regulations, somewhat oppressive, but possibly in their consequences humane—that there can be little doubt, as calculated many years back by Commissioner Colebrooke, the population, without depending upon the ingress of foreigners, may reasonably be expected to double in every thirty-five years. Quoting the official reports relating solely to the maritime provinces in 1814, Colonel Colebrooke states the inhabitants were 475,883, and in 1824, 595,105, showing an increase of 119,222 in ten years ; the whole island being now divided into five provinces, East, West, North, South, and Central ; the subsequently taken census applies to the whole of the area contained within these divisions, and we are not, therefore, empowered from it to show in what proportion the increase has been progressive of late years, in either the maritime or interior districts.

That we have a right to expect a great additional influx of natives from the continent of India, is not to be doubted for a moment by those who have witnessed the readiness with which, at the call of capitalists lately introduced (whose occupation is the growth of coffee especially) the Malabar labourers come over; they are fully satisfied with the climate, although much dissatisfied with the food of the country. The northern part of Ceylon is inhabited chiefly by people of this caste or nation, and they are, generally speaking, more industrious, and a more hardy people, than the Cingalese : those men who have voluntarily come over from the coast in search of occupation also, are a more robust race, but they have been accustomed to a proportion of animal food, and must have grain for their meals at least three times a day, whereas the Cingalese is satisfied with one meal of rice, and makes up the rest of the nourishment he takes with fish or fruits and herbs ; as a proprietor of land in the colony, he has these latter growing on his own property, and gathers them as he needs, but the Malabar, a perfect stranger, working at a distance from his own home, has none of these advantages, he must go to market for all he consumes, independent of which, he is not to be satisfied with these make-shifts, he will never be content without something more substantial.

Now, supposing grain to be had in such abundance, and at the rate it is procurable on the coast, the pay of a labourer in the island being double what it generally is on the continent of India, it might easily be imagined that *our* draft from 100,000,000 of people, would soon be immense, especially as those crossing the narrow gulf which

divides Ceylon from the continent, become free from any oppression, either of great or petty headmen, and at liberty to engage themselves to any master whom they may most like, whose interest, as well as whose obligation, owing to the prompt administration of the laws, it unquestionably is, to treat all his labourers well ; but, unfortunately, the state of things is quite the reverse of this ; there is a heavy impost on the importation of grain *—a corn law, originally planned, as we must presume, to encourage the cultivation of rice in the colony, but by no means tending to benefit the country ; for if the people of Ceylon find their lands, from the abundance of water always procurable, independent of the regular rains in the interior, and in the westward and southern provinces, capable of producing a more valuable crop of fruit, spices, sugar, coffee, or cotton, it will surely be more to their advantage to pursue the culture of these articles, and with the proceeds of the crop to furnish themselves with a commodity such as grain (in which the coast so plentifully abounds), and to enjoy some of the luxuries of life procurable with the residue of the coin so raised. The very existence of a superabundance of water, a thing not to be obtained on the Indian continent without vast outlay of capital and labour, too frequently is the cause, not only of the unrestrainable inundation of their crops at the moment they ought to be housed, but also whereby, if not the destruction of the whole, generally a partial damage is sustained ; besides which, so long as there is a tithe on grain in Ceylon, the husbandman will be subjected to all kinds of exactions from the renter, without whose permission he subjects himself to a penalty of 100 per cent., should he cut, remove, or even place under cover, his crop, while the weather is favourable ; for, according to the provision of his rent, it must stand on the ground until the tax-gatherer declares himself satisfied.

The monetary system of this island is at present under the greatest disadvantages ; the common rate of interest is from nine to twelve per cent. : the latter is the legal rate. In all arrears of dues, the government charges nine per cent.

There is a loan board, the funds of which are administered by a government officer, under the control of the supreme court, who draws, as superintendant, £200 per year : the capital is formed of monies paid in by courts, on account of minors and suitors ; it lends on lands, houses, and jewels, mortgaged one-half the value, at seven per cent., payable monthly. The fund exceeds £ 16,000.

There is a savings bank, receiving money at five per cent., and

* The duty on grain has been of late years considerably reduced, but is still 3d. a bushel on paddy, and 7d. a bushel on rice.

lending at seven : it is governed by a chairman and managers ; the chairman is allowed £ 100 a year. Its capital, on the 31 st of October, 1838, was £21,492. 16s. 4d. Interest paid monthly by borrowers.

Amount of deposits to 31st of Oct. 1838 . £42,915. 19s. 0d.

Ditto withdrawn	21,423 2 8
	£21,492 16 4

The terms of both these funds are the same. When two unexceptionable and valuable securities, for double the amount of the additional advance are tendered, and accepted, the borrower may have his loan increased to two-thirds of the value of his landed or other real security.

The Nartacatta Chitties of Madras have sixteen or eighteen houses, or commissioned agents, at Ceylon, sent over from the families or connexions of their own caste or people, who reside generally about Adria-patnam, or Nagapatnam, on the Coromandel coast, who have a resident superintendent of each firm at Madras, and these men carry on all the money trade of the colony with India ; they buy and sell bills and bullion, advance money on loan, import coast cloths* and other articles of merchandise : their general rate of interest is two per. cent per mensem, but they not unfrequently demand four. † They watch every turn of the bill market, and, as purchasers of such are seldom satisfied with less than six per cent. for the discounting drafts at thirty days' sight on either the Hon. East India Company or the merchants of Madras, Bengal, or Bombay, and the island is so close to the continent of India, that they can get over funds as fast as they require them. Until the late orders for equalizing the value of the rupee at 2s. throughout India, the Ceylon government made it current at 1s. 10d. ; so, as fast as the merchants imported it, paying 2s. 1d. and 2s. 2d. to the Madras agents, for its advance against shipments to London, these gentry exported the coin which they brought up at 22d. On the occasion of a pearl fishery, which, by good management, there ought to be each year, these very chitties have, for a month's use, been known to give fifteen per cent. for money, which, strange as it may appear, is by no means wonderful, when it is considered that they exact, for the loan of the rupee for a single day, one fanam, or three halfpence, or more.

Notwithstanding the advantage done the country by the resource there offered by the loan board and savings bank, there is no possibility of a merchant raising money in Ceylon, to purchase up a cargo, or meet a sudden demand, for the deposits he could make would not be acceptable at either ; he therefore depends on the Nartacatta Chitty, who takes his Madras bill at extraordinary discount.

* Coast cloths are cotton cloths manufactured in India.

† The legal interest on seed-grain is 50 per cent,

The export duty on cinnamon annually is about 75 or £80,000 ; for which deposits are allowed for six months in the custom-house, subject, after two months, to pay interest at nine per cent. ; there being no ready-money in the colony, these duties are secured to the government by deposits of all species of merchandise save grain, and too frequently by the goods of shippers in England, who are looking out eagerly for their returns, while their property is pawned to meet the charges attendant for the shipment of the island-produce on account of others.

The usual way of remittance of money from Colombo to the out-stations, or *vice versa*, is to obtain, at half per cent., a draft of the Treasurer or Sub-treasurer of the district ; these checks are **always** at three days' sight, frequently delayed three days in the granting, and not payable^s unless the accountant acknowledge himself in possession of a register of the draft, which ought to be despatched by the drawer on the day the draft is drawn.

The trade, i. e. exports and imports of the colony, may be estimated at £1,000,000 annually ; the imports the rather exceeding the exports in all statistical accounts, owing chiefly to the exports being valued only at their prime cost in the colony ; and the imports, in many cases, on the value of the goods there : under the article of cinnamon, the duty, £75,000, is not included in the value of the export—merely the **price given** for the cinnamon at the government sales ; whereas this duty, to enable the trade to continue, must be supposed to be paid by the consumer, and should be entered as a part of the value. It **averages** 120 per cent. on the prime cost of the article, if purchased from government ; 200 per cent. if purchased from private parties.*

Exporters' bills against shipments are usually negotiated **through the agents** at Madras, and at the rate of 2s. 2d. the rupee, whereas they draw against those shipments their own bills, in order to remit the dividends they receive on pensions or allowances of absent or retired servants, at from 1s. 9½d. to 1s. 10½d. The method of fixing this exchange is the handing round a paper to four, five, or six **principal houses** of Madras, who sign their assent to its being fixed at — for the current month, or quarter, or season.

Bills so negotiated generally require that the goods be shipped by their agents at Colombo to their agents in England, the charge **being**

* The duty on first and second-sort cinnamon is 2s. 6d. per lb. ; the third sort, 2s. The price fixed by government for the first sort, 3s. 6d. ; second sort, 2s. ; third sort, 9d. With these duties **on** the produce, which must soon **be** lowered, they have now promised to sell **off** 16,000 acres of cinnamon gardens without reserve !!!

two and a half per cent. at each place, besides one per cent. on the larger side of the account current with the party making the advance. The returns on the whole of these shipments are also frequently required to be made back entirely through the house at Madras.

In Ceylon, money will always purchase a bill on England for £ 100, paying down £90 ; and by the ready intercourse with England, via the Red Sea, this transaction may nearly be accomplished with the same capital three times in each year.

[To be continued.]

COMMERCE AND CIVILIZATION OF AFRICA.

(EASTERN AFRICA.)

THAT the English people are eminently practical in their pursuits, is perhaps the source of their national greatness ; and that, in the present age, they are remarkable for their determination to turn the accounts of distant countries to practical purposes, is perhaps the surest foundation on which to rest the future glory of the British name, if not the future prosperity of the British empire. This trait of national character, this determination of national purpose, forms the only green oasis in the weary and gloomy desert of our national prospects. The mighty efforts now making to extend and establish British dominion in distant and almost undiscovered countries, is undoubtedly the great feature in the history of passing events—the commencement of a new era in the revolutions of humanity. “ The gods never assist those who do not assist themselves,” is a proverb equally applicable to nations as to individuals. The British people are assisting themselves, and all that is requisite to extend British greatness is faith in the future. Hope has been called the strumpet of human life, but this is true only of hope which is accompanied by listless inaction ; that hope which is founded on action and reason, is one great source of human vitality. Who, that contemplates the colonization of Upper Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Cape of Good Hope, ought or can despair in the future glory and prosperity of the British nation ? Into whatever quarter of the globe British commercial or colonial enterprise penetrates, civilization and Christianity attend its progress, intestine quarrels are compose& aboriginal feuds gradually disappear, disease is mitigated ; industry vanquishes the dominion of indolence ; law and legality take the places previously occupied by violence and despotism ; society becomes constituted ; the arts and sciences supersede ignorance

and barbarism, and man exercises his reasoning faculties for the benefit of his kind. And it is a fact never to be forgotten, that all these benefits are conferred on uncivilized and barbarous countries by the British ' people, as contradistinguished from the British government. The native genius and untiring perseverance of the former accomplish these great objects always unaided -generally unencouraged -often-times opposed by the stolid indifference or perverse activity of the latter. The history of the British government, which has been written and re-written to satiety, is one continuous record of colonial errors ; the history of the British people, whose historian has yet to arise, will contain few pages that are unadorned with their commercial and colonial enterprise.

Asia and America are both witnesses to the general truth of the outlines we have sketched of the results of this enterprise. Unfortunately for Africa, on its vast continent the spirit of British civilization has but slightly descended. Of what real utility to this immense expanse of country—a true idea of which it is beyond the capacity of the human mind to contain—have hitherto been the expeditions, the travels, which have been made in it ? Years and lives have been expended in traversing its inhospitable districts ; the powers of human endurance have been tested to their uttermost in penetrating not many leagues beyond its sea-board ; societies have been formed, flourished, and decayed, for the purpose of its exploration ; vast sums of money have been spent to gather information to satisfy European curiosity, or to add to the amount of European knowledge. We have wiped away the witty reproach of Swift, that—

Geographers in Afric maps,
With savage pictures fill their gaps ;
And o'er uninhabitable downs,
Place elephants for want of towns,

We have now observations from almost every degree of latitude, from the Mediterranean to within three or four degrees of Benin. We now know where the great kingdoms of Mandara, Bornou, and Houssa are to be placed on the chart ; what space the several provinces occupy ; in what latitude and longitude are situated the various cities, towns, and even villages, whose names we only heard of, and one of which, Bornou, had been guessed out of its place more than 600 miles. To flowing rivers and circling mountains have been given their proper directions ; to lakes and forests their accurate positions, always at the cost of great hardship, patience, and perseverance, much bodily fatigue and danger ; and but too frequently at the expense of health and

life itself. “The great African problems,” as they have been called, are now solved ; some of the sources of the Nile, that river which, according to Ovid,

“In extremum fugit perterritus orbem,
Occuletque caput, quod adhuc latet——”

have been discovered ; the course of the Niger has been traced ; Timbuctú has received our travellers. And yet of what benefits have been all these expeditions, all this perseverance, all this loss of life, all this expenditure of money, to Africa or its inhabitants ? To what uses have the exertions, the health, the lives, of Park, Tuckey, Ritchie, Salt, Oudney, Denham, Laird, Clapperton, Pearce, Laing, Landor, Davidson, Owen, Caillié, and Ruppell been expended ?-None : we do not hesitate deliberately to assert-none. And to what does our boasted knowledge of Africa amount ?-In reality, to a knowledge of our own ignorance of almost one entire quarter of the globe. Of Africa in general it may be justly said, that ninety-nine parts out of a hundred are unknown ; and that from several points, a man might travel from the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic, over ground which has never been trodden by our travellers. The greater part of Africa still continues an immense blank in geography, which remains to be filled up. Of the vast interior of this continent there remains, totally unexplored, about thirty-five degrees of latitude, and from twenty to forty degrees of longitude, comprising at the lowest computation a region of from two to three millions of square miles, of which we are as profoundly ignorant as if it were situated in another planet.

There is, however, one fact respecting Africa which we do know, and it is that fact from which springs its woes. From the northern coast down to the country of the Hottentots and Caffres, from the eastern mountains of Abyssinia to the waters of the Great Western Ocean, the horrid system of slavery more or less prevails, and along the entire coast the slaves are more or less a subject of traffic. The whole interior, so far as our knowledge extends, is one eternal scene of civil war. Of the various tribes, nations, colours, and races of men, who inhabit this immense country, there is no one who has not its enemy. Man wars upon man for the sake of property in man. The currency of the entire continent may almost be said to be human. Taxes and tributes are paid in flesh and blood. The dowry to propitiate a royal marriage is raised by the sacrifice of thousands. The ransom of captured princes is paid by the liberties of their fellow-men. Across scorching deserts, in which not a living animal or even

insect exists, in various directions is seen one tribe of human beings driving another to slavery. Nearly 300,000 Negroes are annually carried across, or perish on the Atlantic. The whole Eastern world has from all time been supplied with annual myriads of these unfortunate wretches. However sinful the share of Europeans in this traffic, it is unjust to charge them with creating, in the interior of Africa, the brutalized habits on which the supply of the slave-market must from infinitely remote antiquity have depended. It is a melancholy fact, too, that the caravans of black captives, continually seen arriving on the shores of Abyssinia, for the use of the Orientals, consist, in a great measure, of unfortunate beings obviously belonging to tribes and races in a higher state of cultivation than any that have ever been drawn upon for the plantations of America. Moreover? it need scarcely be added, that a very great proportion are cruelly mutilated prior to the voyage—which, indeed, many hundreds and thousands do not survive to undertake at all. Internal slavery, the European slave-trade, and the Eastern slave-trade, are the curses of Africa. In attempting to put down this infernal traffic, the appeals have been generally made to humanity, when they should have been directed to self-interest ; for it is a fact, established by the evidence of all travellers and voyagers, that so long as the slave-trade exists, it is in vain to look for the developement of the industry and commerce of Africa. Where that nefarious traffic exists, it operates directly to the discouragement of every other trade. A merchant vessel may have contracted for, and be in the course of loading a lawful cargo ; but no sooner does a slaver enter the same port or river, than the former is deserted ; the natives rush into the interior, to seize and carry their sable brethren into bondage, and until the slaver has procured a full cargo, the legitimate trader lies idle. Nor does the mischief terminate there ; the interior is disturbed, the natives are afraid to bring down their goods, and commerce languishes, or is destroyed. “ I can safely assert,” says Mr. Laird, “ that, as far as my experience goes, European traders will be received with open arms by all the inhabitants of the interior—that nothing prevents interior trading but the terror that a white man’s name carries with it—a terror which is carefully kept up by the chiefs upon the coast—the disorganized state of the country produced by the slave-trade.”

Various have been the plans suggested to introduce civilization into Africa, but they have all hitherto contained within themselves the seeds of failure. If the history of humanity suggests one great truth more than another, it is, that civilization is the result of commerce ; the

interchange of goods is accompanied by the interchange of ideas ; new wants, new desires are thus created, the earth becomes fertile, and man a reasoning animal. Sir Francis Head, in his pleasant and lively life of Bruce, ascribed all the evils that afflict Africa, the deserts, the pestilential climate, and the dreadful moral condition of the country, to one and the same cause—the unequal distribution of the water ; and he proposes to remedy these calamities by tapping the immense lakes of the interior, and by attaching veins and tourniquets to the great streams of vitality which empty themselves into the oceans. This scheme of the gallant ex-governor has only one fault—it is utterly impracticable. The very supposition of its being attempted, would presuppose the civilization of Africa.

French writers, and indeed one English writer of reputation, suggests **that Algiers, under the** occupation of the French, seems to answer the conditions of African civilization. It must be admitted, that this **district of Northern** Africa is concentrated and united in its parts ; that **its** inhabitants are a somewhat civilized people, are acquainted with European manners and customs, are dwellers, for the most part, in fortified towns, and united with more advanced nations by the common bonds of religion—all excellent qualities to form a centre from which to irradiate civilization among barbarous nations. But the French occupation of ten years has destroyed a flourishing country, and disorganized a progressive people. They themselves, as well as the Arabs, are now starving in a country a few years ago teeming with plenty. The natives, for a time, ceased to wage war openly, only more successfully to carry it on in disguise ; and now the war has recommenced in earnest, and in the form of that worst of curses, a “ holy war.” Algeria will only submit to France by force—civilization seldom accompanies force. But were the French securely established, with the consent of the conquered, it may be doubted whether they are a people who have **qualifications** to carry civilization into semi-savage countries. This part of the subject, however, we refrain from discussing. **Algeria, it** must also be recollected, presents one formidable obstacle to the increase of **commerce**, and thereby of civilization—it has no good harbours.

Of late years, public attention in England has been greatly attracted **to** the western coast of Africa. “ The splendid discovery of Landor,” says Mr. Laird, “ was hailed with, if possible, more enthusiasm by mercantile than by scientific men. The long-sought-for highway in to central Africa was at length found, as open **by** the **Niger** as that by the Rhine, the Danube, the Mississippi, or the Oronoko, into their **respective** countries. To the merchant it offered a boundless field for enterprise ;