

to the manufacturer an extensive market for his goods; and to the energy and ardour of youth it presented the irresistible charms of danger, novelty, and adventure." Possessed with such enthusiasm, it was not surprising that Mr. Laird should head a commercial speculation up the Quorra, which he miscalls the Niger. Although the speculation proved most disastrous to property and life, it has undoubtedly laid open many interesting and new particulars respecting countries until then unknown, and it has left its projector convinced that the interior of Africa must be civilized from its western sea-bord, and that by the somewhat extraordinary means of establishing a chain of British posts on the Quorra, as far as Sego, and from thence to Timbo, to Sierra Leone, and to Barracondo on the Gambia, each post to be commanded by a British officer, and garrisoned by an extension of our African troops. The scheme is unworthy of discussion; the benefits derivable from it would be utterly disproportionable to the outlay and annual cost. The occupation of a safe and good port, capable of becoming a great commercial depôt \* (or several of such depôts), government might and ought to effect; but to establish "a chain of posts" for thousands of miles into the interior of Africa, is a suggestion unworthy of the sagacity of a British merchant, who ought to know that commerce best flourishes in the absence of all chains-even of "a chain of posts."

But there is one formidable objection to the progression of African civilization from its western sea-bord-it must be made through the lowest and most inferior of African population. Let the effort, however, be made for Western Africa. But in so doing, let us not forget that a fairer and more congenial field, both for European commerce and humanity, is to be found on the eastern coast of Africa, of the greater part of which England has too long lost sight, and to which the attention of government, the parliament, and the public, cannot be too much directed. We therefore propose to devote a few pages to an examination of its present state, its capabilities and prospects, and then to describe the condition of several of the ports at the entrance" of the Red Sea, and discuss the policy which our present position with Egypt, and the steam-communication between Bombay and Suez, demand our government to adopt.

Of the eastern shores of Africa, the Natal coast, with one small and unfortunate exception, is subject to a native prince, of the most savage disposition and habits; the Portuguese lay claim to that extensive range lying between Delagoa Bay and Cape Delgado, and the Imaun of Muscat

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\* Government, it is understood, are now negociating with the Queen of Spain for the purchase of the island of Fernando PO.

exercises authority over part, and pretends to dominion over the entire line, commencing near Cape Delgado, and terminating at Cape Gardafui. The claim of the Portuguese to this immense extent of coast is, fortunately for the interests of humanity, little more than nominal. The glory of the Iberian monarchy is equally departed in Africa as it has vanished in Europe, Asia, and America. The vices of Portuguese colonization were not partial, but universal ; they were the offspring of national avarice. and fanaticism, alike injurious to themselves and the **native** tribes over whom they pretended to throw the mantle of **European** civilization. It is pleasing to our national vanity to speculate how different would now have been the condition of a great part of the coast of Eastern Africa, had Queen Elizabeth accepted the proposal of the Portuguese merchants to sell her extensive territories on it. The **Portuguese** ambassador interfered with a remonstrance, or rather a supplication, and the queen magnanimously declined the captivating offer, although the district was warranted to abound in gold, and “to belong to nobody but the natives.”

The Portuguese still, however, possess a few miserable settlements, scattered along the coast ; commencing with one at Delagoa Bay, on the **mouth** of the English River, which may be taken as a fair specimen of how Portuguese settlements in Africa are conducted. The establishment consisted, when visited by Captain Owen, of a major, commandant, captain, lieutenant, adjutant, secretary, priest, and surgeon, with about **fifty** soldiers, some of whom were Europeans, sent thither “for their country’s good,” the rest being Negroes. The previous commandant had, a few weeks after his arrival, committed suicide, on finding **the** golden dreams he had indulged in not likely to be realized. The adjutant of the then existing force had been banished for the murder of his brother, and was generally intoxicated all day. The lieutenant had **been** sent thither for the murder of a priest, after debauching his sister; and their **ladies** are described as being every way worthy of such husbands. Another of the wretched establishments of a fallen and degraded nation, which cheats in Europe and robs in Africa, is at the bay of Inhambane, in 24 deg. south latitude, and is used entirely as a slave mart.

**Quilimane**, on the northern mouth of the **Zambizi**, was formerly one of the most valuable, as it still is, from its locality and the luxuriance of the surrounding country, one of the most important of the settlements which the Portuguese have on this coast. Its former wealth consisted partly in the gold and silver trade, but principally in grain, which was produced in such quantities in the circumjacent districts of

the Rios de Sena as to make it the storehouse of Mozambique and 'the other colonies; but the introduction of the slave-trade stopped, as it everywhere does, the pursuits of industry, and at present Quilimane, and the surrounding country belonging to Portugal, do not grow food sufficient for the consumption of their own population. From their indolent sensuality, the colonists there are starving in the midst of plenty, or rather where, with the smallest degree of labour, there could not but be plenty-for neither the soil nor the climate can be mainly to blame where cocoa-nuts<sup>9</sup> mangoes, oranges, limes, bananas, pine-apples, guavas, and plantains are spontaneously produced ; where the ordinary vegetables of Europe, cabbage, lettuce, spinach, pease, beans, pumpkins, cucumbers<sup>9</sup> are found to flourish, and where the most useful kinds of grain, as rice, millet, maize, and even wheat<sup>9</sup> can be raised. War and bloodshed now reign, where peace and industry once flourished, and contending tribes are constantly striving to obtain, by mutual conflict, prisoners as slaves\* for these European monsters.

The island of Mozambique, and the opposite coast for about ten miles to the west and south, is the next Portuguese settlement on the eastern coast of Africa ; nor does it differ from the rest in wretchedness and misery. Captain Owen truly remarks, " The sins of the early Portuguese have been visited in Africa upon many generations-the climate, poison, and the dagger are constantly destroying the present race; and, although in possession of the finest country 'in the world, they are entirely dependent upon other nations-importing all their enjoyments, except the grossest sensuality."

The ancient wealth and vice-regal splendour of Mozambique are now lost in poverty and gloom ; the inhabitants are sunk in sloth, demoralized and depraved almost beyond belief, and lost to every feeling but that of gain.

It was a merry place in days of yore,  
But something ails it now-the place is curst.

The town, which occupies nearly one half of the island, is still large. In the palace and forts, and some of the houses, are yet visible the remains of former grandeur, but the whole place has the appearance of rapidly falling into decay ; the very ruins are fast disappearing, and a few years will most probably obliterate all remains of the past. The population, of about 6000, is made up of a few native

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\* We forbear, in noticing the Portuguese colonies, to enter into the statistics of their slave-trade ; the reader will find details of that nature in Mr. Buxton's late work on the African Slave-Trade. They are amply sufficient, in our opinion, to justify the declaring of that trade piracy.

Portuguese, Arabs, Creoles, and Slaves -the last class by far the most numerous. The principal trade consists of those unhappy beings, with skins, ivory, and a little gold dust. The settlement is supplied with grain from the northern shores of the main, and by the Arab dows. Were these sources to fail, the population must inevitably perish from **famine**. The Portuguese colonial laws were framed, in some particulars, for the encouragement of vice. No Portuguese who has married in one of his country's colonies can return to his native land. Our readers will readily imagine the state of society to which such a regulation must lead.

On advancing northward, the last frontier post of the Portuguese is Ibo, after which comes the first Arab settlement of Quiloa. This was once the most considerable of the Arab possessions of the coast, holding sovereignty over Sofala, Mozambique, and the intervening ports, but now, a miserable village, scarcely visited or known, occupies the site of ancient Quiloa ; and the wretched Arab hovels of the present day are blended among the ruins of a fallen city. "It is melancholy," says Capt. Owen, "to contemplate the devastation that the monopolizing spirit of mankind has produced on the east coast of Africa. Wherever we went, even in the most obscure harbours, we could trace the remains of former wealth, and civilization, contrasted strongly with present poverty and barbarism."

The eastern coast of Africa, from Cape Delgado to Cape Gardafui, is one of **the most** interesting portions of that continent. The scholar, the merchant, and the philosophical inquirer into the various conditions of human society, all find here a favourable field for their respective **researches or** speculations. And yet a cloud of ignorance has for some ages back veiled that highly-favoured region from our eyes. **Malté Brun** acknowledged that his most recent authorities respecting the coast north of **Zanibar** were three centuries old. He knew not what nations possessed **Mombása** ; nor the fate of Melinda, (described by **Vasco de Gama** as pleasantly situated on a plain near the sea-shore, surrounded with gardens, and containing gardens with handsome rooms and painted ceilings, but now in a state of desolation) ; nor the prosperity of **Lami**, which he believed to have been overwhelmed with sand. The British Admiralty have relieved us from this ignorance, and the expedition of Capt. Owen, in 1822, the history of which that gentleman and Captain **Botiler** have given to the world, and the researches of the *Edinburgh Review*, have thrown light on an unknown coast.

We have before remarked that the line of coast referred to is claimed by the **Imaun of Muscat** ; but he nowhere lays claim to a

territory beyond a league distant from the sea shore. His empire is essentially maritime, and he measures its importance by the trade and revenue it yields him. To collect his revenues on the widely spread coasts acknowledging his sway, he maintains a fleet, consisting in all, according to Dr. Ruschenberger, of 75 vessels. This number has been doubted by the Edinburgh reviewer, who, however, on his own knowledge, states the Muscat navy to have consisted, in 1835, of one 84-gun ship, one 64, and half a dozen frigates, all built of teak, after English models, and kept in excellent order. His naval force, however, according to an excellent authority, now consists only of one 64, four frigates, and about 10 smaller square-rigged vessels. The hulls and armaments are good, but otherwise they are inefficient. As the Imaun's government is so mild that there is very little danger of any reaction arising from his innovations, the discipline of his fleet and of his regular army, which is trained after the manner of our Indian forces, and partly officered by sepoys, bid fairs to have a lasting influence on Arab civilization. Owing his political existence to the effectual succour he received from the government of Bombay, when he first engaged in the perilous game of sovereignty, the Imaun is deeply sensible of the importance of his English alliance, on which he wishes to rest his security. When the late advance of Kourschid Pasha to the Persian Gulf endangered the safety of his Arabian dominion, he appealed to the intervention of the British government, which, it is understood, informed Mehemet Ali of its determination not to allow the slightest encroachment of the territories of their well-affected ally. At the request of the British government, the Imaun has restricted, reformed, and partially abolished the slave-trade on those parts of the eastern coast of Africa over which he has sway ; and in order that the nefarious traffic might be effectually put down, he offered England the possession of the most valuable island in his dominions, Zanzibar, provided they would give him other possessions of equal advantage. He receives English travellers with more than Oriental hospitality, admits them to familiar intercourse, favours their plans, sympathizes with their objects, and defrays their expenditure. His advisers are Arabs, who have been educated in British India, and there been instructed in British civilization.

The little island of Zanzibar, is the first valuable possession of the Imaun of Muscat after leaving Cape Delgado, and will undoubtedly become one of the great commercial depôts of Eastern Africa. Its inhabitants are estimated at 150,000, a dense population, allowing

**250** to the square mile. Two-thirds of this number are slaves, and 17,000 free negroes. The island is watered by several little streams, the chief of which, called the Panedogo, may be ascended a couple of miles in boats. The town, containing 12,000 inhabitants, is ranged along the banks of this stream. Our trade with Zanzibar is of very recent origin, dating from the expiration of the East India Company's charter. The present Imaun of Muscat has been at great pains to improve this island, which, it is said, he meditates making the place of his permanent residence and the capital of his dominion. He resided there for three years previous to 1836. It has many claims to his partiality : it.. is conveniently situate opposite those African coasts, over which he claims sovereignty : it is about 45 miles long, and 12 to **15** broad, with a low undulating surface, attaining at its greatest height an elevation of about 500 feet above the level of the sea. It is encircled by coral reefs, which rise in a steep and compact barrier on the eastern side. It is clothed with a rich verdure, shaded with groves, in which the stateliest forms of the African forest are mingled, in endless variety **of shape and hue**, with the fruit-trees of India ; while along the sea-shore, and often appearing to rise directly from the surf, the cocoa-nut palm forms a grateful fringe.

The **African** trade of Zanzibar has gone on increasing during the last half century, at the expense of the Portuguese settlements at Mozambique, and on the river Zambia. The improvement in the cultivation of the island has kept pace with the increase of its external trade. The **Imaun** has **planted the** sugar-cane extensively, and procured experienced cultivators from the **Mauritius**. He has also vigorously undertaken the culture of indigo, coffee, and the nutmeg. Gum-copal, ivory, and hides are already sent here for sale from the opposite continent. The foreign vessels which visited Zanzibar between September, 1832, and May, **1834**, amounted in all to forty-one sail, of which thirty-two were American, seven English, one Spanish, one French. The American cottons have taken precedence of the English here, from whence, according to Sir Alexander Burnes, they find their way to Muscat and Persia. "The English endeavour," says Dr. Ruschenburgen, the United States diplomatic agent, in describing Zanzibar, "to imitate our fabric, by stamping their own with American marks, and by other means of assimilating it, but the people say that the strength and wear of the American goods are so superior, that, lest they be deceived, they will no longer purchase from Englishmen." We will venture to hint that this determination did not arise spontaneously, but was the result

of the American diplomatic agent's suggestion. Within this last three years an English and an American factor have been established on the island ; but the latter has, by the superior tact of his government, been invested with a political as well as a mercantile character. The revenues of the island in the year 1839 were farmed at £36,000,\* a sum probably not exceeding the half of what was actually paid. The superiority of American commerce in Zanzibar is merely the result of British negligence and of American cunning. The Imaun of Muscat, as we have before remarked, is a firm friend to British alliance, the importance of which to him daily increases, and for the sake of which he sacrificed a large portion of his revenue derived from the slave-trade, and at one time actually offered to cede to us this valuable little island, to enable us to put down effectually this abominable traffic on the eastern coast of Africa. In return, the British government have guaranteed the integrity of his dominions. Here then is a fair plea for preference of British commerce in Zanzibar, if we were not too deeply imbued with free-trade notions ;—what would France give for such an opportunity to extend her commerce ? The direct trade between London and Zanzibar, which commenced in 1834, has been crowned with complete success, and cannot fail, if properly cultivated, to call forth the commercial resources of Eastern Africa, and lead to the most important results. During the very first year of the establishment of an English house in the island, the value of their importation into Zanzibar from London, considerably exceeded that of the importations of all the Portuguese settlements in Africa put together. The secret of the prosperity of this valuable island is the partial abolition, or rather the restriction of the slave-trade, for the slaves sold in Zanzibar are sold by themselves ; that is, they voluntarily enter into service for the sake of seeking their fortunes.

Between Zanzibar and the main there are numerous harbours formed by the islands and reefs, which are safe, and by no means difficult of access. Twenty-five miles north of Zanzibar is another low coral island, called Pemba, extending thirty miles, from north to south, and ten miles from east to west. It is about eighteen miles from the main. The soil which covers the coral rock is so productive, that it is the granary of the adjacent coast, its rice being of the finest

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\* The Edinburgh Review states that the revenues of Zanzibar, in 1834, were farmed at £110,000. This is, in all probability, erroneous, as the amount in 1839 is correctly stated above, and the island has gradually increased in prosperity.

quality. Between Zanzibar and Pemba the river Pangany falls into the sea.

After leaving Pemba, the next important position is Mombása, which has long been an object of the Imaun of Muscat's desire. The advantageous position of Mombása necessarily attracted his attention. About the year 1817, he obtained possession of Patta, the island of Pemba, and the low coast extending from Melinda southward to the river Pangany, but he was enabled to gain no further positive advantage. Possessed of these points, he interrupted the commerce of the people of Mombása, and blockaded their little island. When the British ships of war under Captain Owen were off the coast, the Arab chiefs resolved to cede their little state to Great Britain through the medium of that officer. He accepted the cession of Mombasa, on condition that they abolished the slave-trade, and a truce took place between the contending parties. For three years the British flag replaced the red flag of the Arabs on the fort of Mombása. The British government, however, were unwilling to increase the number of British colonies, and orders were sent out to give up the place. The day of the departure of our garrison was a day of general mourning throughout the island. As soon as the English abandoned it, the Imaun recommenced his attacks on it. The brave islanders, however, repulsed all his attacks, sometimes with great loss, and the government of Bombay indirectly encouraged their resistance, nor could the representations of the Imaun induce the Anglo-Indian government to deviate from the path it had laid down. Despairing of subduing Mombása by his own power, the Imaun sought the assistance of the Americans, whose traders have of late years grown numerous on the coasts of Arabia and Eastern Africa. A factory in Zanzibar, or on whatever part of the African coast they might choose, and exclusive privileges of trade, were the prices to be paid for republican assistance in subduing Mombása, with which place these unprincipled traders, had no quarrel, or even cause of complaint. The Bombay government no sooner heard of this nefarious alliance, than in the spring of 1834 they despatched a ship of war to Zanzibar, where the Imaun of Muscat was then residing, to demand explanations, and preserve the independence of the brave islanders, and thus for a time was frustrated the subjection of Mombása.

The Americans, it is well known, are extremely desirous to possess a good port in the Arabian Seas, and to monopolize the commerce of Eastern Africa, Hence the eagerness with which they entered into the

atrocious agreement we have referred to. In the year 1835, the United States government despatched a diplomatic agent to negotiate a commercial treaty with the Sultan. This object he effected ; and under the pretext of securing the trade of the United States from arbitrary exactions, and placing it on an equal footing with that of the most favoured nations, the treaty in question fixed the duty of imports at 5 per cent.-an advantage in favour of American commerce of 2½ per cent.

Mombasa is one of the chief commercial ports of Eastern Africa ; the coasting trade, chiefly the produce of the land, gives employment to many hundreds of large boats or dows, and the ivory-trade brings vessels of burden from Cutch, Surat, and Bombay. The quantity of ivory annually exported from Zanzibar, Mombása, and Lamú exceeds 650 tons. The trade in provisions is in the hands of the natives ; but the export trade belongs to the Arabs of Muscat and the Banyans of Cutch and Bombay.

The Arabs, who are generally allied to the native chiefs, hold fairs in the frontier towns of the coast tribes, which are rarely above three days' journey from the sea. The chief native fair or market, supplying Mombása, is held at Jivu, about fifteen miles in the interior. The Banyans also are great monopolizers of trade ; they never erect factories or forts, but traffic directly with the natives of the interior, whom, as well as the foreigners who visit the coast, they keep in the dark respecting their profits. All direct communication between the natives of Zanzibar is prohibited by them, and they repress the spirit of native industry, by selling the Africans nothing but the vilest and cheapest goods. As a place of commercial importance, the island of Mombasa cannot be too highly estimated. Had our government consented to its becoming a British settlement, there can be no doubt it would have been a highly valuable one in a financial view, while the moral results flowing from British intercourse on African civilization would have been immense. As our trade with Eastern Africa increases, the necessity of a colony on the coast will become apparent ; and as there is no point more suitable than Mombása, it is to be hoped that our government will, until the time arrives when it ought to take possession of the island, prevent its falling into the hands of any other power.

The port of Lamú is another most valuable possession of the Imaun of Muscat on this coast, and has a considerable trade in ivory.

The eastern coast of Africa, from the mouth of the river Juba, which is almost under the Line, to Cape Gardafui, a distance of one thousand miles, is for the most part sterile ; the country, which is thinly peopled,

is inhabited by a race called the Soumauli, who profess to observe the precepts of the Koran. They are represented as a mild generation, of pastoral habits, and confined almost entirely to the coast ; the interior being occupied by the fierce and untamable Gallas. The southern portion of this district, as far as Magadocia, has some considerable **towns**, in which the slave-trade flourishes. Camels are the only exports of this coast; for although the Arab merchants sometimes ascend the Juba as far as **Gonára**, the chief produce of the Soumauli country is carried to **Zeyla** and Berbera in the Gulf of Aden. From Gardafui, in lat. 3 deg. north, to Magadocia, in 2 deg. south, the whole line of coast is a naked **rocky** shore, rising abruptly to the height of from two to **four hundred feet**, which, in advancing, declines into a sandy plain. In the whole extent of this portion of the coast there are neither bays, rivers, nor inlets.

Although the **power** of the Imaun along the immense line of coast we have described extends, and that with many lengthy interruptions, not more than a league from the coast, the Arabs, considered as distinct from that sovereign, have a sway, derived principally from their commercial habits, along the coast, from the mouth of the Juba southward for an extent of about one thousand miles ; and throughout this entire extent the nations inhabiting the interior, to the **distance of three hundred miles**, are comprehended within the range of their commerce, **The river Ozy**, for the distance of four hundred miles, has been **explored** by **them**. They maintain a direct or indirect commerce **with the country** of the **Chága** behind the **Mombása** coast; with that of the **Moviza**, who are described as a people knowing and **enjoying the** advantages of industry, social order, and of commerce ; with that of **Monomœzi**, who are represented as a very rich people. For a **range of** a thousand miles, the Arabs have thus a wide and easy access to the interior of Africa, while their traffic doubtless pervades and essentially civilizes regions of which the very names are unknown to them.

From all that is known respecting the nations who inhabit the interior on the eastern coast of Africa, we conclude that **they are generally** much more civilized and enlightened than those of the opposite division of the continent. It is recorded of several that they are rich ; which supposes a knowledge of accumulation and property, both incidents of civilization ; and those that are known to be of an inferior race are highly **prized** in the slave-markets, on account of their **ingenuity and skill as traders**. Besides, the natives of the eastern coast of Africa are not all Negroes, neither are those races in which the Negro blood predominates so low, either in body or mind, in the scale of humanity, as their brethren of