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E S S A Y S.

- I. On the POPULOUSNESS of AFRICA.
- II. On the TRADE at the FORTS on the GOLD COAST.
- III. On the Necessity of erecting a FORT at CAPE APPOLONIA.

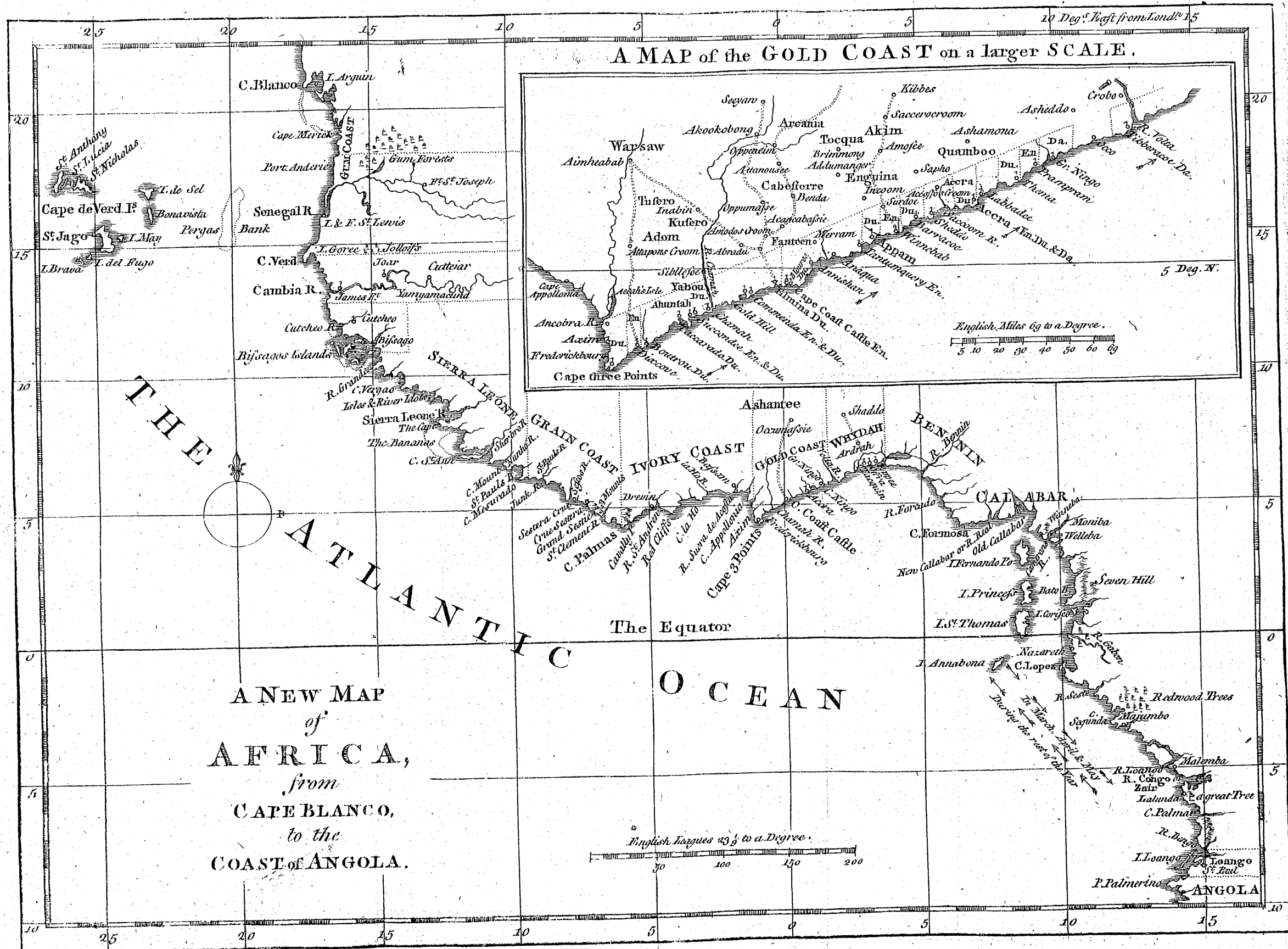
ILLUSTRATED WITH
A New MAP of AFRICA,
From Cape BLANCO to the Kingdom of ANGOLA.

— *Alterius sic*
Altera poscit opem res et conjurat amicè.

HORAT.

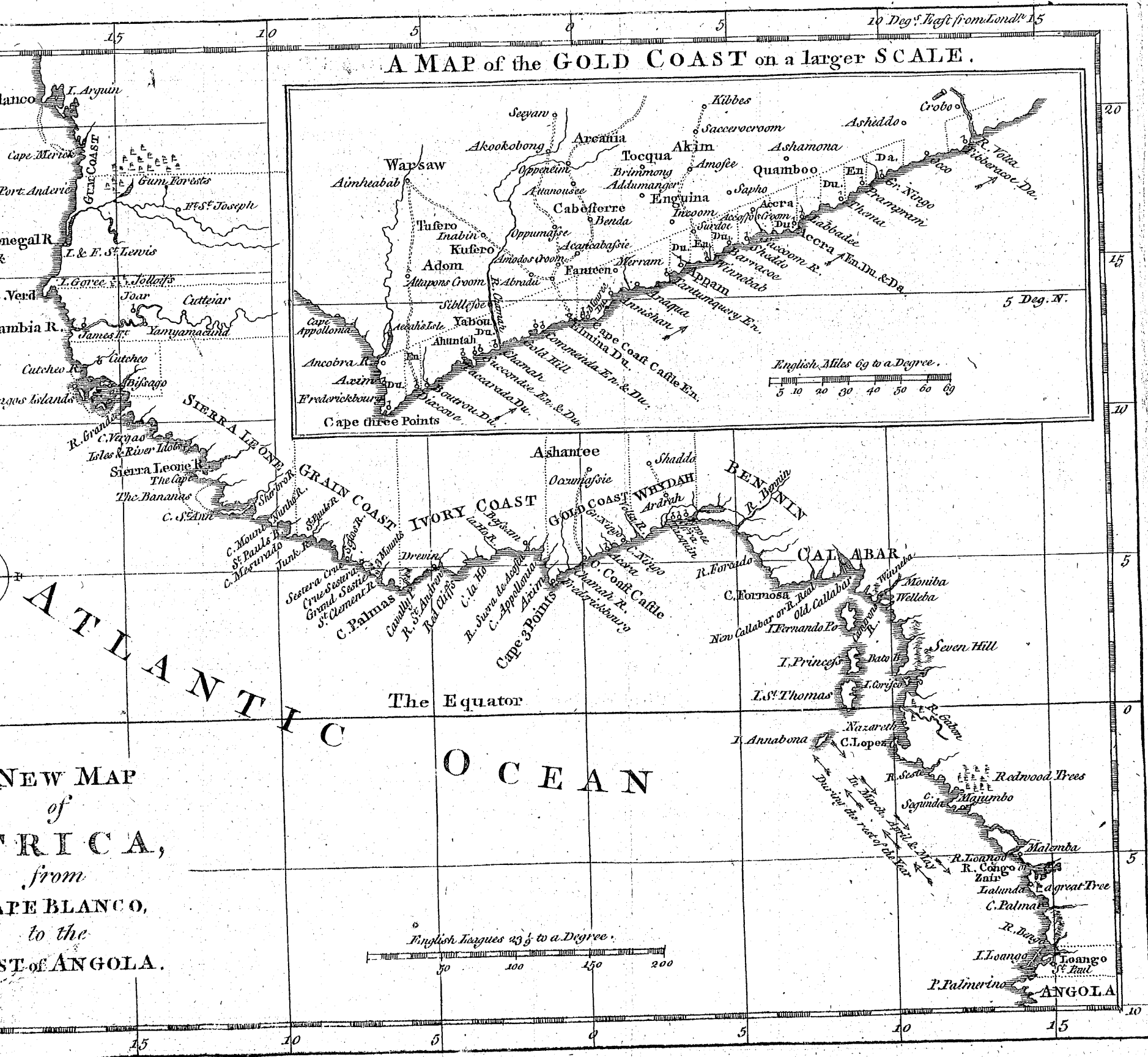
L O N D O N,
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TO
THE RIGHT HONORABLE
W I L L I A M
EARL OF HILLSBOROUGH
First Lord Commiffioner
and Plantations, and
Most Honourable Privy

My LORD,
Though I trust to your
kindness to receive
I have ever had the most
the improvement of
trade, as that which
ject of the following
I have found some
myself in presenting
the state of the African
just now a matter
inquiry, and consequently
me an opportunity
least impropriety I
your lordship.



TO
 THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
W I L L S,
 EARL OF HILLSBOROUGH,
 First Lord Commissioner of the Board of Trade
 and Plantations, and one of His Majesty's
 Most Honourable Privy Council, &c. &c.

My LORD,
THOUGH I might safely
 trust to your Lordship's readi-
 ness to receive favourably what-
 ever had the most remote tendency to
 the improvement of so important a
 trade, as that which makes the sub-
 ject of the following essays; yet should
 I have found some difficulty with my-
 self in presenting them, had not the
 state of the African trade been made
 just now a matter of parliamentary
 inquiry, and consequently afforded
 me an opportunity in which with the
 least impropriety I might address your
 lordship.

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My first intention was only to set forth the importance of the trade at Cape Appolonia, and the prospect of its being greatly improved and enlarged by having a Fort at that place. But, when this was done, my Lord, there seemed to be a necessity, in order to complete the subject, to say something of the use of forts in general, and the advantage the publick receives from the trade carried on at them. This produced the second of these essays, of which a part appeared last summer in a periodical work, mixt with things on other subjects; but as that performance (such as it is) was my own, I thought I had a right to turn it into the present form. The inquiry concerning the populousness of Africa sprung from the others; for having proposed an establishment which was to enlarge the slave trade, one difficulty seemed to arise, namely, how that trade could bear being pushed further, which,

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which, even as it hitherto has been carried on, is the astonishment of every body.

In the second essay, I have confined myself principally to that circumstance which seemed most wanting an inquiry, to wit, the competition between the captains of ships and the chiefs of forts. This competition removed, as surely it easily may, by expedients of a sufficiently obvious nature, and which consequently need not be pointed out by me, the merchants trading to the Gold Coast, I believe, desire no further alteration.

The question, my Lord, if the trade is now in a more flourishing state than it ever was in the time of the Royal African Company, may be very easily decided. The astonishing increase of the Guinea traders demands for Woolens, and the manufactures of Manchester and Birmingham; with the prodigious exportation

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to that country of corn spirits from England, and of rum from America; are of themselves circumstances that tend very greatly to the answering this question. But after all, my Lord, if it be an established maxim, that people in trade (especially in an open one) judge very well in matters relative to their own interests,---and if they approve of the system under which their trade is conducted, there is a strong presumption that it is a good one:---if, my Lord, this be allowed, the present African system needs no defence: the merchants trading to that country have universally given their suffrages in favour of it, and surely it is a sort of tyranny not to let them judge for themselves. That it may admit of amendments is not to be denied, and what human institution is there that will not? Some, at least such as I humbly think will be amendments, are hinted at in the following

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following essays: but, for a few little defects in the present regulation to subvert the whole, would be lopping a limb on account of a scratch; especially, as is pretty openly avowed, if there is a design to substitute in its place the long exploded and execrated project of a Joint Stock Company; a project which is equally to be rejected, whether we consider it in theory, or appeal to experience. The merchants concerned in the Guinea trade are satisfied with having it in their power to trade directly with the blacks themselves, and they cannot be brought to believe that the price of a commodity can ever be lowered by increasing the number of interventions in the purchase of it. And if, in support of our argument, we appeal to facts, what a croud present themselves! Will not the fates of the several Dutch, Danish, French and Portugueze African companies, determine entirely on this side the question?

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question? But above all, my Lord, to say nothing of five or six other English African companies successively formed and broke in the space of eighty-seven years, the famous Royal African company is the most striking instance. With all the powers that the whole legislature could give them, powers which they exerted in the most merciless manner, by seizing, condemning or destroying the ships of private adventurers, with noblemen of the first rank, and even with kings among their directors, who stretched their prerogatives in favour of this company; a company, that after spending millions of their own money, and running in debt with the whole world, the private adventurers were all along able to overtrade in Guinea, and undersell in the West-Indies. The company, after dwindling upon a parliamentary allowance for some years, was, at last, with the hearty consent of the nation in general, and the African merchants

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merchants in particular, dissolved. In vain will be urged, that four hundred thousand guineas were, in a few years, coined out of the gold imported by them from Africa:—it is incontestably proved, as has been observed in another place, by the Journals of the House of Commons, that they bought their gold too dear, and were ruined long before the parliament broke in upon their charter.

But I fear I forget myself, and am running that into a preface which I begun as a dedication. Facts, however, will be as acceptable to your Lordship, in whatever shape they appear, as the usual fulsome strain of a mere dedication would be disgusting. The praise of an individual must be of very little consequence, amidst the applauses of the whole commercial nation, at the unwearied labours of the board of trade and plantations: labours so much increased by the vast extent of territory fallen to this country; and
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it seems as if your Lordship, and your noble coadjutors, had determined that the assiduity, to turn these glorious conquests to the best account, should equal the valour by which they were acquired.

But I will now finish, and certainly ought to blush at detaining your Lordship so long, at a time when you have the trade of the whole world to consider, and that of such a nation as Britain to superintend.

I am,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

And devoted humble servant,

John Hippisley.

E S S A Y

ON THE

Populoufness of AFRICA.

WHILST the great increase and high cultivation of the sugar colonies in the West-Indies have, for more than a century past, made the demand for Negroes so extremely great, it has often been asked with astonishment, how Africa has been able to supply them with such prodigious numbers. For these eighty or an hundred years past, forty thousand at least have been exported yearly by the *English, French, Portugueze, Dutch, Danes, and North-Americans.* They are dearer, indeed, upon the Coast, from the number of trading competitors, and the increase of their value in the West-Indies; but the purchases are still very quickly made, and

B slaves

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slaves seem quite as plenty as they were twenty or thirty years ago.

It is said by historians, and the writers in political arithmetick, that the blow struck by Ferdinand and Isabella, and by Philip the Third, in driving about a million of Jews and Moors from the dominions of Spain, affects that kingdom to this moment, though the first expulsion took place so long ago as the end of the fifteenth century, and the other an hundred and seventeen years after. Now, if Spain, in near three centuries, has not recovered of this wound, what shall we say of a part of Africa, vastly more extensive indeed than Spain, but consisting, as has been supposed, mostly of barren sands, and wide-spread, uninhabitable deserts, that in less than a hundred years has furnished the planters in the West-Indies and America with four millions of its inhabitants, and is at this day so little affected by these draughts, that if double or treble that number should be wanting in the same length of time, there is more than a sufficient fund to supply them, without the least danger of exhausting the country?

To account for this, we must compare the extent of the most populous countries in Europe with that part of the continent of

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of Africa from which we get slaves. This last we know to be very great; but for the notion of its interior regions being full of barren wastes, inhabited only by wild beasts, this is a mere vulgar error, derived from the ancients, who gave up the whole torrid zone as uninhabitable. By the accounts we have along the west side of Africa, from traders who out of all dispute have come from the most inland parts, they are extremely well peopled, and the country in general quite fruitful and verdant. It lies, indeed, almost entirely in the torrid zone: but will that be taken for a reason, even if we had not the above accounts, for its being thought bare of inhabitants? Let us look to those countries, both to the east and west of Africa, that lie in the same latitudes. Is the *Mogul Empire*, *Siam*, *Sumatra*, *Java*, *Borneo*, *part of China*, the *Philippine Islands*, and the other places in the East-Indies between the tropicks, thinly inhabited? Was any place more populous than *Peru* and *Mexico* before the Spaniards extirpated the natives? yet does the equinoctial line pass directly over the middle of these countries.

Our most northern place of traffick is *Senegal*, the most southern *Angola*, a coast which, allowing for the indentations of the

bays, contains little less than four thousand miles in length. Many of the slaves brought to the different trading places scattered on this vast extent of sea-shore, we have very sufficient reason to conclude, from the accounts of the black merchants trading to the gold coast, and often from the colour of the slaves themselves, are natives of nearly the utmost extremities of Africa. The descriptions they give of the dress, persons, and customs of the nations from which they come, or to which they are near neighbours, agree exactly with those of the Moors in Barbary, and the back parts of Tripoli; a distance so prodigious from the gold coast, that we may from thence very reasonably take for granted that great numbers of the slaves purchased at *Angola* are brought from the interior parts of *Ethiopia*, and the borders of the *Indian Ocean*. Thus then, the space from which we draw slaves, has an extent, along the sea, from sixteen degrees north to about twelve degrees south, and its inland boundaries reach from the confines of *Mount Atlas* to the back of *Nubia*, the head of the Nile, and so on to the *Straits of Mozambique*.

I believe it will be very readily allowed, that there never could have been fewer inhabitants

habitants in this tract of country, being at least three fourths of the whole continent of Africa, than in the *British Islands*, *Holland*, *Germany*, *Switzerland*, *Italy*, *France*, *Spain* and *Portugal*, which together make scarcely one fourth of Europe.

Now let us consider the very different circumstances of Europe and Africa with regard to the advantages and disadvantages attending the propagation of the species.

What numbers of both sexes in our quarter of the globe are born, grow up, and die without ever having children! How many Men abstain from marriage from humour, a contemplative and philosophick turn, love of retirement, an indolent or a pleasurable disposition! how many Women from coldness, caprice, coquetry, and the not being asked! The increase of luxury has always been a hindrance to marriage. The vain are unwilling to abridge any part of the sumptuousness of their appearance in the world, and if they cannot figure as much after matrimony as before, give up all thoughts of marrying at all. The inconveniencies from indigent circumstances, and the certainty of multiplying them by having children, prevent vast numbers of both sexes from entering into wedlock, and many others till very late in life. The long absence of husbands from

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from their wives on the account of trade, to say nothing of war, prevents the latter from breeding as often as they otherwise would. Debauchery cuts off the very source of propagation in many, or at least leaves their immediate offspring unfit to continue their families. A state of servitude, in the parts of Europe I have mentioned, precludes the state of matrimony to more than two hundred thousand men, and as many women,—for who will take or keep a married servant of either sex?—But above all, religion, in the Roman Catholick countries, strikes the heaviest blow at propagation. France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, contain five hundred thousand of each sex, who, if they were allowed the privileges of a conjugal state, would furnish those countries yearly with two millions of people.

Let us now take a view of Africa. There we shall find desire unchecked by the dread of want; there alone we shall behold nature unaffected by humour, caprice, or coquetry, taking its full scope.—A solitary genius, a turn to speculation and abstracted studies, resolutions of chastity from disappointed love, unmarried servants, long voyages, and religious vows, are all utterly unknown in those regions.—It may be objected, that where there is no restraint to
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the indulgence of desire, constitutions may be spoiled by a too excessive use of certain springs; but this by no means is so likely to happen to *savage* or unlettered people, as to the inhabitants of the *refined* parts of the world; for, to the confusion of learning, or at least what is called *polite study*, the more exquisite sensations are sharpened by it. The imagination, enlivened by a cultivated mind, figures to itself the objects of pleasure in such numerous, bright, and attractive images, as never present themselves to the thoughts of the vulgar. *Satiety* takes its natural course in these last, terminates their efforts, and suspends the indulgence of desire, till nature truly gives it by having had a due time to recruit itself. But far different is the course the passions take in the other case:—there desire succeeds desire before nature gives the regular warning; and yet, by the powerful strugglings of an over-heated imagination that can figure to itself a pleasure *even beyond what really exists*, the body is brought, for a time at least, to obey the summons, over-acts its powers, and *prostitutes* itself, if I may so say, to the *mind*. Thus, by the most perverse turn, the faculties that, as it should seem, were destined to subdue the appetites, become provocatives to them, and instead of regulating

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the simple calls of nature, serve, very often at least, as the incentives to *intemperate lust*.

This is the first time, for aught I know, that sentiment has been reckoned as an hindrance to population; but I believe there can be no doubt but it frequently is, and that the Africans, those however about whom I am writing, are almost totally devoid of it.

Neither are the fruits of promiscuous lewdness so bitter in that part of the world as they are in Europe, and consequently not so hurtful to procreation. The *Lues Venerea* and the *Gonorrhœa* are indeed both known in those countries of Africa we are acquainted with; but their symptoms are very mild, the infection not so communicable as in our parts of the world, and the cure vastly more easy. The natives think nothing of them, nor are they, however carelessly managed, scarcely ever attended with rotten bones, or an impaired habit of body. The only medicine among these people for the *Gonorrhœa*, and which always carries it off, is an infusion of diuretick and vulnerary herbs; and the cure of the confirmed *Tabes*, if it deserves that name, is effected by a strict and warm confinement in the house, a rigid abstinence from all high-seasoned animal food, and
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taking the decoction of sarsaparilla. The sarsa, I suppose, was originally introduced among them by some European, as it does not grow in Africa: its good effects must however have been very manifest for them to have adopted the practice so universally among themselves, that sarsa is become an article in trade, is constantly brought to the Gold Coast, sold to the traders there, and carried to the inland parts of the country*.

C Debauchery

* We might account for the mildness of the symptoms in this disorder from the excessive perspiration, did not the same take place also in the West Indies, where the symptoms of the *Lues Venerea* are however, by what I have heard, not quite so severe as in Europe. The true reason undoubtedly is, its not being a malady peculiar to the climate; for it has been observed by physicians, that *exotic disorders* as well as *plants* degenerate, and will in time die away. The *Elephantiasis* of the Greeks, and the *Leprosy* of the Egyptians, continued but a time in the Western parts of Europe, and are now hardly ever seen. The Venereal disease has also declined in its violence of symptoms in Europe, insomuch that Dr. Astruc ventures to prognosticate that in a course of years it will be totally extirpated. — This way of reasoning may appear singular enough in the subject before us, it being generally agreed to now, that the Venereal disease in Europe was occasioned by Columbus's sailors bringing the *Yaws* from America, a *cuticular disorder* in that country, but which changed its appearance from the *alteration of climate*. Now the *Yaws* is as peculiar to Africa as it ever was to the West Indies: how then shall the Venereal disease, which owes its origin to an endemic of Africa, be called a *foreign* one? We answer, By its entire variation of symptoms; a circumstance altogether sufficient to make us reckon it a new disease.

Debauchery in the pleasures of the table has gained very little footing in Africa. The people are remarkably negligent as to the nature or condition of their food, nor are they a whit more anxious about the manner of dressing it. With them, in the vulgar phrase, a belly-full is a belly-full. Drinking, and that to excess, prevails among many of the negroes upon the coast, and a little way inland: but from the quantity of spirits imported in this country, compared to the number of its inhabitants, we may very reasonably conclude, that some millions of them never tasted a drop of distilled liquor during the whole course of their lives.

Luxury in dress, building, furniture or equipage, has not yet been introduced;—and the means of living in so vast, and in general so fruitful a country being therefore very easy, no man will be afraid of not having

A negro family carried from Guinea to Europe would find their constitutions quickly altered; and if their descendants, after the second or third generation, were removed to Guinea, they would feel every effect of that climate in the same manner, and be subject to the same disorders, as the ab origine Europeans. The *Burgundy wine* transplanted to the *Cape of Good Hope* produced the fine *Constantia wine*, as different from Burgundy as one wine can be from another.—Should the Cape vine be now transplanted to France, the grape of it would doubtless produce a wine different both from the Burgundy or Constantia.

having it in his power to provide for a family; an anxiety which when once out of question, we may always trust to natural inclination for the rest*.

Neither does a state of slavery prevent population, as it doubtless would in a civilized part of the world, where liberty is considered in so rapturous a light. A man or woman of sensibility,—that sensibility increased by reflection, and perhaps study, would, under the yoke of slavery, be deaf to all the calls of inclination, and refuse giving being to wretches doomed to inherit the misery their parents feel in so exquisite a manner †. But the idea of slavery is different in Africa; for independent of the almost total absence of keen sensations, the slaves of a family are considered as no unrespectable part of it. Scarce one of them is ever sold, unless for very great crimes ‡; and then the rest of

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* In every place whatever, where two people can live conveniently, a marriage follows of course. Nature disposes sufficiently to this, where she is not stopt by the difficulty of a subsistence. *Spirit of Laws, chap. x. book 23.*

† Did not the women of America make themselves miscarry to prevent their children having such cruel masters? *Spirit of Laws—*from *Gage's Account of the Spanish West Indies.*

‡ The slaves shipped from Africa are almost all prisoners taken in war, and brought by the inland traders

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his fellows are consulted, and the case exactly laid before them. Should a master do otherwise, and dispose of one through mere ill humour or avarice, he stands in danger of the rest running away from him. Slaves also, if they have abilities, are permitted to make the most of them; by which they often become rich, and purchase slaves for themselves. In this they meet with no interruption, provided only that they acknowledge their subservience from time to time, and occasionally make some little presents to their master and his descendants. Nor are the less opulent slaves afraid of the burthen of a family, or that their offspring may want the assistance so absolutely requisite in their infant and tender state; it being a constant observation, in this as well as in every other country where slavery is allowed, that the masters and mistresses have almost the same fondness for the children of their slaves as for their own, and are equally careful in the bringing them up: a circumstance that ought to awaken our reverence of the Divine Providence, which in the default of parental love, or its inutility, supplies the
want

to the slave market towns at the back of the Gold Coast, where they are met at a certain day (generally Wednesday) every week by the Fantee and other coast negroes; and from these are they bought by the white men.

want by an adventitious affection in one totally unconnected by the ties of blood to the poor helpless infant.

As to coquetry, platonism, inappetency and whim among women,---these will scarcely happen in a country where education and elegance of thinking never found place; where the air is so soft, the sun so powerful, the shade so voluptuous, and the food, however simple, of so rich and stimulating a nature*.

The journeys made by the Africans are seldom or ever beyond the limits of their own countries, or just to the confines of a neighbouring one for the purposes of trade, never through curiosity, or for amusement; and even then their wives generally accompany them; so that few children are lost to these states by the absence of husbands from home. We may add here, that child-birth is easier throughout all these countries than it is in Europe.

The wars are infinitely less bloody than ours. Scarce any of the prisoners taken in battle are put to death, but are almost all sold, and brought to some part of the coast.

Polygamy

* The Chian pepper is used in almost every dish of the negroes, and that in great quantities. Fish, when to be got, is preferred to every other kind of food. Soups are in great esteem, and these they fill with rich stomachick mucilaginous vegetables of various kinds.

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Polygamy is universally allowed through Africa, and contributes vastly to its populousness. It would, however, be hurtful to that of Europe. Among us the number of males and females born is nearly equal, or at least differs only so much* as about makes up for the multitudes of the former cut off by war, sea-voyages, and other casualties attending their active state. Polygamy must in this case be certainly hurtful to population, for this plain and common reason, that ten women will not have so many children by one husband, as they might by ten; and if one man has ten wives, many others must go without any wives at all. But Africa is very differently circumstanced: and first with regard to the trade.

Of all the slaves shipped from the coast, not a sixth part are women; consequently, the number of that sex remaining in the country, being greater than that of the other, polygamy becomes necessary. It ought, however, to be confessed, that this inequality, arising from the trade, is not of itself sufficient to show the propriety of polygamy's being allowed in a country, where scarce any man of opulence has less than two or three wives, and

* In the proportion of fourteen to thirteen.

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and some of them have many hundreds. Some men must be cut off by war: and the male slaves sent from Africa, being five or six times more numerous than the females, is a mere trifle in explaining such a case as this, where there is such a prodigious difference between the numbers of *wives* and *husbands*. Here, therefore, we must have recourse to another argument, if so we may call what is barely a recital of matter of fact. From the observations then of those Europeans who have long resided on the several parts of the African coast, and up the rivers, of those who so often visit them on account of trade, and by the strictest enquiries from the inland merchants, it appears that no man goes without a wife from a scarcity of women; that the richest men having many wives, does not prevent the poorest having one or two; in short, that an unmarried black man is seldom or ever seen. The number of women must, therefore, exceed that of the men; nor are we to look upon this as a singular case, the same happening in some places (exactly under the same latitudes as Africa) in the East-Indies*.

Thus,

At Japan, Kempfer says, there are more females born than males. At Bantam, it is said, there are ten girls born for one boy.— See collection of those voyages which contributed

Thus, of the many hindrances to population in Europe, not one takes place in Africa*. Now by the most moderate calculations, just hinted at in the beginning of this essay, a very small part of Europe, though doubtless the most populous, is prevented having a yearly recruit of at least three millions of people. It follows then, that if a century ago, this small part of Europe,

contributed to the establishment of the Dutch East-India company, Vol. I.

In short, this seems to be the case in all the southern parts of Asia; and, in consequence, throughout all these countries polygamy is allowed. On the contrary, in the northern parts of that quarter of the globe, more males than females are born, and particularly at Tibet the disproportion is so great, that women are permitted to take more husbands than one. *Du Halde's China.*

* So great then are the advantages that attend the propagation of the species in this country, that it should seem there would be a superabundance of inhabitants, if the slave trade did not take so many off. Certain it is, that in many of the eastern parts of Asia, the climate and other circumstances are so much more favourable than the soil, that whilst the people multiply, the famines destroy. In this case is China; there a father sells his daughters, and exposes his children. The same causes operate the same effects, according to Dampiere, at Tonquin. So fruitful are the women in the Island of Formosa, that they are not permitted to bring children into the world till they are thirty-five years old: before they have attained that age, the priestesses tramples upon their bellies, and makes them miscarry.— See Vol. V. of voyages relative to the establishment of the Dutch East-India company.

This is mentioned, as we would, if possible, render the slave trade less terrifying than at first sight it may appear.

Europe contained *as many* inhabitants as almost the whole continent of Africa, (which I believe we may be pretty clear it did not) the increase of the last must have exceeded that of the other by an astonishing number. Think only of the difference of three millions the first year! These marrying early, their numbers would double at the end of twenty years: what must the increase be, allowing however largely for deaths, in a century? We will not burthen this essay with such enormous calculations. It appears at one glance, that Africa not only can continue supplying the West-Indies in the quantities she has hitherto, but, if necessity required it, could spare thousands, nay, millions more, and go on doing the same to the end of time.

I have not here taken upon me to defend the slave trade, or offered any arguments to shew that it can be reconciled to the feelings of humanity. I have only endeavoured to set in a clear light a subject which hitherto seems to have been very little considered, and to demonstrate that we need not fear wanting a sufficient supply of slaves from Africa, even though the demands of our colonies should become vastly greater than they are at present. To declaim upon the horrors of this trade would have been beside the question, and, as far as I can see, could

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have

have answered no good purpose; for the impossibility of doing without slaves in the West-Indies will always prevent this traffick being dropped. The necessity, the absolute necessity, then, of carrying it on, must, since there is no other, be its excuse. We would not, however, be quite silent upon this occasion. A hint will be forgiven by those who *do not* need it, in consideration of those who (*perhaps*) *do*. We hope then, it will be ever remembered *that the traffick is in human creatures*; that sensibility, and deep reflection upon their sad state, do not operate very powerfully among the negroes; yet are they not *totally* devoid of them; that certain ties there are, which, when broken, affect even brutes; and that feeling, bodily feeling at least, is the portion of every thing that has life. Shall we then forget that many of these poor creatures, to say nothing of their common misfortune, in leaving their native country for ever, have been torn from the woman, the child, or the parent that they loved? circumstances of so piteous a nature, as, instead of inspiring wanton cruelty, or cold neglect, should teach the white possessors to soften the misery of their condition by every safe and reasonable indulgence that their humanity can suggest, and that the nature of the case will admit.

ESSAY

ESSAY II.

On the Trade at the Forts on the Gold Coast.

WHENEVER the circumstances of the African trade have been brought upon the carpet, one question has almost constantly arisen, viz. *Whether the forts were advantageous or hurtful to the trade in general.* Certain it is, if we had the exclusive possession of the Gold Coast, the supporting of forts would be an unnecessary expence; but whilst foreigners have established themselves in this manner, we were under the necessity of doing the same, or our trade must have been greatly obstructed, and in the end we should have seen it wrested out of our hands. It has been a constant and avowed maxim with the Dutch and French, *That wherever they had a fort, an exclusive right belonged to them of course.* Some have thought that stationed ships of war would answer every purpose of forts; but, besides the objection of the great number of ships that would be requisite, the vastness of the expence and the mortality,

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how could any inland communication be held, or influence maintained, by means of ships relieved every six or eight months, and of which the commanders would scarcely acquire much knowledge of the disposition and politicks of the natives; at least, could not in these points be in any degree upon a footing with the experienced Dutch, and other foreigners, constantly residing in the country? This expedient has indeed been tried formerly upon the Gum Coast, and found utterly ineffectual. Our government sent two men of war to the coast, of superior force to the French, to protect the merchant-ships; but the French, by virtue of one fort only, and their interest derived from that establishment, brought the traders under such subjection, that they did not dare to carry off any trade to the British shipping, and their voyages were ruined.—To this, perhaps, it may be said, *that our influence is not so great upon the Gold Coast*: but this would ill agree with the captains frequent complaints of *the prejudice their voyages receive from the great influence of the chiefs among the natives*; —complaints which (not always from conviction of their being well founded) have induced the committee to lay very considerable inhibitions upon the trade of their chiefs, and sometimes to dismiss them their service.

service. Now, if, under such difficulties and risks, these chiefs *really* retain such weight as to take the ascendant of the shipping, what must become of these last, should the forts fall into the hands of foreigners, who would undoubtedly exert all their strength and artifice to prevent a single slave, or ounce of gold, being carried off to the shipping?—*But why these questions upon the consequences of our forts falling into the hands of foreigners?* Is there any such danger? I will not pretend to say there absolutely is; but there have, of late, since the talk of building a fort at Cape Appolonia, been many vehement and positive assertions made against our keeping any forts at all. These assertions, it is true, being totally unsupported by reasoning or facts, will not operate very powerfully; but they may prevent these *supports* (as certainly the forts are) of the African trade being attended to in such a manner as the importance of the case requires.—“ If such a thing is done, — “ if such a regulation takes place, I will “ not send a ship. Build a new fort indeed!—I wish the old ones were all “ destroyed, or that the Dutch or the d--l “ had them rather than us.” — Such has been the way of talk among some; how contrary to reason, is perhaps pretty clear by

by what we have already said; and we hope to make it still more so in the course of this essay. We might indeed to these rash sentiments oppose the sense of the whole body of the legislature, who, as often as they have taken the state of this trade into consideration, have constantly decided for supporting the forts, and even for erecting new ones.

In 1693, and 1694, the committee reported their opinion, that *forts and castles are necessary for carrying on and preserving the trade to Africa.*

When that trade was laid open in 1697, and the act renewed in 1712, the whole legislature declared *that forts and castles were undoubtedly necessary for preserving, better carrying on, and improving the trade to Africa; and that it is necessary that they be maintained and enlarged upon the coast.*

In 1730 they resolved it necessary to keep and maintain the British forts and settlements, and to grant ten thousand pounds per annum to the company for that purpose. This was continued to the present committee of the company of merchants trading to Africa, when the old company was dissolved in 1750; and two years ago the supply was enlarged to thirteen thousand pounds.

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The complaint of the masters of ships, and consequently of the owners, has been against the chiefs of the forts being allowed to trade. But how without trade will these men live upon the coast?—Salaries equal to such service, considering the present situation of money matters, could not be given; nor indeed would they answer the purpose, for it is principally from the trade the chief makes that his influence among the natives is derived. It is this that gives weight to his interpositions in the affairs of the coast; it is this that obliges him to make himself of consequence; as the increase of his trade depends very much upon his figure in the country. A salary even equal to all he might get by trade would doubtless satisfy him: but what would be the advantage to the *shipping*? Nothing. What to the Dutch? Immense. Circumscribed, in his views, to a stated sum paid in England, he would certainly not aim at popularity among savages,—at least not so much as when his prospects of gain among them were, as I may say, indefinite. He would live as moderately as he could, save as much of his salary as possible, look from his battlements and see the trade pass his gates to go to the Dutch forts, be cold and unspirited in the affairs that are brought before

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before him, as matters in which he has no interest, rail at a country in which he can find no amusement, and quit it as soon as his circumstances will permit, to bring news home of the vast encrease of trade and power at the Dutch forts. Thus, instead of chiefs, who, from the nature of their business, must become masters of every thing relative to the coast, and capable of being active and useful in the general trade, and watchful against the encroachments of foreigners, we should have a succession of ignorant and indolent men, who would naturally be indisposed to attend any business beyond the limits of their walls; and the forts, under such circumstances, might certainly as well be abandoned.

If then the chiefs must be allowed to trade, say these gentlemen, *it ought however to be only with the shipping, and by no means should they be permitted to send a single slave from the coast upon their own accounts.* These chiefs, say they, without any expence of vassals, mens wages, wear and tear, insurance, &c. have a house, salary and servants allowed them; they must therefore out-trade us, as they can afford to give greater prices for slaves than we. In answer to this it may be said, that the

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the salary and other little emoluments * at a fort are but moderate considerations for living in such a country as Guinea; so moderate that they are not even sufficient for a decent subsistence. What then are the superior advantages of the chiefs? If they have vessels of their own, they are then at the same charge as other traders. If they send slaves by the vessels of others, the expence is still greater, for there is a profit doubtless in taking negroes on freight.—If they buy slaves to sell again on the coast, they cannot be supposed to give greater prices than the shipping, as, in that case, they must lose by their trade. The masters of ships indeed give five and twenty shillings sterling † more for a slave to a white man than they *usually* will to the blacks; yet this advance is very inconsiderable, when the circumstances are considered that attend the keeping of fresh-bought slaves for sale;—such as the charge for *food*, and oftentimes *medicine*, and the accidents of *loss of sight, lameness, madness*, and, not unfrequently, *death*. Six or seven per cent. would be but a short allowance for all these: and then, what a vast number

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* About 100 l. per annum sterling, salary and perquisites together:

† Eight ackies slave price.

ber of slaves must a chief buy to clear only two or three hundred pounds a year! The calculation is easily made, and therefore shall not swell this essay.

But, say the captains, the influence of the chiefs among the negroes, and the inconvenience, and oftentimes danger the black traders suffer in sending their slaves off, and bringing their goods ashore, in such rough seas, must give great advantages to the chiefs.

With regard to the influence of the chiefs, it might indeed take place, was not the Gold-Coast trade carried on almost entirely by the Fantees, a people exceedingly intelligent and tenacious of their rights;---inasmuch, that they would laugh in a person's face who should tell them, *That by an English act of parliament they have liberty to trade with whom they think proper.* It is a liberty they have constantly taken, as the undoubted right of a free people; *so free*, that upon the slightest disgusts they often *make very free with the chiefs themselves.*—Here it may be asked perhaps, Why, if there is so little influence, we keep forts in the Fantee country? We answer, *Merely because the Dutch do*, who, if we were away, would find it worth their while *at any expence* to oppose the independence of the Fantees,--an independence which

which hitherto these negroes have preserved by the jarring interests of the Europeans settled among them.

As to the risk being less by trading on shore, whoever has been in Guinea must know, that however specious this remark may seem, it has not the least foundation in fact; for not to mention that the masters of ships *generally keep factories on shore at the principal trading-places*, the negroes have always a tendency to give the preference of their trade to the shipping; inasmuch, that they will wait many days in the towns under the forts, if the sea happens to be rough, and at last run all risks rather than not let the captains have the refusal of their slaves. This is so true, not only in trade, but even in the article of provision for the table, that it has been a constant observation every where upon the Gold Coast, and particularly at Annamaboe, that scarce a sheep, fowl, or duck, is ever offered on shore for sale till it has been the whole round of shipping in the road, and brought back sea-sick and half drowned with salt water.

The reason is plain. The negroes, with a certainty of at least an equal price, are strongly persuaded that they shall have better goods from the shipping than out of the warehouses in the forts, it seldom or ever

happening but there are many ordinary pieces of goods in those warehouses, (ordinary from lying long, and being often in the negroes hands) which the chiefs must get rid of, or lose by their trade; whereas, every piece on board the ships is equally fresh and new. Add to this, that the black traders are often in debt to the chiefs, who, to live with any degree of quietness, are under the necessity of trusting them, and that pretty largely. This alone would account for their shunning the forts, if there was no other reason.

Under so many disadvantages, therefore, it is almost impossible for a settler on the Gold Coast, at least in a fort, to make a fortune; and, in fact, very slender fortunes have been made; less by far, than (in equal periods of time) in any other of our colonies. This is so well known for a truth, by every one acquainted with the affairs of Guinea, and with those chiefs who have left the coast within these last fifteen or twenty years, that there need no particular proofs to be brought of it.

These chiefs however are considered as such formidable opponents, that upon the presumption of their trading at greater advantages than the shipping, they are from time to time threatened with *an absolute prohibition of freighting slaves from the*

the coast,---the consequence of which remains to be considered.

If a chief is not permitted to send *some part* at least of his slaves to the West-Indies, what shall he do with such as the captains do not chuse to buy? Let him be ever so careful in his purchases, he must still lay his account in having some of his slaves rejected. By confinement in a fort, by the alteration perhaps of food, and other circumstances, they, in a little time, look worse than when first bought. Besides this, people differ in their ideas of strength, symmetry, and other qualities of a slave; and when a lot of slaves has been blown upon by one captain, it would be an affront to offer them to another; and with French, Dutch, and Danes, he is forbidden to trade on pain of being superseded. There was a resource left when he could freight to the West-Indies such as would not sell; but this cut off, he is no longer upon just footing with the captains; he is deprived of that equality, which in the opinion of every one, but the illiberal and selfish, is so essential to the proper carrying on of trade. He must quit the trade, or be ruined.

A prohibition therefore of this kind amounts to a prohibition of all trade whatever at the forts; and how very hurtful to

to the shipping this must be, a very little time would shew.

We have in the beginning of this essay ventured to assert, that if the chiefs of forts are not permitted to trade, we may as well at once abandon them. They assuredly are not only marks of possession to the English, but contribute vastly to the encrease of the trade in general. Being filled by men of property and experience, so many channels of trade are kept open in the absence of shipping, as is of the utmost consequence to them. Considerable lots of slaves are ready for them, and prevent a delay, which must unavoidably happen if the captains are under the necessity of making their purchase by the tedious method of a slave or two at a time from such dilatory creatures as the negroes.

If it be a maxim in trade in general, that expedition is the life of business, it is peculiarly so in that of Guinea, where mortality and sickness are of such infinite weight. To debar the forts from trading is therefore precluding the shipping the only expedient for preventing this delay; and, what is worse, the channels of trade to the English forts being stopped, they will naturally turn to the Dutch and Danish; the officers of which, by our desisting,

ing, would be spirited to push their interest in the country with the greater vigour. And thus the consequence of this measure will be, that instead of buying a vast number of slaves from Englishmen, the captains must have them from foreigners, who, being under no restriction, will insist on far greater advancements of price than are usual among us; and our forts, no longer then the respected residences of men of property and character, will become the habitations of a set of wretches who must be driven to desperation to live in Guinea upon the miserable terms of a stinted and precarious subsistence. Forts that can be of no service to the traders; must therefore be a useless burthen to the state, and a subject of contempt and ridicule for Europeans and natives.

The sum of all that has been said is,

1. That forts are absolutely necessary upon the coast of Guinea, to preserve and encrease the trade of the shipping.
2. That the forts will be of no use, if the chiefs of them are not permitted to trade.
3. That the salaries and other emoluments of the chiefs, being barely sufficient for a livelihood, cannot enable them to out-trade the shipping.
4. That

4. That the slaves being sent off by the chiefs own vessels, these chiefs are at equal charges with other owners.

5. That being sent by the vessels of others, the slaves are even dearer to them than going by their own, as there is a profit in the freight, which profit is paid by the freighter.

6. That if the chiefs buy to sell again on the coast, they not only *are not rivals to the masters of ships*, but are really *their factors*, and that too for *very moderate commissions*.

7. That to prohibit them sending slaves on freight is tantamount to an absolute prohibition of all trade whatever at the forts; and

8. That such a prohibition must sling vast trade into the hands of foreigners, distress the English, render the forts not only useless but contemptible, lengthen the voyages, and, in every respect, lessen the profits of the shipping.

ESSAY III.

On the Necessity of erecting a Fort at Cape Appolonia.

IN the foregoing essay it having been proved, not only that the forts are necessary to be kept up as marks of possession, but, if the trade at them is stopped, that the shipping will also be exceedingly injured, if not ruined, in theirs;—it follows, that if there is a place upon the Gold Coast of greater consequence than any of those where we at present have settlements, we should, without loss of time, begin to build, if the natives give a proper invitation, and there be the least danger of the Dutch preventing us; to say nothing of the French, who, for more than half a century, have been seeking an establishment upon the Gold Coast, and will spare neither expence nor labour, if, by our contentions with the Dutch, they find the least open to fix themselves.

But the danger, now immediately impending, is from the Dutch; a people in whom

whom seems riveted a constitutional enmity to the English. Whatever phlegm they may derive from the air of Holland, they have still possessed a very enterprising genius whenever the prospect of gain lay before them. Perhaps indeed to that phlegm they owe the perseverance which carries men through such attempts as would quickly discourage those who have only vivacity and fire to support them. Nor are the Dutch devoid of these last-mentioned qualities when they get into the equinoctial countries. The warmth and lightness of the air give an adventitious alacrity, which produces many whimsical and aukward effects. The very idea of a *sprightly Dutchman* carries ridicule in itself. Well were it, if this ridicule was all their neighbours had to contemplate in them. But the same climate seems also to give these men an arrogance, and a more actively-mischievous disposition than appears when they are in the northern parts of the world. If Asia had not been the theatre where these bloody performers have exhibited themselves in so conspicuous a manner, Africa alone could have produced instances enough of their encroaching and merciless genius. We shall not enter into a detail of these, but a few will

will be necessary for the introduction of our subject.

Before king Charles's first Dutch war, the violences committed by the Dutch, even in time of full peace, are hardly to be credited. Not only a vast number of the English shipping was seized, but a price set on the lives of the English residing in the country. Volkenburgh, General of Elmina, offered two ounces of gold for every Englishman's head the negroes would bring him.—When the war broke out, (principally in consequence of these outrages) De Rhuyter, the admiral, carried it on in the *steady sanguinary manner* usual with his nation.—With nothing to oppose him in Guinea, he shewed the same animosity and resentful spirit, as if he had met with the most vigorous resistance. At Taccorary, the guns of which were not of size to reach his fleet, he levelled the fort to the ground, landed his men, and put all the English to the sword. This however was in time of actual war; but the Dutch have been as little scrupulous when we were not only at peace with them, but in the closest alliance against the French.

In the year 1698 they destroyed our castle at Succondee, murdered some of the

white men, and used the rest in the most cruel manner.

In 1706 they did the same at Taccorary out of mere wantonness, for they had themselves abandoned it, after it was conquered by De Rhuyter, and it had successively been afterwards in the hands of the Swedes, Danes, Brandenburgers and us. Nor had we any other advantage in it but that of getting shells, to make into lime for the repair of our forts. Yet was this sufficient to make them murder and imprison the white men, and burn the town to the ground.

In 1750 they raised a war at Dixcove against the English, and avowedly supplied our enemies with ammunition from their fort of Boutry, lying about four miles to the eastward of Dixcove; seized our canoes going with supplies; imprisoned our people, and murdered one white man, at least looked on whilst the negroes did it. Had it not been for the providential arrival of a French vessel from Nantes, commanded by one captain Wall, the fort would inevitably have been taken, and every man massacred. The garrison as reduced, after a siege of some months, to their last barrel of powder. The blacks and Dutch (for the chief of Boutry was himself at their head) knew this distress, and

and were preparing to give the assault next day, when the vessel came to between the English and Dutch roads. A canoe with a letter from the chief of Boutry was immediately aboard, desiring to purchase all the provision, guns, powder, and ball that could be spared, and begging that the surgeon might come and dress some men, who had been wounded the day before in an engagement. The captain sent an answer to this purpose. " That he had observed, as he was coming into the road, that the fort of Dixcove was attacked by the great number of armed negroes near it, and the cannon from time to time being discharged from the ramparts: that this request for arms and ammunition gave him to understand, the Dutch were also concerned and leagued in this attack with the negroes: that whatever his connections were as commander of a French ship, and his duty to his owners as dealing in the very articles specified in the letter, yet must he beg to be excused from furnishing them, or even from sending his surgeon upon such an occasion, 'till he had heard from the English commander at Dixcove: that, in short, he was an Irishman, and as such (especially as

" peace

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“ peace subsisted between France and
 “ England) should look upon himself as
 “ guilty of parricide if he supplied the
 “ Dutch with means to destroy those
 “ whom, as long as he lived, he should
 “ look upon as his countrymen.”

By the time he dispatched this noble answer, the English canoe was aboard, the captain went ashore, and plenty quickly took place of the most distressful want at Dixcove. The siege was soon after raised. Our interest in the country, however, dropped entirely. The town under Dixcove, burnt in the course of the siege, has never been tolerably rebuilt; and at Succondee, where we also have a fort, or rather the ruins of one, we have a town consisting of at most forty negroes.

Thus then the whole windward part of the Gold Coast (viz. from Commenda to Axim) is possessed by the Dutch; and their influence inland is also very great,--- our's nothing.---Even our right at Atchuma, a village a few miles to windward of Dixcove, which we never made any other use of than to get shells and lime-stone at, for the repair of our forts, the Dutch have for some years disputed with us; and of late, as Mr. Bell * writes, have ab-
 solutely

Late governor of Cape-Coast Castle.

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solutely insisted upon our abandoning our pretensions to, though we have exercised every kind of authority there time out of mind, and tho' the caboceer (or head man) has always acknowledged himself an English subject, receives our pay, and declares he will quit his country for ever, rather than submit to the Dutch. Our weakness in short is such, throughout all these parts of Guinea, that even against this flagrant and insolent attack upon the natural right of the inhabitants, and our long-established privileges, we can oppose nothing but *protests* upon the coast, and *appeals* in Europe, the first of which the Dutch laugh at, and the others are treated with coldness and neglect.

However derogatory to our honour, and hurtful to our interest, it may be to yield this point to the Dutch; they are now endeavouring to strike another stroke, which will affect both in the most sensible manner. This is nothing less than to get the trade of Cape Appolonia into their own hands, and consequently to exclude us, and all other nations.

This place lies nine leagues to windward of the first European settlement we come to on the Gold Coast, viz. the Dutch fort St. Anthony, at Axim, and has always been remarkable for its plenty of gold.
 Every

Every nation comes in for a share; and the English often owe the finishing their slave trade at Annamaboe to the gold they get at this place: for it need not be mentioned, that gold is no longer considered by the negroes in the careless light it was when the Europeans first traded with them. They have long found its importance; and it is become as precious among them as with us, for this plain reason, that every necessary and indulgence are as readily purchased with it in Guinea, as in our parts of the world.

Such is the importance of the trade of Cape Appolonia to the English, that it is the only place where they can depend on getting gold, on (what is now so improperly called) the *Gold Coast*.

The Portugueze are also prodigiously advantaged by it, and never fail stopping unless driven past it by the current in the night. In a day's time a Portugueze will sell four or five hundred rolls of tobacco, at an ounce of gold per roll. This I have been told by the Dutch themselves; and they never failed at those times expressing their concern and indignation at the Portugueze *daring* (such was their word) to do this; for it is to be observed, that the Dutch Settlements are maintained almost entirely by the tobacco, paid in toll by the Portugueze

Portugueze at Elmina; and such quantities of that commodity, sold so near the forts, and doubtless circulated all along the country at the back of them, must be exceedingly hurtful to the Dutch. This has at all times made the General of Elmina, and the chief of Axim, (who generally is the second officer upon the coast) look with very jealous eyes upon Cape Appolonia. Not this alone, but the trade made by other nations, is sufficiently offensive to them; as, could it once be stopt there, it must of course center at Axim. Even the ships of their own country the company's officers consider as encroachers upon this occasion, and call them indeed by no other name than *interlopers*.

Influenced by these reasons, the least of which would be sufficiently cogent with such selfish people as the Dutch, they have sought every opportunity to destroy Amoniah, caboceer (or rather king) of Cape Appolonia.

This man is reckoned the richest in gold throughout all Guinea, and his spirit for trade is equal to his wealth. His extreme civility, and even benevolence to Mr. Stockwell, who, when he was superseded at Cape Coast, went there to settle, have been much spoke of. Amoniah not

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only gave him ground for his designed fort, but in a manner resigned his own house to him. Mr. Stockwell has told the author of this essay, that during his stay there his expence was extremely small, the generous Amoniah supplying him with almost every thing; and when he left the place, (unequal, as he might have foreseen, to the business of building a castle with a capital of less than three thousand pounds) Amoniah wished him success in his undertakings, assured him he should at any time be welcome to return, and might command him and his as he had done before.

The Dutch were not a little mortified at this; for these gentlemen never forgive a negro caboccer, who does any service, or shews any civility, to an Englishman. I do not however pretend to say, that this gave birth to the present affair. It has a much older origin, the Dutch having long meditated the establishing themselves at this place by the conquest of it. Elevated by the almost exclusive possession of a country extending from Commenda to Axim, and the insignificant and powerless forts of the English at only two places in this tract, (viz. Succondee and Dixcove) the lucrative spot of Cape Appolonia could not but excite their ambition and avarice; situated, as it was, in their reach, and so
convenient

convenient to be attacked from Axim. The low condition of the West-India company, * and some dread of such a power as
G 2 ours,

* The West-India company which subsists at present, is not the same that formerly made so great a figure in the world, were masters of Brazil, and the scourge of the Spaniards; but another company erected on the ruin of that, in the year 1674; into which the proprietors of the old West-Indian company were indeed admitted, but admitted upon such terms, as showed plainly enough how low they were fallen, and how near becoming bankrupts; for they were allowed *no more* than fifteen per cent. in the new capital; that is to say, if a member of the old West-India company was possessed of a hundred florins in property, it gave him a title to no more than fifteen florins in the new stock; neither could they think this hard, since some of their creditors bore a great proportion in the loss. Those that had lent money upon the stock, had no more than thirty per cent. allowed them; but as to the fair creditors, with whom the company had run in debt for the support of their commerce, they had their demands converted into stock at par; so that the proprietors of the new company were three different sorts of people, in favour of whom the republic granted all the privileges and emoluments which the old company had enjoyed; and they entered likewise into the possession of all the fortresses and colonies which belonged to the same old company.

The affairs of this new company were managed, as they still are, by directors, as those of the East-India company; and though by several calls they raised considerable sums of money, and carried on their trade with tolerable spirit for some years, yet they could never retrieve their affairs, but have been always endeavouring to unite themselves to the East-India company, as the only means left for preserving their settlements in Africa, and the West-Indies. As for Surinam, there is a particular company established for the management of its commerce; and the trade to Curaçoe is managed by private persons, who pay the company
for

ours, which, however weak among the Blacks, gave law upon the ocean, prevented their beginning till now; now I say, that a long, expensive, and bloody war, will, as they think, make us less impatient under their

for their licences, and a small duty on all the goods exported or imported. See *Harris's Voyages*.

The trade within these fourteen years has been laid open, and the Dutch drive a large and beneficial traffick to that part of the world, *so that the nation in general suffers very little, if any thing, by the company's being in a low condition*; which, in all probability, is the true cause, why the republick is at so little pains to recover or restore the affairs of that company, and, perhaps, would be glad to see it united to that of the East-India, as a means, and indeed the only means, of reviving and supporting the slave trade. There was a probability of seeing this accomplished, upon the proposal made by the West-India company for the purpose in 1714, when they made it appear that their funds amounted to near 150,000 florins a year, exclusive of a legal demand they have upon the crown of Portugal for a large sum of money; but since that time the affair seems to have been no more thought of, nor is it at all likely that it will hereafter be brought to a conclusion. Upon the whole, therefore, we have very good reason to suppose, that as their affairs now stand, the Dutch will never make any great progress in this part of the world; for except their colonies upon the continent, they have none that are either capable of being improved or extended. See *as above*.

Their forts in Africa are, however, better maintained than ours, as indeed well they may, considering that the sum allowed by our parliament does not amount to much more than a third of the income of the Dutch West-India company. So inconsiderable indeed is our stipend, that it is rather to be wondered at how the committee have been able to keep one stone upon another, than how it happens that the forts are not in a formidable and flourishing condition.

their insults than we might have been at another juncture. To this may be added the accidental circumstances of the present chief of Axim's abilities, temper, connections and influence. This man is of a family that has given many magistrates of great rank to the states, a family that has ever been remarkable for its pertinacious opposition to the princes of Orange, and (as usual with the Amsterdammers) its peculiar enmity to the English. He inherited the turn of his ancestors, and was so little upon his guard in the display of it, that he lost, as it is said, a cornecy of horse, which was in the Princess Gouvernante's gift, and all future hopes of promotion in the army, in which he was a cadet, by the liberties he gave his tongue. Finding Europe no proper theatre for his talents, he had interest enough to go out second in rank upon the coast of Guinea. The general died two months after his arrival, and this gentleman, in consequence, became President of the Council, and supreme director, ad interim, for the Dutch affairs. He was scarce warm in his seat, when (*viz.* in the year 1759) he suffered himself to enter into an open war with the English at Commenda, on account of an old dispute about the landing-place.—The event was disgraceful to him. After a fierce

fierce cannonade for near a fortnight, between two forts which are not at a greater distance than musket-shot, the Dutch agreed to reasonable terms; and, by an instrument signed by the president and the whole council, the point in dispute was settled to the entire satisfaction of the English.—

A new General coming out, this gentleman returned to his old station of second person upon the coast, and accepted the command of the fort at Axim. There he had not been long, when, by a little quarrel with Amoniah, he found an opportunity of indulging his enterprizing disposition, by putting in execution the long-suspended designs against Cape Appolonia. A war was entered upon, the latter end of the year 1761, and, in a little time becoming very expensive, the General remonstrated against it; but the Chief of Axim, whose abilities are very shining in what relates to style, and the putting a good face upon any cause, had address enough to satisfy the General, (as indeed well he might, considering how amply the Dutch will be reimbursed by possessing themselves of this rich trading spot) and to engage him and the council so deep in the affair, that there is no reason to expect they will now give it up easily.

The caboceer of Affinee was hired to attack

attack Amoniah to the westward; and, on the other side, they set upon him with the people of Elmina, and other negroes from Commenda, Succondee, and Cape Three Points, with the gentleman we have been speaking of himself at their head.—

They have had some slight engagements, in one of which Amoniah was wounded. Under all this, he bears himself up like a hero. Beset on every side; every thing to dread from so bitter and bloody an enemy as the Dutch; with nothing to rely on (at least as yet) but his own courage and the fidelity of his people—he scorns to capitulate, and bravely declares he will *never be taken alive*, but rather die fighting at the head of his troops. He is indeed fighting for his all; a circumstance that will doubtless animate him sufficiently, especially when it is considered, that the attack is derived, not from any injury offered by him, further than that of availing himself of his natural right to trade in his own dominions, and to prevent the Dutch from being his sovereigns.—

In this *exigency*,---for such to be sure it must be called,---he invites the English to be his Protectors, and to come and build a fort at his landing-place.

The advantages from such an establishment will be prodigious.

It will sink the reputation of the Dutch in such a manner, that we may effect quickly to recover our lost credit, and take the lead on the windward parts of the Gold Coast.

Instead of only *sharing* the gold at Cape Appolonia with the Portugueze, Dutch, Danes and French, we shall have it *entirely* to ourselves. At least, the ships of other nations will be obliged to lie at such inconvenient distances from the road, (of which, by virtue of our fort, we become sovereigns, and from which our men of war may drive them) that they will find it very little worth their while to come to an anchor.

Of the great quantities of gold, and no inconsiderable number of slaves, purchased at this place, not above a sixth part goes to the English. The rest is engrossed principally by the Dutch and Portugueze, the French and Danes coming in but for a small share.

Our English spirits and tower muskets are much esteemed at this place, and the coarser Manchester goods are preferred to all others. What an encrease would it be to the profits of our distillery, and to the manufacturers of Manchester and Birmingham, if we could possess ourselves of the *whole* trade, as in a great measure
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we should, by erecting a fort! Nor ought the expence of maintaining it to be mentioned as an objection, since this, trifling as it will be, is paid, by money indeed issued out of the treasury, but that money every farthing laid out in the above-mentioned manufactures and other English goods, to be shipped to Guinea for the payment of the officers and servants.

We speak here only of the trade actually now existing. But by the erecting of a fort, and the occasional factories from the shipping, it may very reasonably be presumed that it will encrease every day. The trading paths (to use the Guinea term) to this place are from the very richest inland parts of Africa; and the trade also of Bassam, a town on the seaside to the westward of this, would also center here. The reason the trade through these paths, however considerable, has not been greater, is the want of encouragement from an European settlement of consequence. Amoniah, the caboceer, has indeed shewed more spirit than is usual among negroes; but the spirit of a negro is little better than indolence, compared to the trading genius of white men. Even as it is, Amoniah in a manner wallows in gold; every grain of which he got by trade from the inland parts. The author of

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these essays once possessed a slave who had lived with Amoniah several years, and being by trade a working gold-smith, had made great numbers of trinkets, and even pieces of ornamental household furniture, in that precious metal, for his master. The account he gave of this caboceer's riches, and the advance upon his goods to the inland merchants, was astonishing. Amoniah now grows old, and being also so harrassed by the Dutch, is willing, for the sake of security during the rest of his days, to resign his trade to the English, by allowing them to build a fort.

This, when effected, will induce the masters of ships to fix factories there during their stay at Annamaboe; and more permanent ones will doubtless be also settled by the English traders living on the coast, and even by merchants in England.

Ships from the windward coast, and wanting but little of finishing their trade, may get dispatched here, and consequently expedite their voyages exceedingly, not only by taking their departure so much to the westward, but by avoiding the eastward current which sets with such rapidity round Cape Three Points down into the bottom of the gulph of Guinea; which inconvenience

inconvenience they are now forced to submit to, by being obliged to go down to Annamaboe, and often with such bad assorted goods for that place, as put the captains under the necessity of selling them for prime cost, or of leaving them in the forts till they return upon the coast. The vast advantage of saving even one week in a Guinea voyage need not be mentioned to those who know how precarious the lives of slaves are at sea.

At this place the shipping, by means of their factories, might be supplied with Brazil tobacco (often so absolutely necessary for putting off their other goods) before the Portugueze vessels get among the forts, at which time, it is well known, the Dutch put a guard aboard, and do not suffer them to trade till they are to leeward of the European settlements. Should the Dutch, in consequence of this, fit out a Cruizer to lie off Cape Appolonia, and take possession of the Portugueze vessels there, this expedient, it is presumed, will meet with proper resentment, and the Dutch be treated, by our men of war and merchant ships, as downright pirates: at least, when, from time to time, this kind of resentment has been shewn, and the Portugueze taken under the protection of a man of war of ours, the Dutch on the coast have made no remonstrances,

monstrances, nor have the *States* or the *West-India Company* thought proper to expostulate with our court about it; a kind of conduct, in a people so tenacious of their privileges as the Dutch, that brings greatly in question their right of using the Portuguese in the arbitrary manner they do, or even of receiving from them any tribute at all. But a discussion of this matter would lead us too far from our subject.

It ought not to be omitted, that the trade from the Afantee country might be brought down to this place.

The Afantees are the most numerous, powerful and wealthy people we know of in Guinea. How far they extend inland we have not yet been able to discover, but the breadth of their country to the southward is almost equal to that of the whole Gold Coast.--- They lie, at unequal distances, at the back of the European settlements, from Axim west, to Winnebah east. Succondee, Chama, and Commenda, were the places they formerly traded to on the coast, the roads to these being the nearest and most convenient from their country. A war they had with the Warfaws, in the year 1738, stopped this trade entirely, and it has never been opened since. Take the following account of it.

The old kingdom of Warfaw lay considerably

siderably far inland behind Dixcove and Cape Three Points. It is almost all champaign land; and the King, when the Afantees were coming upon him, knowing how inevitable must be his destruction, if he engaged an enemy so vastly superior to him upon such a spot, collected his whole people, put to death all the aged and infirm, laid his whole kingdom waste, and with the remainder of his subjects of both sexes, all healthy and in the vigour of life, by a rapid march of two or three days, reached the country immediately behind Succondee, Chama, and Commenda; cut off and enslaved the unprepared inhabitants, and made himself master of certain passes, which, as it is said, are impregnable.---By this manœuvre he secured himself effectually, got possession of a country as good as that he had left, opened a free communication to the European settlements for his own subjects, and cut it off entirely from those of the king of Afantee.

Thus have things remained ever since. Many attempts have been made from time to time, by the Europeans, to bring about an agreement between these two powers, but all to no purpose. The *messages* have been heard, the *presents* received, *promises* sometimes given, but *nothing has been done*. These attempts were, doubtless, in some degree, praise-

praise-worthy ; as, if the paths in question could be once opened, the encrease of trade would be prodigious :---They have, however, been a little inconsiderate, as there is scarce any reason to expect that this very desirable end will be brought about. The animosity between these two nations is so strong, and has subsisted so many years, that it seems impossible a reconciliation should ever take place. The indignation of the Asiantees will never subside at being so egregiously outwitted, and at seeing their schemes so effectually blasted by a people whom they had been used to look upon with contempt. They might be brought to a temporary and fallacious peace, knowing how it might contribute to the accomplishing their designs, by giving them access to the Warsaw country, and of making themselves masters of the strong passes above mentioned ; but it is very unlikely the Warsaws should not reflect upon this sufficiently to put them upon their guard against a peace that must inevitably be fatal to their lives and liberties.---There seems, in short, to be no way left for the Europeans, but that of hiring and stimulating the Asiantees to cut off their enemies entirely by one bold attack, to be seconded by an irruption into the Warsaw country by the people from the sea

sea coasts. But it is to be hoped, for the sake of humanity, that this will not be done. Perhaps the slave trade, a trade in itself already surcharged with shocking circumstances, ought not to owe its encrease to so terrible and bloody an expedient. The Asiantees have now no other access to the Gold Coast, but by passing to the eastern confines of their country, the forts being left on the right hand, through the kingdom of Aquamboe, and so down to the sea side, near the river Volta and Prampram, the last and most leeward of our English settlements. This journey takes them at least three weeks to perform, and is otherwise very inconvenient from the mountainous and marshy ways. They receive also such ill treatment from the Aquamboes, who will not suffer them to trade with the Europeans, but on condition of being their brokers, at commissions little short of forty per cent. and lose such numbers of slaves in so long a journey, that of late years they have less and less been inclined to pursue so tedious, troublesome and dangerous a trade. Now Cape Appolonia lies much more convenient and near to them on the southwestern side of their country ; and to that place they have *actually always traded a little* ; but for want of an European settlement,

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ment, and, in consequence, of a concourse of shipping, found it not worth while going there, and preferred the route to Prampram and Acera, with all its inconveniences, as at those places they met with every thing they wanted.

This is no idle and fanciful piece of speculation. A Fort, and the fixed and occasional factories in consequence of one, together with a concourse of shipping, will assuredly open this vast trade, as that it will continue shut, if the fine opportunity we now have of erecting one is not immediately seized. *Immediately* we say: for as to the assertion, that the Dutch cannot *quickly* complete a fortification,---the town once subdued, fascine batteries are raised in a trice. Axim lies very convenient to supply them with stores, either by sea or land. Such batteries once raised to overawe the natives, the rest of the work goes on easily; and when Amoniah and his people find there is no remedy, and that *we refuse their offer*, they will e'en make the best of the affair, agree with the Dutch, and themselves assist in building the fort.

Such are the advantages we shall reap by a fort at Cape Appolonia. And to these not one objection has been opposed, but that *the governor will get money too fast*. This, if it proves any thing, proves too much

much. We ought in this case to have no forts at all. But if forts are necessary, as, in the course of these essays, it is hoped, has been proved, there can no doubt remain but that a place of such vast importance as Cape Appolonia should not be without one. As to the governor's trade, it does not appear, from what is made at the other forts, that such an event as is talked of is likely to take place: or, if any thing of that kind is really apprehended, restrictions may be laid on the governor's trade, and these enforced by oaths and large securities in England for their obedience of orders. The Committee of merchants are ready enough to dismiss any servant of theirs whenever they find the least tendency to his aiming at a monopoly. These gentlemen have, from time to time, given strong proofs of what they will do, where there has appeared the most remote tendency to injure the trade of the shipping. They dismissed the chief of Tatumquerry for *saying* he would give more for slaves than the captains of ships. They dismissed the chief of Winnebah merely for outbidding a brother chief, in a case where the shipping had no concern. These men, notwithstanding their long services, were kept out of employ some years; nor were they again admitted into the service,

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till the committee was very well satisfied, by their submission, and indeed by the interposition of the merchants themselves, that they would no more be guilty of even such slight offences. So jealous are they of the concerns of the shipping, that even within these few months* they superseded the governor of Annamaboe, merely because he carried on too much trade; imitating, as it should seem, in this, the rigour of the old commonwealths, in which it was always deemed a crime of the highest nature to be too popular, and any citizen so offending was almost always punished with imprisonment, fines, and banishment. Too powerful a capital on the coast of Africa is, in the committee's eyes, a crime of the like nature. In a trade by act of parliament made free and open, these gentlemen could not prevent an enterprising man from forming and executing what legal plans he thought proper for his advantage; but when they found, or suspected they had found, that the profits of the trade centered too much in this man, and that the shipping were the worse,---what they could do, they did.---They determined he should at least be in a condition of a private merchant, and that the nation's fort, and the nation's money, should not contribute to the furthering of his schemes. They
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* See p. 64.

deprived him of his command.---There is indeed no likelihood, that men, as they are all, of fortune and character, and in their collective capacity totally unconcerned in the African trade, should, designedly at least, act otherwise than for the publick good. Some clamours have been raised against them, but these have only tended, by the suffrage of the whole legislature, to raise the reputation of an institution, which, in the opinion of the merchants of London, Bristol, and Liverpool, seems the very best for the just management of our concerns in Africa, and the exclusion of all monopolizing and selfish jobs.

So little is there in this objection of the governor's trade.

But, after all, if so vast are the advantages that will accrue to the British dominions by this establishment; if the slave and gold trade will be so much encreased, and so great an additional vent found for our manufactures; voyages so much shortened, and in consequence the mortality of slaves so much lessened;---shall we give it up because the governor will clear a thousand, or fifteen hundred pounds a year? Short-sighted and illiberal as this objection is, it will surely never weigh with the legislature; and one would think the person did not deserve a serious answer who
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should deny that it is better that one man, *an Englishman*, should have part in so vast a trade, a great portion of which he would return to the shipping, and expedite their voyages, than that the far greatest share should go into the hands of foreigners.--- This objection therefore ought not to have the least weight; and we may conclude, that not only whether the alternative is--- That either the Dutch or we must settle; *but even, if the Dutch had no chance*, yet should we avail ourselves of the opportunity.--- We are called upon by the united voices of honour, generosity, and our own interest, to assist a distressed prince, who calls upon us for protection. Our bestowing it will redound to our credit, and contribute to our advantage, in every part of Guinea; and the fort once built, we have it then in our power, with regard to the share of the trade that shall be permitted the chief, or any other individual in the committee's service, to put matters upon such a reasonable and just footing, as shall make their places sufficiently profitable, and yet not injure the shipping, whose good, out of all dispute, ought first, and principally, to be considered.

F I N I S.

A P P E N D I X.

AT the end of this tract it was intended to set the differences between the captains of ships and the chiefs of forts in a proper point of view, and then to offer such expedients for reconciling these differences, as seemed reasonable in the opinion of the author. For this purpose he had drawn up his thoughts in the form of a regular essay, which was to have made the fourth and last in this pamphlet.— Reasons, to him of a sufficiently cogent nature, though, perhaps, of no great consequence to the publick, have prevented this. Upon the whole, to say nothing of his present situation and connections, he thought there was a species of arrogance and presumption in the drift of this intended publication.—Barely to recite facts, to reason upon them, to shew (at least to attempt shewing) the danger of some expedients that have been offered, and the insufficiency of others; all this he has ventured

tured upon in the foregoing essays. But to point out what he thinks the proper remedies, he must, upon reflection, decline; especially, as he believes, that upon duly considering what he has already said, those remedies will present themselves very readily to the mind of the intelligent reader.

One thing, however, he would particularly guard against, and this is a suspicious partiality either to the captains of ships or the chiefs of forts. These last, he hopes, will have no just reason to think hardly of him when he confesses, that though he believes it indisputable, that to prohibit them freighting slaves from the coast would be hurtful to the trade in general, yet must it *certainly be allowed* that there is a great difference between a *total prohibition and a permission under certain limitations and restrictions.*

It has been shewed, that to take from the chiefs the liberty of freighting slaves, is depriving them of that equality between trader and trader, so necessary for the proper carrying on of business. The captains may take very greatly the ascendant, and insist too much upon a compliance with their own terms, when they are assured they alone can be the purchasers, and that the slaves must lie on hand if they refuse them.

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To avoid a ruin which must inevitably follow from such a partial disposition of things, the chiefs will quit; and the channels of trade to the English forts being thus stopped, they will turn to the Dutch and Danish, to the very great advantage of those nations, and the extreme hurt and disgrace of ours.—This is the difficulty, the insuperable difficulty resulting from *an absolute and total prohibition.*—But is there no alternative, but that of *stopping the chiefs trade entirely, or giving them an unbounded liberty of sending what number of slaves they think proper from the coast?* Cannot a method be fallen upon, which shall at once leave the chiefs upon an equitable footing in the sale of their slaves, and yet satisfy the other traders? Would not a restriction from freighting yearly beyond a certain stated number, bring about this desirable end? Would it not be impossible for the chiefs to break through this regulation without the knowledge of the captains, whose duty, as well as interest, it would be to detect them upon such occasions? Would not a chief thus restricted, knowing exactly how far he may, and how far he may not go, be in a more agreeable situation than that in which he is at present,--- ignorant how far, as a British subject, he is

allowed to trade, and subject to the resentments and disgusts of every one about him, or with whom he has dealings?

A report prevailed, and gained every day more and more credit, that a trading connection of a pretty formidable nature was fixed at Annamaboe. Alarmed at this, the Guinea merchants were, as it is said, preparing to address the committee to take from the chiefs the liberty of sending slaves to the West-Indies or America. This, they thought, was laying the axe to the root. But the intentions of the committee were to proceed in a more rigid, not to say severe, manner. They did not wait for any application from the merchants; but very early, when it came to their knowledge, that such jealousies were spread, they wrote to their constituents at Bristol and Liverpool for instructions; requesting, if there was any objection to the arrangements they had made, or to the conduct of their officer, that they might be informed, and justice should immediately be done. Certain it is, that it would have been the last degree of tyranny, upon bare rumour to have proceeded to extremities. No accusation in consequence of these letters, and I think they were repeated, came either from Bristol or Liverpool. Things therefore remained

remained as they were for more than a twelvemonth. At length an affidavit was sent to the Committee signed by one captain, that the governor in question had sent off to the West-Indies a whole cargo of slaves. The Committee immediately and unanimously dismissed that gentleman their service.

F I N I S.



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