

# The Nigerian Chronicle

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Applications should be addressed to the undersigned who will furnish any further information desired.

E. J. Alex: Taylor.

Hon: Secretary to the Committee.

Victoria Road, Lagos.

April 3, 1911.

# The Nigerian Chronicle.

A weekly review of progress in politics, economics and commerce; and of general news especially as affecting the two Nigerias.

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### CONTENTS

<i>News of the week.</i>	
<i>Home</i>	
Re. Johnson-Wells fight.	1
Criminal Assizes	1
Annual School Inspection.	1
<i>Letter to the Editor</i>	
Re School Examinations	1
<i>Editorial</i>	
The Finance of Southern Nigeria.	2
The Native House Rule Ordinance in Southern Nigeria	3
<i>Political</i>	
Legislative Council Proceedings.	4
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	
Development of Native Government in Southern Nigeria.	3
<i>Historical</i>	
Yoruba Antiquity	7

## NEWS OF THE WEEK.

### HOME

The Annual Government Inspection of Schools began during the week. Managers of Schools and their Masters are pretty busy preparing for the examination.

A man was arrested last Saturday on the charge of wilful murder of his wife. It was reported that the man also attempted to commit suicide. That immediately the deed was discovered he ran away from a tree where he was trying to hang himself and plunged himself into a deep well. From this he was also pulled out after some trouble.

The Criminal Assizes were commenced last Monday. There are 22 cases on the docket several of which had been disposed of as we go to press.

An accident occurred to two workmen yesterday whilst engaged in their daily vocation. They both fell from a scaffold from which they were working and one died immediately. Latest report is that the other one is improving.

The Rev F. B. Mayer is reported as endeavouring to influence public opinion in England with a view to stopping the fight between Jack Johnson and Bombardier Wells.

### DIRECT INTER-COLONIAL SERVICE BETWEEN LAGOS AND GOLD COAST

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### Letter to the Editor

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIGERIAN CHRONICLE.

SIR,  
The Schools are now entering upon their busiest season. There is the Annual School Inspection which has already begun this week. The examinations of the different English Public Institutions and the Local School Exhibition are to follow, apart from the annual show of individual Schools which was everywhere in evidence last year. These mean a great mental strain on the pupils. But it is believed that the Government who has control at least over the Examinations and Exhibition will so arrange it that opportunity will be given to every child in every school to do his best with the minimum mental pressure and without the usual rush and clash in their different examinations.

It is understood that the pupils of the Abeokuta Grammar School are coming down for the Cambridge Local Examination. As this Exam. takes place a week after the College of Preceptors Examination which is said also to be under the auspices of the Southern Nigeria Government, why not the Abeokuta Grammar School authorities arrange for their boys to sit to the latter Exam. here at once as it will save them the supervision fees, give the pupils a two weeks change of scenery, apart from the uniformity it will secure for all candidates sitting to the Exam. in squareness and fairness.

I would also suggest in the interest of the boys that they be allowed to compete with the Lagos Schools in the Annual School Exhibition. Thanking you Mr. Editor for space.

Yours truly,  
EGBA.

LAGOS, 3. 10. 11.

# The Nigerian Chronicle

## THE FINANCE OF SOUTHERN NIGERIA.

One of the standpoints from which writers on Southern Nigeria have based their estimate of the progress of the country is its finance. From a business point of view, that may be right. The tradesman gauges his progress from his balance sheet at the end of the year. He congratulates himself over good business done if his assets are in excess of his liabilities. And if he is a gambler he reduces his expenditures where his liabilities are in excess of his assets. The Secretary of State in his reply to the Niger Deputation that waited on him recently recognized this principle when he said:—"But if and when further duties are imposed and I find that there is any danger of loss of revenue to Southern Nigeria I shall be myself prepared to take what steps are necessary... by a re-arrangement of the finances of the Colony." It seems the local government does not believe in this system of business. A man who spends all his income and has nothing to lay by, cannot count of any good outlook for the future. Without a capital to call his own the least unhingement will cause a rupture in his business and his credit in the market will go. For a business man in this position to continue to borrow is to court bankruptcy since he cannot only not repay the principal but may ultimately fail to pay an evergrowing interest. This is just the financial condition of Southern Nigeria to-day. It is deriving a good revenue which is wasted in over-luxurious emoluments and unnecessary expenditures. The government is also taking loans from time to time a penny of which has not been repaid. The annual interest on these loans if saved would have placed the colony in a position to undertake public works on its own responsibility. We hope that now that the expenditure for the ensuing year is to come under consideration the government will take all necessary steps to see that substantial savings are set by to repay the loans raised especially as the British taxpayers are now daily putting forth claims on the funds of the natives because they advanced these loans.

The London Chamber of Commerce has passed a resolution in favour of the reservation of land in Crown Colonies in return for any expenditure from Imperial funds for administration or development. The idea is that in return for his money the taxpayer at home shall have an asset in the shape of land in the Colony which may ultimately reimburse him. It regards an Imperial grant whether to provide for the construction of a railway or to carry on necessary administration as an advance which is to be repaid when the finances of the possession allow and that some tangible security may be given in the meantime since these grants are a sort of investment. "Grants had been made in previous years to relieve cases of distress, but these were given to establish colonies to prevent bankruptcy or great hardship. But the grants which are being made to East and West Africa are given largely in the commercial spirit, to develop the territories for industrial purposes, and in such a case it would be reasonable to take a security for repayment

if it is to be had."

The difficulty in the way of the scheme is the fact that lands in Southern Nigeria are no Crown lands. To bridge over this difficulty, where the governments cannot take possession compulsorily, it has been suggested that they might use their influence to obtain, if necessary by purchase but for small sums, land in the immediate neighbourhood of stations which may eventually be in demand for housing. Arent our previous contentions on the land problem based on the views we hold, it has been said in some quarters that we are simply rousing suspicion against the Government. This is far from our intention. We simply conclude what will be, from what has been and what is; and the above suggestion of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce conclusively proves us true. The question of who is benefiting directly from these loans is too plain to be discussed. On the Government side we have four Native Medical Practitioners as against 60 or more European Practitioners. In the one case the number of these officials is said to be fixed whilst the other is open to increase. On the Mercantile side there is the intention of sending the native middle men to reach the producers. For all these the natives must give up their rights to their lands to the Government in order to add to their already grievous burden.

It is time, we say again, that the Government should make it a point, to save every penny to pay up the present loans. The building of railways, the construction of Harbour Works are only blessings when they do not bring distress to the people. It is the administration that relieves us of debt and secures to us the rights in our lands whose memory will ever be cherished.

## THE NATIVE HOUSE RULE ORDINANCE.

Mr. Bennett regards as "unreasonable men" those who have pleaded against the administration of the House Rule Ordinance. Their unreasonableness he would prove by a demonstration of what he knew existing as the House rule in the more civilized parts of Southern Nigeria i.e. the Western Province. And what has he shown? He alleged:—

"That a 'House' in the Western Province is composed of the Father's family, strangers who have sought the father's protection, pawns and even white slaves. That the rule of the father in the earliest stage was unimpeded; that he was always a despot until the natives nominated a 'Father of the Country' and a Council to check his despotism. This his explanation of the origin of a Native council and of an appointment of a Chief or king as its presiding head is only conjectural and no doubt must have reference to a very remote period, anterior to the time of the Druids. For when, about the 10th century, the Yorubas were compelled by war to quit their old habitat, they were already a strong nation among whom father and son held differences of opinion. (See page 2 of 'Lagos Past' paper read by Dr. Johnson M.L.C. before the members of the Lagos Institute with Sir William Macgregor as President.) It is like saying that because feudalism existed in England some years ago therefore

## DEVELOPMENT OF NATIVE GOVERNMENTS IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA.

By R. E. DUNNETT.

Author of "At the Back of the 'Black Man's Mind'" and "Nigerian Studies."

Continued from our last issue.

### THE CLAN FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

For various reasons, one being for mutual protection, related "Houses" have come together in one town or district, and the heads of the many houses have chosen the Father of the most important or older family to be their chief, and have supplied him with advisers or a Council chosen from the heads of various houses. This Chief is called the "Father of the Country," and he and his Council are looked upon as a Court of Appeal by the members and the Fathers of different houses not only in the town itself but in many outlying hamlets.

As there is a feeling among certain well-intentioned (but somewhat unreasonable) people against the administration of the House Rule Ordinance, it may be well to give you some idea of the old native rules still in existence in the more civilised parts of Southern Nigeria (i.e., the Western Province) where the House Rule Ordinance is not in force. Sir William MacGregor either did not know of the existence of House Rule in the Lagos Protectorate or ignored it, leaving the administration of the rule entirely in the hands of the Father of the Country and native Rulers.

The House, as I have shown, is composed of the Father's family, strangers who have sought his protection, pawns, and those who once were slaves. The rule of the Father in the earliest stage was undisputed. If one of the family under the Clan Rule in the Western Province wishes to leave his recognised House and establish one of his own, he must first get the consent of the head of his House. In the early stage of the development of the House Rule this power of the Father was too despotic, and hindered the progress of the country. As stated, Sir Ralph Moor, a former Governor of old S. Nigeria, saw this, and established the House Rule Ordinance, which is only in force in the Central and Eastern Province. The natives in the Lagos Protectorate or Western Province had also come to the same conclusion (i.e., the despotism of Father rule), and had nominated a Father of the Country and a Council to check it.

Thus in these more developed native states of what is now the Western Province, where the Ordinance does not apply, the member of the family who wishes to establish a House of his own first goes to the Father of his House, and, if not reasoned out of his desire by him, appeals to the Father of the Country and Council; he has to abide by their decision. Should this member of the family run away and refuse to contribute to the upkeep of his House or community, when he is caught he is liable to be brought up before the Father of the Country and Council and fined or imprisoned.

The stranger, if he wishes to leave the House, has to inform the head of the house. The land, the use of

\* Election to this Council by purchase and bribery now exist.

which has been lent to him, reverts to the head of the House representing the community. Should he go without consent, and leave any movable property behind him, this may be held until his return, when he will be fined by the Council and his property returned to him. The slaves who had freed themselves, and now those who have been freed by treaties and agreements made with representatives of the British Government, become members of the family, and may, if wealthy enough, start Houses of their own, but only with the consent of the heads of their Houses. But if one of this new labour class runs away and returns, or is caught at any time, he is liable to be chastised, or (if rich enough) fined heavily. The pawn is free to return to his House as soon as he is redeemed; should he come away, the person who pawned him is ordered by the Council to redeem or replace him.

Such, in a few words, is the native House Rule in the native states in the Western Province. It is an interesting fact that none of the peoples speaking different languages east of the Niger in Southern Nigeria have developed any higher form of government than the Clan System. Whether they would have done so if the British Government had not proclaimed and exercised a protectorate over them must be an open and undecided question. In my opinion, these people were just entering the next stage of development—at any rate, the Aro, a great Ibo trading people in the Arochuku district, were fast becoming a dominating people. They or their so-called *Isi* men had established a very powerful "*Isi*" which drew to their town hundreds of people from far and near to undergo certain trials by ordeal. So much cruelty and barbarity became associated with these ordeals that the British Government had to interfere "and smash the *Isi*." If it had not done so it is possible that future historians might have had to write about a great "Ibo Kingdom" in much the same way as Dalziel and Ling Roth have done about the Dahomey and Benin Kingdoms. It is, however, a fact that we have to cross to the west bank of the Niger for the development in Nigerian native Governments.

### THE KINGDOM STAGE OF GOVERNMENT.

Tradition tells us that the Benin Kingdom owes its foundation to the arrival in its capital of a reformer from Ife, the religious centre of the Yoruba-speaking people. This Yoruba reformer married a Benin woman, and the historical personages we know as the Kings of Benin have all been looked upon as descendants of this couple. It is an interesting fact—and, I think, an important one—that the Kings of Benin, until Overani was dethroned, recognised the right of the ancient landowner and paid rent to the original Father of the Country, still known as Ogiame, in whose territory this founder of the Kingdom of Benin first settled. There can be no doubt, from my observation made in many villages that were nearly depopulated to feed the late King's ambition for human sacrifice and war, that the intervention of a foreign power was necessary to save these interesting people from a barbarous form of despotism, on the one hand, or anarchy and self-extinction as a ruling people on the other. This kingdom of Benin was at one time so powerful that the Alafu of Oyo, the head of the Yoruba people, told me that even his predecessors had to pay tribute to its King. It is not possible in this short article to say much about these remarkable people. Anyone interested in their history can learn more from Ling Roth's "Greater Benin" and other

books that have been written about them. I must, however, point out that it was only in 1897 that Admiral Rawson took Benin City, and that the place is now joined up to ports on navigable rivers by excellent motor roads, and that by the public spirit of the people, guided by their administrators, this once bloody city has been endowed with water works that provide every part of it with a beautiful supply of most excellent water.

#### THE YORUBA KINGDOM DEVELOPMENT.

The first reformer who uplifted the pagan people of Benin from the House Rule to the dignity of a Kingdom came (as already stated) from Ifa, the religious centre of the Yoruba-speaking people.

It must, I think, be admitted that many years before the Mohammedan reformer appeared on the scene (some 600 years ago) Ifa had already become a religious centre of ancestor and phallic worship. We have stories, most of which agree in stating that the father of the family at Ifa had four or six sons who became the fathers of the four or six great families composing the Yoruba-speaking people. Bini, the founder of the Benin Kingdom, was one of these; another was the founder of the Ikaka family—the two younger sons, it is said. The Yoruba Kingdom proper, if we may so call it, was (by tradition) founded by four great sons of the Olu, or chief of Ifa, who are likened to the four walls of the Yoruba Kingdom. These four are now represented by the Oyo, the Egbas, the Ijobas and the Ketnas, most of the latter being now included in French Dahomey. These four great families superimposed their religion and higher form of government upon the pagan families in the countries they now occupy, and so raised the House and Clan forms of government to that of the Kingdom stage.

Religion, or so-called superstition, can easily be shown to precede, or at least be concurrent with, each stage of native government, but in this article I confine myself as much as possible to the political aspect. Let me then indicate how in this naturally developed form of Kingdom government the previous stages are amalgamated and made use of.

#### THE FORM OF A NATIVE KINGDOM.

We will commence at the top and work downwards. The first thing to be noted is the prominence given to the Queen-Mother, who reminds the reigning King of the one who has preceded him, and through whom he approaches the spirit of the first Father, the founder of his race. Secondly, the King is the reigning Father of all his race. Thirdly, the War Chief, representing motherhood, is the treasurer and guardian of all the families and their property. In the fourth place the Prime Minister of the ann, is the one through whom the King rules his people. The Prime Minister is the head of the officers and Council, called the Ogboni. This Ogboni is also the name of people forming the King's secret society or primitive police force.

As the Prime Minister is true or not to the interests of his King he is likened to the son of God or to the Devil. The conquered class become the King's subjects in provinces ruled over by the Awajala, or King's representatives, in concert with the ancient Father of the Country and his Council. Then in the outlying villages of these provinces we find the rule of the father of the House or family. In the capital, provinces and districts, we find the fisherman, hunter, planter, trader, and mechanic each leading his more

or less primitive life; each of these occupations, with the exception of that of the fisherman, has its Guild or Council. In addition to this we have the religious side of the government represented by the Priests of Ifa (the revealer) and the Priests of certain Nature powers and their Councils.

#### THE EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT.

The next development is now in progress, and it has been caused by the coming in contact of these so-called pagan Kingdoms with Mohammedan influence on the one hand, and Christian influence on the other. Under these two religious heads I include trading and political influences.

The armed aggression on Southern Nigeria by the Mohammedan people of the north having been beaten off by the heroic efforts of the Yoruba and Ibo speaking peoples, the British Government intervened, from the south, to enforce peace and to protect all parties against the horrors of external and internal wars. This pacification took place about the year 1886. Roads and railway have been made and Christian traders have pushed their wares to the farthest corners of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, a Mohammedan country; but Missionaries of the different Christian sects suggest that their progress is barred by the tolerance of Christian Administrator for religious other than his own.

This last development is of the greatest interest as it is the beginning of a period in which the (so to speak) "disestablished" Administrator, regardless of his own creed, is endeavouring to help the natives of the country to rule themselves in accordance with all that is good in their own native laws and customs; and who has the courage, however great the popular pressure may be, to guard the interests of the people he governs against the inroads of fanaticism and sentimentality from whatever direction these attacks may come.

[The author's best thanks are due to Dr. A. H. Unwin for some of the photographs.]

From the UNITED EMPIRE.

[Mr. Dennett's article has six illustrations and a Map of N. C.]

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY AUGUST 10TH, 1911.

*Continued from our last issue.*

Item 194, Improvement of Water Supply, Government Hill, Ibadan.....New Vote £90

Explanation Offered.

His Excellency Sir Walter Egerton on a visit to Ibadan some time ago considered that the water supply of Government Hill was susceptible of considerable improvement. Honourable Members are accordingly asked to vote the sum shown on the Agenda for the purpose of doing this work, which consists of erecting a new concrete tank and carrying the water pipes to the Sanatorium and Residency.

Item 196, Improvement of Quarantine Station, Lagos.....New Vote £305.

Explanation Offered.

It has been found necessary for additional work to

be done at the Quarantine Station on the other side of the Lagoon. Considering the possibility of yellow fever invading Nigeria, I do not think any Honourable Member will have any objection to our putting our house in order so as to take every possible precaution in the way of quarantine. If Honourable Members like to visit the station I am sure they will agree that the expenditure was well justified.

Item 199, Dispensary at Government Hill, Ibadan.....New Vote £100.

**Explanation Offered.**

A dispensary is being erected at Ibadan on Government Hill by the Native Government. It is felt that this Government should contribute towards the cost of its erection as the Dispensary will naturally be utilized by the Staff at Ibadan. The total cost of the building is estimated at £250.

Questioned by the Hon: Dr. O. Johnson:—I understand from the explanation of the Hon: Colonial Secretary that the Ibadan Government is building this Dispensary and we are contributing towards it. Have they any right to build on Government Hill and we contribute?

Hon: Colonial Secretary:—The Ibadan Government is building a Dispensary for their Officers on the Hill and we are only supplementing their expenditure:

Hon: Dr. Johnson:—The Difficulty is now cleared.  
No. 24. Head 43., R. and B. Extraordinary.  
Item 31, Motor Waggon—additional.....New Vote £41.

**Explanation Offered.**

£600 was the amount estimated for the provision of a motor wagon for the Eastern Province in 1910. This amount was found to be insufficient by the sum shown on the Agenda and Honourable Members are now asked to vote that sum.

No. 25. Head 45., Marine Extraordinary.  
Item 5, Completion of Foundry Equipment at Apapa—additional.....New Vote £57.

**Explanation Offered.**

This additional vote has been necessitated by an excess on the Indent for materials for the building which has now cost Government a total sum of £900. The prices of materials sometimes fluctuate considerably and it is difficult to make accurate Estimates.

Item 16, Other Charges, S. D. "SANDGROUSE" etc., additional.....New Vote £6,984.

**Explanation Offered.**

This additional vote has been necessitated owing to the unfortunate grounding of the S. D. "Sandgrouse" towards the end of last year, and the consequent necessity of sending her home to be repaired. I would add that certain improvements and additions were also effected to the vessel and the utility of her sand pumping machinery is now considerably enhanced.

No. 26. Head 46., Railway Capital Works.  
Item 18, Remodelling of Ibadan Station Yard.....New Vote £12,913.

**Explanation Offered.**

This item as Honourable Members will see is for the remodelling of the Ibadan Station Yard. This includes the erection of a new Station building, Coal Store and Carriage Store and several other extensions and improvements. Except for certain slight modifications, the Ibadan Station remained as it was original

ly designed, when the importance and traffic on the Railway was nothing like what it is to-day, and it is only reasonable that we should provide not only for the greatly increased traffic which has to be dealt with at present, but also for future developments which, as far as one can at present foresee, promise to be considerable. The scheme has been under consideration since 1909 and after a protracted correspondence necessitated by having to refer the plans and estimates to the Consulting Engineers and the submission of revised Estimates after their observations, it has been finally approved by the Secretary of State at a total cost of £12,913.

The Secretary of State has decided that this expenditure should come out of the revenue of the Colony rather than be a charge against loan funds.

Item 19, Straightening of Permanent Way.....New Vote £3,500.

**Explanation Offered.**

This sum represents the cost of 11,000 sleepers which are required for the line between Aro and Ibadan. The Secretary of State has approved of the proposed expenditure and Honourable Members are now requested to vote the sum in question.

**REVOTES**

No. 27 Head 32. Motor Transport.  
Item 21, Tools, Plant, etc.....Revote £50.  
Item 22, Purchase of new Rolling Stock, etc.....Revote £950.

No. 28 Head 43. W. and B. Extraordinary.  
Item 2, New Public Offices.....Revote £84.  
Item 9, Quarters for Director Agriculture.....Revote £500.  
Item 36, Extension and conversion of Street Lighting.....Revote £383.  
Item 38A, Lighting Customs Wharf, Transit and Kola Sheds, etc.....Revote £143.

Item 44, Laboratory, Medical Research.....Revote £68.  
Item 99A, Forecasts Slipway.....Revote £742.  
Item 99C, Iron Water Latrine, Forecasts.....Revote £242.

Item 160, Removal of Benin Prison.....Revote £100.  
Item 145, Workshop, Fort Stewart.....Revote £500.

Item 148A, Improvement and Extension of Water Supply, Calabar.....Revote £290.  
Item 148B, Water Supply, Duke Town.....£213.

Item 195, Iron Jetty with Customs Examining Shed, Sapale.....Revote £1,400.  
Item 198, Forecasts Steamer Pier.....Revote £140.

Warri Government School.....Revote £42.  
No. 29 Head 43. R. and B. Extraordinary.  
Item 22A, Completion of Ileshi to Ubiaja Road.....Revote £80.

Item 29, Bridges on Ikor Ekpen Erriam Road.....Revote £199.  
Item 30, Surveys for New Roads.....Revote £101.

## Yoruba Antiquity.

By O. J.

### CHAPTER II.

## SHUMIRO-ACCADS AND URBA'U. (URRABA)

Before the Turan-Accadian conquest of Babylonia, Shumir, in the earliest period of which there was any knowledge, was divided into several independent states, the limits of which were defined by canals and boundary stones. These states were ruled by priests, who in the first instance concerned themselves only with the spiritual needs of their people. Men lived without order<sup>1</sup> and feared only the wrath of the gods<sup>2</sup> whom they sought to propitiate through the *PATASI*. The more learned and clever of these Divines in course of time grew to be objects of attraction and veneration and the states in which they live centres from which knowledge and wisdom radiate. They subsequently composed the higher order of priest from which the lower one took light and leading.

In their functionary as High Priests two personages early distinguished themselves in so much as to bring honour and renown not only upon themselves but upon their states, and veneration for their cities guardian deities. These were the *patesi* of Nippur (Niffer) in the north and that of Eridu on the south—

the one state noted for its sanctuary of the god, *En-ki* or *En-ki* and the other regarded as the home of the culture-god *En-ki*. The civilization here developed coalesced as the nations intermingled. Colonists from Eridu crossed the northern border beyond Nippur, and founded *En-dimirra* (Babylon)<sup>3</sup>; whilst *Urca* or *Ur* (Ur) South of Eridu was peopled from Nippur.<sup>4</sup> *Erech* and *Larsa* were states just emerging and of less importance at this period.

The influence wielded by these ruling priests was most considerable. Conscious of their power and fired by an ambitious desire they assumed the functions and title of King. Whilst retaining their priestly office they claimed to be supreme in the state in all secular concerns. This change in the form of Government, which probably was originally confined to a few states on either bank of the Euphrates, where one hears of the Kings of *Kungl Sumer*, and *Kis*, came to have a far reaching effect on the surrounding states beyond the two rivers. It intensified the spirit of rivalry and created a stronger desire for power among hitherto peaceful though unrelated States. The dynasty of priest-kings founded at Lagash<sup>5</sup> (*Tello*) by *UR-NINA* grew so powerful that his grandson *E-ANNA-DU* made himself Master of the whole of Southern Babylonia including the district of *Sumer*. He was followed by his brother *E-ANNA-TUM I* who continued the succession until that dynasty was overthrown by the High priest *LUGAL-ZAGGISI* of *Gis-ghil*

1 ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA article Babylonia and Assyria.

ABRAHAM LIFE AND TIMES

2 Ancient Fragments

3 Man felt himself placed in a world where he was suffered to live and have his share of what good things he could get, but which was not ruled by him,—in a spirit world. Spirits around him, above him, below him,—what could he do but humble himself, confess his dependence, and pray to be spared? For surely, if those spirits existed and took enough interest in him to do good or evil, they could hear him and might be moved by supplication. To establish a distinction between such spirits which did only harm, were evil in themselves, and those whose action was generally beneficial and only on rare occasions destructive, was the next natural step, which led as naturally to a perception of divine displeasure as the cause of such terrible manifestations and a seeking of means to avert or propitiate it. While fear and loathing were the portion of the former spirits, the essentially evil ones, love and gratitude, were the predominant feelings inspired by the latter.—feelings which, together with the ever present consciousness of dependence, are the very essence of religion, just as praise and worship are the attempts to express them in a tangible form. *Rogers's Chaldea.*

4 "Of one thing there can be no doubt: that our earliest glimpse of the political condition of Chaldea shows us the country divided into numerous small states, each headed by a great city, made famous and powerful by the sanctuary or temple of some particular deity, and ruled by a *patesi* a title which is now thought to mean *priest-king*, i.e., priest and king in one. There can be little doubt that the beginning of the city was everywhere the temple, with its college of ministering priests, and that the surrounding settlement was gradually formed by pilgrims and worshippers. That royalty developed out of the priesthood is also more than probable, and consequently must have been, in its first stage, a form of priestly rule, and, in a great measure,

subordinate to priestly influence. There comes a time when for the title of *patesi* is substituted that of "King" simply—a change which very possibly indicates the assumption by the kings of a more independent attitude towards the class from which their power originally sprang."

5 "The Mythology of the Euphrates Valley was local in origin, each district and city having its own peculiar deity whose power was supposed to extend over the district in which his temple was situated. Whenever a city arose to metropolitan importance, its presiding deity received an accession of influence, sometimes rising to the head of the Pantheon. The earliest metropolis known to us was Nipur (now represented by the ruins of Niffer, S.E. of Babylon). The presiding god of Nipur was *Bel*; this deity became the national god of the Babylonians, and retained that position until the rise of Babylon.

*Hea*, the other god who was associated with *Bel*, had his seat at a city named *Eridu*; he was supposed to have been begotten by a goddess who represents chaos, and who is sometimes called the mother of heaven and earth. After the seat of government was removed to *Ur*, its presiding deity, the moon god, named *Sin*, came into importance. *Sin* was called the eldest son of *Bel*, and oaths over contracts were sworn by the god *Sin* and the king. When *Ur* was succeeded by *Larsa* as capital, *Shamas*, the sun god, was joined with *Sin*; and when, later, *Larsa* gave way before *Babylon*, *Merodach*, the god of *Babylon*, was joined with *Sin* and *Shamas*. *Merodach* gradually usurped the place of *Bel*, and was ultimately considered to be the same as that deity."

6 "Babylon was not included in *Sumer*. It consisted of the two Accadian towns *Ca-dimirra* "the gate of God" and *Din-fir* "the seat of the tree of life" on opposite sides of the Euphrates which after the Semitic conquest were united into one known as *Babil* the Semitic translation of *Ca-dimirra*. The chief city of Northern Accad was like *Babylon* built on the two banks of the Euphrates the larger half being called *Sipar* or *Sippara* "the city of the Sun" and the smaller half *Agade*. *Sayce Babylonia.*

who made Erech his Capital and styled himself King of Kengi." "In a long inscription which he caused to be engraved on hundreds of stone vases dedicated to El-ili of Nippur he declares that his Kingdom extended "from the Lower Sea of the Tigris and Euphrates or Persian Gulf to 'the Upper Sea' or Mediterranean."

Of the duration of the Empire founded by LUGAL-ZAGGI there is no definite knowledge at present save that it ultimately fell before an Accadian invasion from the north. The hero of this conquest SARGON the FIRST was suddenly rushed to fame. Born in concealment in the accadian highlands he entrusted himself to the protection of the god Akki who conducted him along the Euphrates to Sippar in an ark of bulrushes. Here he became a farmer and a priest to the goddess Ishtar. But the day arrived at length when, in the course of his profession he became known and the crown of Babylonia was set upon his head. He founded the city Accadimma and entered upon a career of foreign conquest. His exploits were preserved in the words of the following inscription which has been put into his own mouth:—

"Sharukia the Mighty King, the King of Agade am I.....For forty-five years the kingdom I have ruled. And the black-head race I have governed. In multitudes of bronze chariots I rode over rugged lands. I governed the upper countries. Three times to the coast of the (Persian) sea I advanced" From his capital and conquest of the South countries the name Akka-dimma became coextensive with north and south Chaldea. He was succeeded by his son Naram-Sin who followed up the success of his father to the Sinai peninsula and assumed the imperial title of "king of the four zones." He built within the city Sippar a temple to the sun god Shamash. The glory of this reign is said to terminate as suddenly as its rise when URUKU of Ura ba'u or Urraba (Ur) appeared on the scene.

To be continued

1 "There is evidence of the succession on this site of different peoples varying somewhat in their degrees of civilization."

2 "From the inscriptions found at Tello it appears that Lagash was a city of great importance in the Sumerian period some time probably in the 4th millennium B.C. It was at that time ruled by independent Kings, UR-NINA and his successors, who were engaged in contests with the Elamites on the east and the Kings of Kengi and Kish on the North. With the Semitic conquest it lost its independence, its rulers became vassals, dependent rulers under Sargon and his successors; but it still remained Sumerian and continued to be a city of much importance and above all a centre of artistic development."

3 "There was a quarter or suburb of the old Babylonian city of Lagash whose name was written in the same way Nina or Niina this may possibly have been the home of those settlers from Babylonia who gave its name to the Assyrian city (Nineveh.)"

(Continued from page 3.)

It must still be continued today and the Government of the country based upon it.

Mr. Dennett attempts to equate the Native Council-

Ordinance in force in the Western Province with the Native House Rule Ordinance in operation in the Central and Eastern Provinces. It is wrong and misleading to make such a comparison as the two ordinances aim at altogether different goals and differ in their provisions. The Native Councils Ordinance provides that:—

"It shall be the duty of the members of the Council to consider such questions relating to the good government and the well-being of Native population as shall be from time to time submitted to them by the Governor, and to give the Governor honest and well-advised counsel thereupon, and to submit to the Governor any recommendations or proposals which they may deem to be for the benefit of the Native population. And it shall also be the duty of every member of the Council at all times to give to the Governor his individual opinion (in writing if so required upon any matter relative to Native affairs which may be referred to him for his opinion by the Governor," whilst the Native House Rule provides that the members of the House must of necessity sink their identity into that of the Head of the House.

We are quite surprised to find that Mr. Dennett has discovered a House Rule system in Yorubaland similar to that which exists in the Eastern and Central Provinces. This is quite news to us and we await a further statement of facts to prove his findings true. Meanwhile we would like to point out that there is nothing like the despotism of the Father rule" in the Yoruba country. The Yorubas are too fond of their children to become despots to them. Where opinions differ, father and children take to reason; and where there is difference still they call up the House Council (Agbo Ile) and the question is settled on the side of greater conviction. In the face of this council, the Head of the House can never be absolute in Mr. Dennett's sense. They obey his commands from respect for his position and love for authority. Every head of a House is the creation of the family. Slaves are sometimes made the head of a house where the OMO OLUWABI (freeborn) are living and his tenancy of that position is due to good behaviour and confidence reposed upon his administrative ability. He is a sort of domestic limited monarch. The same rule holds with respect to manumitted slaves as with freeborn. No OMO OLUWABI or manumitted slaves would run away from the house as Mr. Dennett suggests when he writes:—

"Should this member of the family run away and refuse to contribute to the upkeep of his House or community when he is caught he is liable to be brought up before the Father of the Country and Council and fined or imprisoned"

Where he commits a social or political offence is another matter. The proposal to leave the family roof and set up a new one is no social or political offence. The question of a stranger informing the Head of a House before leaving is one of courtesy and gratitude and there is no instance to our knowledge, save where there is an offence, that the Head of a House withholds his consent for the stranger to leave, or punish him for so leaving. A slave once manumitted is no longer subjected to the Head of the House but is free to go anywhere he likes at any time he likes and do whatever he likes. He has of course to conform to the laws of the country. If Mr. Dennett denies this let him explain why some slaves after manumission return to their country. The Yoruba law does not allow heads of house holders to be tyrants.

Other allusions in Mr. Dennett's article are irrelevant to the House Rule question and we would not concern ourselves with their inaccuracies or inaccuracies.

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## CONTENTS

### News of the week.

#### Home

Meeting of the A. S. A. P. Society	1
Proposed Unification of the two Nigerias	1
The Highways Bill	1
Closing of the Criminal Assizes	1
Nemesis at Work	1
Alienation of Land at Abeokuta	1
Obituary	1

#### Editorial

The Native House Rule Ordinance in Southern Nigeria	2
--	---

#### Political

Legislative Council Proceedings.	4
----------------------------------	---

#### Miscellaneous

Land Tenure on the Gold Coast	3
-------------------------------	---

#### Educational

Patriotism	6
------------	---

## NEWS OF THE WEEK.

### HOME

A Committee Meeting of the Lagos Auxiliary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigine Protection Society, was held on yesterday afternoon, the 12th instant at 4 p.m. precisely, at the Glover Memorial Hall.

#### Agenda:—

Report Sub-Committee; Letter from Warri; General

From all we can gather the question of the unification of the two Nigerias is again under consideration. Great political changes are contemplated which may have a far reaching effect on this part of the Empire. A definite line of action however has not been decided upon.

When we criticised the Highways Ordinance at its first reading one of our contemporaries took us severely and gave it out that we were only trying to mislead the public. We would now like to know what is the purport of Public Notice No 935 declaring that the cession of the 6th day of August 1861 of the Port and Island of Lagos with all the rights profits territories and appurtenances whatsoever thereto belonging was a cession of all lands not subject to pre-existing rights of private ownership. After 50 years of British occupancy private landowners are being told that the lands on which their houses stand are Government property. We may be denominated wicked but wickedness or no wickedness the facts are there. Some people will wake no one morning to find themselves landless. We hope to discuss, as soon as space is available, Landlordism in Europe as opposed to landlordism in Southern Nigeria.

The Criminal Assizes were brought to a close on Tuesday.

At the last Criminal Assizes 5 counts were brought against Alfred Oluwole who lately made a false charge

against the Akarigbo of Jebu Remo and caused his arrest and detention. He was found guilty of two and sentenced to 15 months imprisonment for each offence.

We know as a matter of course that Nemesis must overtake the wicked however slow of foot.

We understand that an arrangement is afoot at Abeokuta to lease out a hill for 99 years to some speculators for a paltry amount and against the custom of the country. It is a surprise to us that with all we are saying about alienation of lands some people at Abeokuta, a State that boasts of some enlightenment, are still deaf to their own interest. But they will have to wipe their eyes when it is too late.

### OBITUARY

Mr. W. Farmer Locomotive Driver Lagos Railway on Wednesday the 10th instant at the Colonial Hospital.

Mr. Nathaniel Williams son of Z. A. Williams Esq. on Monday the 9th instant.

Mrs Adeline—daughter of A. M. Thomas of Victoria Road on Monday the 9th instant.

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# The Nigerian Chronicle

## The Native House Rule Ordinance in Southern Nigeria.

We think it well to follow up our last criticism of Mr. Bennett's article with our promised discussion of Rev. J. H. Harris' report, "Domestic Slavery in Southern Nigeria," submitted to the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society and published in past numbers of this paper.

The House Rule Ordinance is permitted as a law in the Central and Eastern Provinces of this Colony simply for the facility it gives for the supply of cheap labour and not as a means of developing native forms of government. The British Government found on the abolition of the status of slavery in the Central and Eastern Provinces a system which would be of great assistance to the European trader in securing him what he would need the most and what would help in filling the steamers quickly. For "it is obviously easier and cheaper to instruct a chief to bring 100 carriers than to engage such carriers individually; easier, but only possible under a system whereby the chiefs have possession of slaves or a servile class." It is well, they say, for the Head of the House whose "ancient slaves" have become a "labour class" to still have supreme authority over them by keeping them in his own house and at his service as heretofore. And if one of them run away and return or be caught at any time he is liable to be chastised or (if rich enough) fined heavily. The Antislavery men doubt think and want it to be believed that by the terms of treaties and agreements which converted the designation "slaves" into a "member of a House" the political and social status of the erstwhile slave has been raised in consequence. This is an erroneous and misleading idea. The one-while slave is only attached to a house but not accorded the full privilege and rights of a freeborn member of the House. The Head of a house has complete control over the servile class but not the freeborn who may refuse under certain conditions to obey him. Whilst he would bring easily the provision of the House rule Ordinance to bear on the former he would find it very difficult to appeal to it in the case of the latter; and he had they never operate. This would have been contrary to the established institution of the country which is the intention of the framers of the Ordinance to uphold.

A House is composed of the Chief who is the Head, the descendants of this chief, outsiders who come to claim protection of the Chief, strangers, pawns and slaves. The first three are the Freeborn and the last two are now known as the labour or servile class. When the Head of a House dies his property is distributed among the freeborn leaving a portion for the new Head to manage the house with. This latter is often regarded as the common property of the family. In this property the labour class has no share. In former times they too are regarded as movable property and distributed among the freeborn along with the property on the death of the Head. A freeborn as well as a slave may acquire property. The slave not having a capital of his own, look up to the Head

of the house to endow him; but this is optional and depend upon the good grace of the chief. If he find favour whilst doing his masters business he engages also in a little one of his own. If through tact he becomes exceedingly rich and he is able to procure his own manumission, he can become a Chief and will be presented as such by his erstwhile master and thereby become eligible as the Head of a house with full rights. The difficulty in the way of this arrangement is that the Head of the House is generally not disposed to give the slave that capital whereby he can arrive at this independence and so he remains in statu quo.

In a house there are at least 300 slaves all of whom more or less do business for their master; and hence his prestige. The proceeds of such business go partly to the chief and partly to the House property. Freeborn as well as slaves who conduct their own business contribute formerly 12/6d to the general family property. This was known as "workbar" or "topside." But since the introduction of the House Rule Ordinance people are said to pay in some parts 5% of the total profits. To enable him to collect these dues he is in agreement with some trading firms who receive all the raw products brought into the factory by the so-called member of the House. This member receives a credit note to the value of the goods sold to the firm, whether on his own account or that of the Head of the House. This note is drawn in the name of the Head of his House. At his leisure the Head goes to the factory and draws the amount either in goods or in cash or both.

If a freeborn member of a House is dissatisfied with the condition of affairs in his own house he has the option to resign membership in that house and with his wives and children to become freeborn members in another house. All he has to do is to pay the footing. On the other hand if a slave is dissatisfied with his condition he can only lodge his complaint with the king who makes an inquiry into his case. If he (the slave) is in fault he is fined or cautioned for first offence, and on a repetition he is sold or rather sent to another house which makes no alteration in his servile condition. But if the master is in fault he is cautioned or fined, and on a repetition the slave or "boy" is removed to another house to serve a new master. This also makes no alteration in his old condition. In consideration of services rendered the Head of a house sometimes pays the debts of his members and in case of sickness attends to them. At other times the members of the house themselves subscribe. In case of death the Head buries; and it is optional with him to give permit for marriage if according to small dowry and obligatory upon him if according to big dowry.

There are two forms of marriage. Marriage by "small dowry" and marriage by "big dowry." (Iya). In the first case a small sum is paid to the mother and relatives of the girl. Issues from this marriage belong to the woman's house. They have no legal claim upon anything in their father's house save what is voluntarily given by the father. In the other case a large amount is paid to the girl's family and the wife and her issues come over entirely to the house of the husband and become members thereof. Only daughters of Chiefs or prominent ladies are married in this fashion. A male slave who has money may marry in this fashion but he is never allowed to marry according to small dowry. A female slave is never allowed to marry according to big dowry not under any induce-

## LAND TENURE ON THE GOLD COAST.

BY FREDERIC SHILLFORD.

The subject of land tenure is of such world wide interest that I need not apologise for introducing the subject, particularly in the *Journal of the African Society*.

Observations upon the subject, however, in the prospectuses of rubber companies and gold-mining companies which appear from time to time, shew such complete ignorance of the whole question in regard to West Africa that it may be pardonable for me to endeavour to throw some light on the subject. Not that I pretend to be very much less ignorant than those whose observations I criticise, but I have had some opportunities of noting the intricacies of the subject, and such information as I have may be useful.

Particulars of "wild rubber," timber, and other wild products are often given in prospectuses, and are apparently based upon the assumption that such products can be collected from land which is ownerless. As a matter of fact, there is no such ownerless land on the Gold Coast, nor, as far as I know, anywhere in West Africa. Any land not specifically owned by a tribe or family would be Crown Land, but there is very little Crown Land in West Africa.

Practically every acre of land in the Gold Coast Colony is owned either by a "stool," i.e., tribal land, or by a family or individual.

"Stool" land is communal land, and is possessed by the whole tribe, and the orders of the Chief of the tribe have to be obeyed with regard to it.

All the land appears to have been originally "stool land," acquired by right of conquest and occupation. The members of the tribe are allowed to take up and cultivate any unoccupied piece of land, with the previous consent of Chief and Elders; but the land is inalienable, and on the death of the occupant it reverts automatically to the tribe. The occupier of the land pays no rent, though the tribe through the Chief has a right to demand that in return for the privilege of cultivating land the individuals of the tribe shall give their services in warfare or other times of difficulty.

Strangers may cultivate land belonging to the tribe, provided a "dash" or present of some kind is given to the Chief, whose consent also would, of course, have to be obtained. In this case, too, the land is inalienable, and is really the property of the tribe, as the cultivator for the time being is simply a squatter on sufferance. The method of cultivation in vogue in the country favoured this system of land tenure. No manuring is resorted to beyond cutting and burning the bush, and after working at one plot of land the cultivator moves forward to a fresh one, leaving the other to recuperate by lying fallow for a number of years.

It will therefore be seen that no "concession" to a Company will give the Company any permanent right of freehold over the land, and, in fact, no agreement between the Chief of a Tribe and a Concessionaire is valid by law until it has been confirmed by the Concessions Court of the Gold Coast Colony. At one time the City of London was deluged with "concessions" brought over by various coloured "concessionaires," which purported to convey land or to concede

mining rights over land, and which, even when granted, were absolutely worthless until confirmed by the Concessions Court. As many such concessions existed only on paper, their prospects of confirmation entirely nil.

Agals, with rubber collecting propositions, estimates, often entirely imaginary, are frequently given of the number of trees per acre over immense areas. If such trees exist at all, it will be found that they belong to tribes who fully realize their value and naturally resent a stranger tapping them.

Family land is that owned by a particular family acquired probably as a reward for some signal services in time of war or danger, or by the influence of some particular member of the tribe. Such grants of land were made in some cases to traders or others who did not even belong to the tribe, but who acquired a footing in it by intermarriage or long residence.

As in the case of "stool land," "family land" is held in common by all the descendants of the original owner or owners to whom the grant had been made, and the head of the family acted as "Chief" or trustee.

It is however, doubtful if family land can be sold outside the family without the consent of the Chief and Elders of the tribe that made the original grant. Cases are not unknown where "family land" has been abandoned for the more profitable occupation of trade on the Coast, dependents and slaves having been left behind to till the land and live on it, paying no rent and giving no services to anybody in return for the occupation of the land. The children or grand children of the dependents or slaves continue to live on the land, and it is a question whether the real ownership has not reverted to the tribe that originally made a grant of it.

Private Land—Private ownership of land, not inherited but acquired by purchase, is now recognised, and such land can be bequeathed by will at the discretion of the testator. Should, however, the owner of such land die intestate, then according to native law, the ownership would descend; as follows:—First, to the mother of the deceased; second, to his brothers and sisters by the same mother, according to age; third, to his uncles and aunts, on the mother's side; fourth, to the children of such aunts; and so on. Descent is thus traced strictly through the female line. Landed property thus inherited, however, carries with it certain obligations as to the support of the poorer members of the family; and in point of fact, the tendency is for "private" land to become "family land" after the death of the original acquirer or purchaser. In the case of women owners of land, the property goes in order of age to the children, the sons taking precedence of the daughters.

It will thus be seen that the subject is a very complicated one, well worthy of the attention which it receives from District Commissioners and other Government Officials, before whom many cases come for settlement.

The absence of deeds or other documentary evidence of transfers of land, which until quite recently was often transferred by hints force, tends to complicate cases, and made the state of affairs, before the advent of the Concessions Court, similar to that prevailing to this day in the literal belt in East Africa, which appears to be simply chaotic.

I have to express my acknowledgments for some

of the above information to Mr. G. F. Mee, who at my suggestion collected it when engaged upon the settlement of claims for compensation to the owners of land required for the construction of the Accra

Akwapim Railway, now practically completed for a distance of forty miles from the Coast.—From the *Journal of the African Society*, July 1911.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY AUGUST 10TH, 1911.

Continued from our last issue.

No. of Warrant	Date of issue.	Head.	Sub-head.	Amount.
91	23.9.10.	Forestry ... .. 19.	Expenses of Forestry Officers studying in other countries ... .. 13.	80 0 0
92	23.9.10.	Civil Police ... .. 17.	Weights and Measures, Fees to Inspectors of ... .. 57.	30 0 0
96	29.9.10.	Education ... .. 25.	Examiners' fees, Civil Service Clerical Examination ... .. 35a.	30 0 0
97	30.9.10.	Miscellaneous ... .. 35.	Miscellaneous ... .. 44.	50 0 0
99	8.10.10.	Do. ... .. 19.	Expenses of Officers' Instruction in England ... .. 130.	100 0 0
106	8.10.10.	W. & B. Extraordinary ... .. 43.	Improvement and Extension of Water Supply—Olabar ... .. 12.	467 0 0
107	18.10.10.	Transport ... .. 32.	General Carriers ... .. 57.	394 0 0
115	2.11.10.	Civil Police ... .. 17.	Weights & Measures, Fees to Inspectors of ... .. 35b.	20 0 0
117	3.11.10.	Survey Department ... .. 26.	General Survey Expenses ... .. 180.	4,602 17 0
122	5.11.10.	Marine ... .. 16.	Motor Barge "Silverdale" Deck Stores ... .. 32.	3 11 3
127	8.11.10.	Governor's Office ... .. 3.	Typewriters... .. 11.	58 0 0
128	10.11.10.	Transport ... .. 32.	Bush Allowances ... .. 62.	200 0 0
130	10.11.10.	Do ... .. 14.	Do. do. ... .. 100.	280 0 0
138	16.11.10.	W.A.F.F., S.N.R. ... .. 25.	Outfit at £30 ... .. 28.	180 0 0
142	20.11.10.	Education ... .. 10.	Training of Teachers ... .. 10 0 0	35 0 0
143	20.11.10.	Postal ... .. 10.	Commission to Stamp Vendors ... .. 10 0 0	100 0 0
			Imperial share of Ocean postage ... .. 96 6 0	
			Electric Light for Post Office ... .. 10 0 0	
			Conveyance of mails by Steamers other than contract ships ... .. 40 0 0	
			Postage stamps affixed to Postal Orders &c. ... .. 100 0 0	
147	23.11.10.	Legal ... .. 7.	Library for Attorney-General ... .. 7.	5 8 10
149	24.11.10.	Telegraphs ... .. 11.	Overtime Fees, Sunday and Public Holidays ... .. 41.	9 0 0
154	1.12.10.	Marine ... .. 16.	Overtime ... .. 302	20 0 0
156	3.12.10.	Education ... .. 25.	Local minor expenditure ... .. 13	50 0 0
163	10.12.10.	Miscellaneous ... .. 35.	Postage, all Departments ... .. 45.	20 0 0
165	20.12.10.	W.&B. Extraordinary ... .. 43.	Customs Warehouse, Opobo ... .. 151f	359 0 0

			17.		56.	
169	20.12.10.	Civil Police ... ..			Weights & Measures, Purchase of ... ..	8 0 0
			28		254	
170	20.12.10	Medical ... ..			Lunatic Asylum (Calabar) dist ... ..	42 0 0
			21.		267.	
171	26.11.10.	Medical ... ..			Transport of Stores ... ..	5 0 0
			17.		53.	
172	21.12.10.	Civil Police... ..			Firemen's Uniform, &c. ... ..	3 0 0
			19.		70	
176	22.12.10.	Forestry ... ..			Uniform for Native Forestry Staff ... ..	3 3 6
			17.		9.	
178	26.12.10	Civil Police ... ..			Expenses of Officers attending Courses at Royal Irish Constabulary ... ..	15 0 0
			44.		28.	
181	30.12.10.	R & B Extraordinary			Path Ikoumala to Kwa Falls... ..	57 0 0
			16.		302.	
182	30.12.10.	Machine ... ..			Overtown ... ..	20 0 0
			18.		49.	
183	30.12.10.	Prisons ... ..			Transport of prisoners ... ..	20 0 0
			10.		33.	
184	30.12.10.	Postal ... ..			Carriage of Mails by Railway & Motor ...	143 6 6
			20		27.	
185	30.12.10	Agriculture ... ..			Tools, Seeds, &c. ... ..	46 10 0
			38.		25.	
1	4.1.11.	W. & B A. Recurrent			Porch & Staircase Lighting, Public Build- ings ... ..	5 0 0
			15.		31.	
15	7.2.11.	S.N. Volunteer Force			Horse allowance to Commanding Officer at 2s, 6d. per diem ... ..	8 7 6
					Total .. ..	£ 9,446 17 9

The Acting Colonial Secretary:—The Secretary of State towards the end of 1909 gave a ruling that at the close of the year a list of Special Warrants which had been issued during any year against which equivalent savings were made under other items under the same head of Estimates, should be submitted to Legislative Council for approval. This list, which is in respect of 1910, has accordingly been prepared and Honourable Members are now asked to approve of it.

The Acting Financial Commissioner seconded.

Resolution agreed to.

The Attorney-General moved the following motion standing on the Agenda:—

(III) "That this Council approves the draft Order to be made by the Governor under The Customs Tariff (Amendment) Ordinance, now laid on the Table."

The Acting Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, seconded.

Motion agreed to. Order passed accordingly.

#### BILLS.

The Attorney General:—Your Excellency:—I beg leave to move the second reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to provide for the stopping or diverting of Highways."

When I introduced this Bill at the last meeting of Council I endeavoured to explain its provisions and since then I do not know that I have heard much objection to it. I have heard one more or less amu-

gling criticism, and that is, that this Bill is an attempt on the part of a wicked Government, backed by a wicked Attorney General, to deprive the people of Lagos of their lands.

The Acting Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a second time accordingly.

The Attorney-General moved the second reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to provide for the punishment of idle and disorderly persons and rogues and vagabonds."

The Acting Colonial Secretary seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a second time accordingly.

The Attorney-General moved the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to legalize certain payments made in the year ended on the thirty-first day of December, one thousand nine hundred and ten, beyond the expenditure authorized by law."

The Acting Financial Commissioner seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a first time accordingly.

The Bill was then declared to be of an urgent nature, and on motion duly made and seconded the Standing Rules and Order were suspended to be extent necessary to enable the further stages of the Bill to be taken at that sitting.

The Attorney-General moved the second reading of

**The Bill.**

The Acting Financial Commissioner seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a second time accordingly.

Council in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Preamble passed.

Enacting Clause passed.

Title settled "An Ordinance to legalize certain payments made in the year ended on the thirty-first day of December, one thousand nine hundred and ten, beyond the expenditure authorized by law."

The Council resumed.

The Attorney-General moved the third reading of the Bill.

The Acting Financial Commissioner seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a third time accordingly.

Question put that the Bill do now pass. Agreed to.

On motion duly made and seconded the Acting Colonial Secretary and the Attorney-General were appointed a Sub-Committee to present the Bill to the Acting Governor for his assent thereto in the name of the Sovereign.

The Attorney-General:—Your Excellency: I beg leave to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to amend the Agricultural Union Ordinance."

The powers of the Governor for appointing members of the Agricultural Union under the Ordinance were decidedly inelastic, and as the importance of Agriculture has increased in the Colony, it was felt that there was some necessity for increasing the members to ensure all interests being represented on the Council of the Union. It was also found out that there was no provision for a seat for the Conservator of Forests on the Council. The object of this Bill is to remedy this defect and also to give the Governor power to nominate members when he feels that certain interests should be represented on the Union.

The Acting Colonial Secretary seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a first time accordingly.

The Attorney-General:—Your Excellency: I beg leave to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to amend the Criminal Procedure Ordinance by making provision for dispensing with Coroners' inquests in certain cases.

This Bill has been drafted by His Honour the Chief Justice and has been submitted to the Secretary of State who has approved of its enactment. What it does is that it enables the Coroner, if the Medical Officer or Medical practitioner certifies that there are no signs of death by violence or other unlawful means and provided that nobody underneath a certain rank demands it, to dispense with the formality of holding an inquest. It has sometimes been found very burdensome to Coroners continually being called upon to carry out unnecessary inquests, and to Jurors to sit upon the jury.

The Acting Colonial Secretary seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a first time accordingly.

To be continued

**PATRIOTISM.**

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE PUPILS OF THE NEW HIGH CLASS SCHOOL BY THE PRINCIPAL—  
THE REV. E. T. JOHNSON.

My Dear Boys,

Our countryman Dr. R. A. Savage now residing on the Gold Coast during his recent visit to Lagos paid us a surprise and addressed you. It is a great pity that the excellent address he delivered on that occasion, based as it was on our lesson of the hour, was not reported. I am hoping however that at some future time he may do us the honour of giving you more of the fruits of his experience as he had done in the past when it will be possible to place his advice on record for your guidance. As I intend however not to break the continuity of our functions held on the last Friday or thereabouts of every quarter, and as you have already had an outsider to address you this quarter, I mean to speak to you myself today.

You will remember how I have often told you during our work that whatever may be the knowledge you glean from this place if you are unable to apply them to the practical duties of life, both now and hereafter, the knowledge to you will be useless, and you will be considered miserable failures. One of the many ways in which the result of your education is to show itself practically to the world is in the service you render to your country. No man can do any good for any country unless he first loves it. This love for country which moves a man to do service for it is what is called

**PATRIOTISM.**

That this is the implication of the term some of you know already, for it is derived from the Latin *Patria* meaning one's fatherland or native country of course as the word stands it is a hybrid. It has on a French dress with a Greek finish. For *patrie* is the French form of the Latin *patria* and a *Patriote* in French is the term used for the man, who loves his country and is devoted to its interest. *Isim* is from the Greek *izo* to make. So that patriotism is that disposition in a man which makes him love his country and devotes himself to its interest.

There are two kinds of patriotism. There is patriotism so-called and there is true patriotism. Patriotism so-called is that which makes a man work for his own ends under the pretence of working for his country. Let us take this school as a country and you boys as the men of the country and your love for the progress of your school as the motive which moves you to work. Suppose a backward boy—in Mathematics say—appeals to one of the senior boys to sacrifice some of his time for him in order to teach him that in which he is wanting; and suppose this senior boy consents to teach the backward boy not because he cares that the boy should progress or for the honour of the school but because he wishes to have practice himself in that special branch of the subject, that senior boy cannot be said to work to relieve the backward boy of his difficulty and to maintain the honour of the school. In that instance he only works to gain his own ends. Let us still take the school as a country and that senior boy a leading citizen and the knowledge of Mathematics as representing some circumstances for the welfare of the country. That boy who teaches

Mathematics to the backward boy because he would only benefit himself thereby is no patriot—no lover of his country. For apart from the idea of what he wants for himself he would have done nothing. In our New Testament lesson you read what Christ said of the Pharisees that they only give gifts because they wanted the praise of men; and since this is their motive Christ condemned their actions. I have defined patriotism as that love for the fatherland which makes a man do and dare—even risk his reputation and life for it. But that spirit which makes a man run such a risk pro- ceedingly for the country, but in reality to gain an end for his own personal benefit, is what I mean by patriot- ism so-called. It is a false patriotism—which is no patriotism. Men imbued with such spirit ultimately become menaces to the country and disturbers of law and order.

#### TRUE PATRIOTISM.

When Dr. Savage visited us the other day, as you will remember, I was lecturing you on your lesson in English Literature. Of the great characters depicted by Lord Macaulay which formed the topic of our dis- course he selected HORATIUS and discussed his life for your instruction. The spirit which moved Horatius to perform such a brave deed for his country is what I call true patriotism. You know how all Rome was trembling with fear when the news was brought that Lars Porsena was coming with a large army to com- pel the Romans to take back their King Tarquin. He had already approached to a few miles of the city. He had stormed their strong fortress, Janiculum, and slain the guards. A few hours more he would have got to the bridge and Rome lost to the Romans. Their (the Romans') only hope of safety was the pulling down of the bridge. But ere this is done Porsena and his army would have gained the narrow entrance. The occasion required someone to go straight and defend this narrow entrance. The situation was critical. None but the man who would lay down his life can afford to go. Horatius volunteered in those lines well known to you:—

“And how can man die better  
Than facing fearful odds,  
For the ashes of his fathers,  
And the temples of his Gods.”

These words infused spirit into two others. With them he went, kept back the invading army and saved his country. This is an instance of true patriotism. When Horatius volunteered himself he had nothing to gain personally but his life to lose.

Let me give you another illustration. At one time in the city of Rome it is said that the Romans woke up one morning to find a deep and almost bottom- less gulf in front of the forum. This forum as you know is their market place and is daily frequented by a great crowd. A great fear seized the people especially as this chasm is continually widening its mouth. The fathers of the city met in their Senate House to discuss the situation. The Augurs divined to know what should be done to get the chasm closed; and the gods declared that the most precious thing in Rome must be sacrificed. The difficulty then was to know what this most precious thing is and how to get it out for sacrifice. The miser thought his bag of gold the most precious thing. He went home and lugged his money-bags closer than he had done before. The widow folded her only son in

her embrace with tears rolling down her eyes and would not allow him to go out lest the gods should claim him—for to her that boy was the most precious thing in Rome. And so every one tried to keep at home what to them was most precious. And as long as this precious object was not forthcoming the gulf continued yawning. In the midst of their perplexity the news was told one morning that the most precious thing in Rome has been found and is to be sacrificed that day. At the appointed hour all Rome met to witness the scene—eagerly expecting to see this most precious thing and how it is to be sacrificed. Riding on horseback through the throng in full military dress was Mettius Curtius. (I speak here from memory.) Reining in his horse a few yards from the chasm, he addressed his countrymen to this effect:—That as the gods de- clared that the salvation of the country depends upon the sacrifice of the most precious thing and that as he is convinced the most precious thing in Rome is the life of one of Rome's sons therefore for the salvation of his country and to his country-gods he Mettius Curtius offers himself. So saying he spurred his horse and rode at full speed into the chasm. It closed and Rome was saved from an impending catastrophe.

You may tell me that these are ancient histories and that I have told you that these tales of old Rome are mostly legends; but you must not forget that they embody certain principles and facts and therefore intended to teach certain lessons.

Let me give you an illustration from modern history.

You know the story of Jean D'Arc, the peasant maid of D'Omremont. Her country (France) was at this time in danger of falling into the hands of the English. Although a girl of eighteen she seemed to hear a voice bidding her deliver her country from an impending danger and she was not disobedient to this heavenly vision. She went, led an army against impos- sible odds and saved her country. She knew she may not live to enjoy the fruits of her labour; and really she did not but she was satisfied with the thought that she had accomplished her task ere she met her untimely death.

At the outbreak of war with Russia, the Japanese Admiral found it necessary to block one of the ports under Russian occupation in order to prevent their ships from coming out. He wanted men to man some vessels to do this deadly work. Volunteers for this action were expected to seal it with their lives. About ten men were wanted but nearly a hundred offered themselves. Those selected counted it an honour to do this deed for their country. They went and fulfilled their task; but never returned. They gained nothing for themselves but victory for their country.

I have given you four historical incidents to illustrate what I mean by true patriotism—the love for country which moves a man to make great sacrifices for it.

One of you raised the question during our Scripture lesson the other day “how can a man lose his life to save it,” as Christ said (He that loseth his life shall find it (Matt. x. 39.) I did not answer that question directly for the reason that I did not think it necessary on that occasion. In the above stories you have the explanation. The true patriot is a man who loses his life to find it. He loses it in the sense that he seeks nothing for himself in his service for his country. He finds it in the good he has done for his country and the enduring name he has made for himself. By his unselfish goodness he becomes a great man. For goodness is

greatness. Christ illustrated this in his own life. He wept over Jerusalem when he failed to effect a reform and ultimately laid down his life for it. At his death his cause seemed to fail but today his name is known all over the earth; honour and worship are paid him. He lost his life to find it.

We have never ceased reminding ourselves from day to day of the list of names of such men supplied by Mr. Forsythe on the occasion of our first Terminal Address, who became great by doing service for their country.

#### THE NURSERY GROUND.

I say this to you, my dear boys, not because I wish you to become patriots at this early stage of your life but to set an ideal before you. At school you are expected to be boys and boys I want you to be. But whilst you are boys it is necessary that your training follow such a line as will make you become serviceable to your country. It is reported of the Duke of Wellington that he remarked that he won the battle of Waterloo on the cricket field of Eton. What does this mean? That as a captain of a cricket team he often carried the honour of his school in his mind and that he made it his duty always to point his men in a way as to win the match. When he became a man and had to lead an army to the field against a great enemy, he called forth those powers of generalship he had already exhibited in school in a highly developed form with the same result.

I was talking to an Egba man the other day who told me that Lihabi, the great hero and patriot who delivered the Egbas from the thralldom of the Ibadans during the early stage of their settlement at Abeokuta showed that disposition in him at play when he was a boy.

"Boyhood shows the man,  
As morning shows the day."

It is in your life at school, in your devotion to your daily task, in the way you attend to your duties, in the way you conduct yourselves in the play ground, in the way you show love for your fellows and seek the progress of your school as a whole, that the true spirit of patriotism is manifested in you. And it is your duty to try and develop this spirit now. If you love your home, if you love your friends, if you love your School and are prepared to sacrifice everything for its honour, you will love your country.

You always hear people speak of a country as rising. Whatever is said to rise must have been on a low plain. Your fathers always speak of our country as one which they expect would rise; which amounts to say that at present we are occupying a very low position among the countries of the world. A man who would rise must bestir himself to do so. It is the duty of every one of us to bestir himself for the rise of our country—but it is chiefly YOUR duty. We stand in need of a reformer. Who he will be we know not. It may be one of you for aught I know, or may be, he is yet unborn. Whoever it be, it is your duty to prepare the way before him. Yours may be the voice crying in the wilderness but keep the ideal before you and cry on. Every cry is a step in advance and brings us nearer to the goal. For

"The song that stirs a nation's heart  
Is in itself a deed."

I cannot impress too much upon you what the several Gentlemen who have come here to address you often laid stress upon and that is that you be good boys. Let me not deceive you. You cannot do anything for yourselves much less for your homes and country unless you are good. Goodness lies at the root of true national greatness. If you are good you will do great things for your country.

"Be just and fear not;  
Let all the ends thon aim'st at be  
thy Country's,  
thy God's, and Truths."

I would close by reminding you of those beautiful words of Horatius very familiar to some of you which I had quoted a few minutes ago, thoughts which moved him to do service for his country:—

"And how can man die better  
Than facing fearful odds,  
For the ashes of his fathers  
And the temples of his Gods."

*(Continued from page 2.)*

ment or consideration. Usually a Chief does not allow his female slave to marry outside his house, each Chief trying to prevent his own members (slaves) increasing those of the other houses; whilst provision is made for freeborn daughters to pass from one house to another. The offsprings of two slaves are always regarded as slaves. It would be seen that the labouring class are not free to make any marriage or other contracts of their own. It is also difficult for foreigners to marry save by small dowry; and permission to ransom is generally refused.

This is a brief description of the custom obtaining in the Central and Eastern Provinces of this Colony where the House Rule Ordinance is in force. It is this custom that the Ordinance upholds, and professes that it checks the despotism of the Head and give greater facility to the members of the houses. One has only to examine the new Ordinance to find that the Head of the House is made more despotic than ever; for no member of the House can object to his treatment without incurring his odium and making himself liable under the law.

The following suggestions we believe ought to demand some consideration and lead to a modification of the hardships of the ordinance.

1 That "boy" owners, as many as are possible at one time, be subsidized by the government by way of compensation for the services of their "boys." This may be spread over a period of 10 years or more and would raise the "boys" into the status of the freeborn.

2. That "boys" who are able be allowed to effect their own manumission and be allowed the same rights and privileges of freeborn.

3 That the present ordinance be remodelled to one which, while maintaining the authority of the Head of the House, will also take notice of the individual rights of its members. That this law be such as would allow for the full development of the custom of the country.

4 That such should be the alteration that members of the House be free to make contracts while they still contribute to the general family property.

The suggestion by Mr. Harris that the clause "in any other manner" be removed leaving "possession by birth" in the definition of the term "member of a House" will not help the cause since the children of two slaves are still slaves.

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## CONTENTS

*News of the week.*

**Home**

Bills for Legislative Council 1  
 General Meeting A. S. & A. P. Society 1  
 Yoruba Text of Building Regulation 1  
 Dr. B. O. Hoare, arrival of 1  
 On School Readers 1

**Editorial**

The Agrarian Question in Lagos 3

**Letter to the Editor**

On Public Notice No. 935 7

**Political.**

Legislative Council Proceedings. 3

**Miscellaneous**

Southern Nigeria and its Problems 4  
 The Breaking-Up of African Kingdoms and the Possible Cause 5

## NEWS OF THE WEEK.

### HOME

Our Yoruba Antiquity and other articles are crowded out.

Our townsman B. O Hoare Esq. M.B. Ch. B.; D. T.M. arrived home last Friday per the S.S. Tarquah. Dr. Hoare is looking hale and hearty. We congratulate him and wish him a successful career.

The latest number of the Government Gazette contains a Yoruba text of the proposed Building Regulation.

Bills amending the Supreme Court (Amendment) Ordinance 1910 and the Lagos Harbour Dues will be introduced at the next meeting of Legislative Council.

A Meeting of the Lagos Auxiliary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society was held on Thursday afternoon, the 19th instant at 4 p.m. precisely at the Glover Memorial Hall.

Agenda:—

Election of Officers.

Report of Sub Committee

The following were elected Officers for the New Year.

President:—Rt. Rev. Bishop Johnson D.D.

Vice Presidents:—Rt. Rev. Bishop Oluwale D.D.,

Hon. O. A. Sapara Williams B.L., Dr. Mojola Agbeli

Ph.D., Rev. R. E. Collins Tella Adesiji; Treasurer (J.

J. Da Rocha Esq; Secretary S. H. Pearce Esq., F.R.C.S.,

Asst. Sec. T. L. Harrison, Esq; Corresponding Sec.

J. Bright Davies Esq, Asst. (Chris. Johnson)

### ON SCHOOL READERS

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NIGERIAN CHRONICLE"

Sir,

It has been announced to the children in some of the Schools that new readers are to be introduced shortly and parents are to be put into the unnecessary expense of procuring them. Not long ago parents had to buy Blackwood's, Century, Arnold's, Royal & Co; and another series is about to be forced upon them. The School authorities hardly know how difficult it is for us to get the money for the books after meeting the home expense. What the new reader is to contain I do not know but to me it is not much the book as the way in which it is handled. It seems that novelty rather than instruction is the thing aimed at for there are books which give all the necessary information that Southern Nigeria children need on the common objects they see around them. The tropical Readers sold at the C. M. S. Book room are the best we have seen. It is written specially for the Tropics. I hope the Education Authorities will not encourage any book that shows a religious bias as the School children of Southern Nigeria come from Mohammedan, Pagan and Christian Homes.

This book for Southern Nigeria is to come from India. It is rather suggestive and sounds very funny. When the Government wanted to introduce the Sedition Ordinance the text had to come from India. When they would the Forestry Laws they had to go up to India not only for the text but for the teachers also to inculcate them. And now that a School book is needed Indian Services has to be requisitioned for. What next is to come from India. Thanking you for space.

Yours truly,

A. PARRER

# The Nigerian Chronicle

## THE AGRARIAN QUESTION IN LAGOS.

### A Statute Quo Warranto.

Our Correspondant VERITAS whose letter we publish elsewhere in this impression raises four questions of paramount importance.

I. Whether under public notice No 935 the Government now claims all lands in Lagos built upon or not as their own.

II Whether future enjoyment of ownership in lands now in private hands depends on the approval or not by the Government of the present owners, titles.

III Are those who possess lands under the arrangement of former days (i.e. prior to 1861) now to be dispossessed of their lands?

IV Under what conditions were Crown Grants given in former years (i.e. from 1861) in Lagos when Government was less exacting than it is now.

To answer these questions, it is necessary to state the articles of the treaty of cession and the conditions under which the late King Docemo had to sign it. We shall cite Articles 1 and 3 which bear on this question of land. They read:

"In order that the Queen of England may be the better enabled to assist, defend, and protect the inhabitants of Lagos, and to put an end to the slave-trade in this and the neighbouring countries, and to prevent the destructive wars frequently undertaken by Dahomey and others for the capture of slaves, I, Docemo, do, with the consent and advice of my council, give, transfer, and by these presents grant and confirm, unto the Queen of Great Britain, her heirs and successors, for ever, the port and island of Lagos, with all the rights, profits, territories and appurtenances whatsoever thereunto, belonging; and as well as the profits and revenue as the direct, full, and absolute dominions and sovereignty of the said port, island, and premises, with all the royalties thereof, freely, fully, entirely, and absolutely. I do also covenant and grant that the quiet and peaceable possession thereof shall, with all possible speed, be freely and effectually delivered to the Queen of Great Britain, or such person as Her Majesty shall thereunto appoint for her use in the performance of this grant; the inhabitants of the said island and territories, as the Queen's subjects and under her sovereignty, crown, jurisdiction, and government, being still suffered to live there.

"In the transfer of lands, the stamp of Docemo affixed to the document will be proof that there are no native claims upon it, and for this purpose he will be permitted to use it as hitherto."

We have now to look for the conditions obtaining when Docemo was "civilly asked to sign away his kingdom." An eyewitness, evidently one behind the scenes, wrote as follows:—

"For Lagos was born in the British family, the youngest member of her colonies, on the fifth day of August, A.D. 1861. Commander Beddingfield R.N., after a hard bumping on the bar off the east spit, had by high direction entered into a palaver with Docemo, King of Lagos, and after "jamming heads"—except the phrase, but the "Captain," as the earnest and Rev. M. Monk insists upon calling him *usque ad nauseam*, plagues himself exceedingly upon a very moderate knowledge

the coast—informed him that permanent occupation (a nicer word than annexation) was determined upon, and that he, Docemo, was to be pensioned, and become one of the many kings lately "retired from business." That barbarous person, curious to say, was not delighted by the intelligence. In fact, he made some difficulties. He proposed to meet Her Majesty's consul, "the Captain" and all the British merchants at Palma, a French station some thirty miles east of Lagos, where he probably intended to give them something more than a bit of his mind. They politely declined a trip so far out of the range of the Prometheus fire. The emissaries and chiefs also demurred, and foreseeing an embargo upon their bribes and presents, waxed surly. At the bottom of the discontent were the liberated Africans,—

"Sharp rogues all, both great and small,—  
as the Cape Coast Castle song hath it."

"So matters ran till the 5th of August, when a flag-staff was slipped and rigged near the British consulate, and Commander Beddingfield landed with his marines. A crowd of people and some chiefs were assembled at the palaver-house. The king, when civilly asked to sign away his kingdom, consented and refused, as the negro will, in the same breath. On the next day he affixed his mark, for of course he cannot write; and there is no African king who will not, in full view of a gallon of rum, "put his name for book," no matter what that book may be, provided that he ignores its contents. In so doing he of course concluded that a bit of paper so easily cut through with a pair of scissors can have no binding force, and a few hours afterwards he will tell you that he can tear it to pieces. WITHOUT AWAITING, HOWEVER, THE CEREMONY OF SIGNATURE, POSSESSION, NINE-TENTHS OF THE LAW, WAS AT ONCE ENTERED UPON. The "Captain" read out an English proclamation, very intelligible to the natives, confirming "the cession of Lagos and its dependencies"—a pleasantly vague frontier. Then followed a touching scene. One Union Jack was hoisted in the town, another on the beach. "Prometheus Victus" saluted with twenty-one guns. The marines presented arms, three hundred felloes, or sanctified boys, as the convert people call them, sang a hymn, headed by their minister. It was not

*Dies irae, dies illa, &c*

And as we Englishmen must celebrate every event with a dinner—I believe that if London were to follow Lisbon's suit, Londoners would dine together amongst the ruins of "Willie's" or the "Tavern"—forty-four Oylins, Europeans, and African-European, officials and merchants, sat down to meet upon the quarter-deck of the "Prometheus," and by their brilliant speeches and loyal toasts added, as the phrase is, *éclat* to the great event. Thus Lagos—rose.

KING DOCMO WAS PERSUADED, ON THE NEXT DAY BY A GUARD OF MARINES, WHO GROUNDLED ARMS WITH A MOST OMINOUS RATTLING IN HIS PRESENCE, TO BE DULY MEDIATISED. He was also assured of a pension amounting to something less than 2000l per annum. This sum is equivalent to his annual revenue, but it is subject to revision. He ungratefully forwarded, *on dit*, an expostulation to Europe; so did his chiefs. On the other hand, the merchants of all nations were highly pleased with the result. Thirteen of them, foreigners as well as Britshers, signed a petition praying the "Prometheus" to remain inside the bar for the protection of English life and property. It is upon a transaction of this kind that the Government is now basing its claim of ownership. And from the questionable morality of the action we pro-

(Continued on page 8.)

"One fellow who calls himself 'Captain, upon the strength of having bought a condemned hul'"

with the acquisition by the Government of the lands of the people for public purposes in one or other of several ways and the administration thereof by the Government. The people naturally objected to this principle. A brief was presented through Messrs. Ashurst, Morris, Cripps and Company, the well known London Solicitors, of 17 Throgmorton Avenue, E.C.4., and petitions were presented to the Queen in Council, which were settled by the present Prime Minister of England, the Right Honourable H. H. Asquith. The matter was, in the meanwhile, ably argued in the Legislative Council of the Gold Coast by my late learned friend, Mr. Satah; and eventually a deputation met Mr. Chamberlain at Downing Street.

In the report of the proceedings of the deputation which waited upon the Secretary of State for the Colonies, it is stated: "Considerable correspondence took place with reference to the petitions and ultimately the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain received the deputation, and after a lengthy discussion he acknowledged in substance the validity of the objections which had been taken to the Ordinance proposed by the Governor."

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It will thus be seen that in 1894 the then Secretary of State for the Colonies admitted the soundness of the criticisms passed on the Crown Lands Bill, and Mr. Chamberlain in 1897 acknowledged the validity of the objections to the Lands Bill and directed the Concessions Ordinance, 1900, to be passed as a simple legislative measure.

If we now turn to the Forestry Bill, 1910, since withdrawn, being the third attempted land legislation on the Gold Coast, or to the Forest Bill, 1911, now before us, we find that, in principle, they each introduce the same encroachments on the people's proprietary right which they objected to in 1894 and again in 1897.

In the definition clauses of the Forest Bill, 1911, we read, *inter alia*, "Crown land means land the property of the Crown or held in trust for the Crown. "Uncultivated land means unoccupied and uncultivated land." "Uncultivated land means land which has not been under cultivation for a period of—years." "Reservation land means land with respect to which a Reserve Forest Officer has given judgment under Section 8."

It then proceeds to deal with such matters as the following:—"Governor in Council may declare certain land subject to forest reservation; prohibition to take timber, collect rubber, etc., during period of order; Enquiry by Reserve Settlement Officer; Colonial Secretary may acquire certain land under public lands Ordinance; Colonial Secretary may acquire reservation land and rights thereover by agreement; Power to constitute Forest Reserves; Native Forest Reserves to be managed by Government; Ownership not to be altered; Proportion of Receipts; Power to relinquish reserves."

To draw one or two obvious comparisons between

the Land Bill of 1897 and the Forest Bill, 1911, it is clear that the administration of Public Lands by the Government is the same as the "management" by the Government of reserved lands under the Forest Bill, 1911. "Administration" on the one hand and "Management" on the other; both words are practically synonymous.

Under the former Bill the Government could acquire land for public purposes in one or other of several ways; so it can under the present Bill, such land being designated "Crown Land." Both deal with reserved lands, and whether you call land "waste land," "unoccupied land," "forest land," or "bush land," the result is the same to the person claiming proprietary rights to such land.

It will be useful here to indicate the nature of the criticisms which have been put forward as to the claim of the Government to introduce legislation affecting the proprietary rights of the people. They have been based upon highly responsible authorities, bound to command attention.

Mr. Lucas of the Colonial Office, in his able work on "Historical Geography of the British Colonies," says; "To judge from the old maps, a row of isolated forts and factories lined the water's edge but they had no territory or territorial right attached."

In a well known work—"Fanti and Ashanti" by Captains Huyshe and Brackenbury, it is stated as follows:—"It appears that all the European Companies on the Gold Coast, Dutch and Danish as well as English, had paid Ground Rent to the Coast tribes for the land on which their forts were built."

In the Government Gazette Extraordinary of August 13th, 1897, pages 298 and 299, are grouped the following opinions by influential officials upon Land Tenure on the Gold Coast, which I shall proceed to refer to.

His Honour Mr. Justice Smith speaks upon the matter as follows:—

"Land in the Colony is distinguished under the following heads: Stool land, private land, and family land. Under these designations all the land in the Colony, save what the Government have from time to time taken for public purposes, has, according to Native Law, an owner. Most carefully do the Natives preserve and hand down all traditions connected with the ownership of such land, and no matter how small may be the plot of land they are always keen in preventing any encroachment on their rights in respect thereof."

The Honourable Bruce Hindle, Attorney General, and afterwards Chief Justice of Sierra Leone, says:

"It is considered by the Natives that all lands, whether reclaimed or not, are attached to the Stools of the different Kings and Chiefs with the exception of the comparatively small portions attached in the manner, hereinafter mentioned. There is no land which is not, or has not been, so attached. In the bush the boundaries are generally fixed by particular trees, by natural features, such as rivers or streams."

Major General Sir Francis Scott, Inspector General of the Gold Coast Constabulary, says:

"As a general rule among the real natives of the Gold Coast the tenure of land is perpetual, whether cultivated or not. All land on the Gold Coast is either the property of a tribe, country, town, company, family or an individual."

to hear a case *in camera* this provision should not apply.

I trust that in view of the explanation which I have given, this Council will be inclined to agree that this amendment to the Supreme Court Ordinance is not unnecessary at the present stage of proceedings.

The Acting Colonial Secretary seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a first time accordingly.

The Attorney-General:—Your Excellency: I beg leave to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to amend the Adulteration of Produce Ordinance."

Honourable members will remember that at the beginning of this year an Ordinance was passed in this Council amending the Adulteration of Produce Ordinance. When it was sent home to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of State did not agree with the section defining "adulteration." He objected to the word "adulteration" in view of the fact that the original Ordinance defined the words "to adulterate," and suggested the substitution of what you will now find in section 2, which will be Clause 25 of the original Ordinance as amended.

I may say that there were also some clerical errors in the Ordinance. Certain sections had been cut out which necessitated the re-numbering of other sections but the references were not amended. As regards this though, I would point out that rather extensive alterations were made in the Bill in Committee and the third reading was taken the same day, and the result is that I did not correct my references and put my sections right. I am sure Honourable Members will agree that it is rather difficult to do all that sort of thing in five minutes. The Secretary of State has asked that the whole Ordinance should be repealed and re-enacted with the necessary amendments and there is no doubt that this course is more desirable than passing another amending Ordinance.

The Acting Colonial Secretary seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a first time accordingly.

The Attorney-General:—Your Excellency: I beg leave to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to amend the Destruction of Mosquitoes Ordinance."

It was some time in May, 1910, I think, just before I went home on leave, that the question of making provision for the destruction of mosquitoes by a special Ordinance was raised; and before I went home I drafted a Bill for that purpose. At the time I was not quite sure as to what places it was desired that the Ordinance should extend and I left the definition of "premises" open. A definition was afterwards inserted. This definition was somewhat remarkable; it omitted to bring in—a very easy thing I must admit—ships which might be in the harbour, and it also included easements—how you are going to get at mosquitoes in easements I do not know. I have amended this definition. I have left out "easements" and included "all vessels used in navigation, whether in the service of the Government or not." That will bring all vessels of any sort within the provisions of the Ordinance. I am informed that some vessels in the harbour are hot-beds of mosquitoes—mosquitoes which are specially vigorous, possibly from the fact of their going about from one port to another and crossing the straits

which perhaps increases their vitality and renders them more healthy than the ordinary mosquito.

The Acting Provincial Commissioner, Western Province seconded.

Motion put and carried. Bill read a first time accordingly.

Council adjourned *sine die*.

## SOUTHERN NIGERIA AND ITS PROBLEMS.

### IX—GOVERNING ON NATIVE LINES.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT LATELY IN NIGERIA)

The fundamental principle followed by the Government in Northern Nigeria is indirect administration—that is, administration through the native rulers of the communities, the Chiefs and their executives, under the supervision and with the assistance of the Residents. That was the policy laid down by Sir Frederick Lugard in a series of comprehensive memoranda which form not the least notable feature of the great work he carried out during his tenure of office, a creative work of which the value can but grow in public estimation as the sense of perspective deepens with the years and as additional information supplies what in the early days of the occupation was largely lacking. That was the policy Sir Frederick Lugard's successor, Sir Percy Girouard, found in being, not, indeed, unthreatened, but enthusiastically upheld by the most experienced members of the political staff. He not only gave it his full official support and checked certain leanings of an opposite kind, but he brought to bear upon the situation a personal sympathy, an illuminating and penetrative genius, which popularized the policy in quarters previously hostile or indifferent. Sir Henry Hesketh Bell has loyally followed in the footsteps of his predecessors. That nothing should be allowed to divert us from keeping on the same road is the writer's conviction, for what it may be worth, after several years' study at a distance and recent investigations on the spot.

#### THE OBJECTIONS.

A genuine and honest endeavour is being made not only to rule through the native Chiefs, but to rule through them on native lines. Too much importance can hardly be ascribed to the distinction. The success already attained would be thrown away if policy were deflected in the direction of substituting European for native ideas. If the native machine is expected to perform functions for which it is unqualified, the works get out of gear. If the Chiefs are called upon to exercise their authority in enforcing measures essentially alien to the native constitution, their prestige over the individual lapses. They become mere puppets, and indirect rule breaks down. I hope to make clear what the native constitution is, and what is meant by ruling on "native lines." The difficulties of improving and purifying, when required, a native administration without impairing its general efficiency are always considerable. In Northern Nigeria they are, for several reasons, peculiarly so. If the result so far, has shown the wisdom of the original concept

tion, it has been due to the determination and tact of the senior political Residents and to the excellence of the native material. Our task has been furthered by the administrative capacities of the Fulani Chiefs. Some were, indeed, found unfit and had to be removed, but the majority are increasingly showing themselves not only capable but quite indispensable to the work of government.

It would, however, be mischievous to conceal the fact that indirect rule in the proper sense of the term, which involves the preservation of native law and custom, has to bear, in West Africa, the brunt of constant and insidious assaults on the part of interested, or prejudiced or ill-informed, opinion. This opposition is often quite honest, and easy to understand if the conditions are grasped. It is important they should be grasped. Indirect rule is an obstacle to employment and promotion in some branches of the service. It restricts the scope of secretarial, judicial, police, and military activities. It robs the educated native barrister trained in English law, and the educated native clerk, of a field for the exercise of their professions. It checks the European capitalist in a hurry to push on "development." The missionary is apt to regard it as a stumbling-block to Christian propaganda. Finally, there is the type of European who is racially biased against the retention of any sort of control by the native in his own country. Indirect rule, therefore, has very many enemies, and it cannot have too many friends among the thinking public at home. So far as Northern Nigeria is concerned, strenuous efforts will have to be put forward by all who are convinced of the necessity of upholding indirect rule therein, when the amalgamation of the two Protectorates is taken in hand. That time cannot be far distant, and the wind which blows from the South is charged with many hostile tendencies. There would seem, then, to be solid reasons for the public to appreciate the conditions which render the continuation of the existing policy necessary to the welfare of the Northern Protectorate.

#### SIZE AND DISTANCE.

Let us first consider the geographical facts, and ways and means. Northern Nigeria is 255,000 square miles in extent, and the territory is divided into 13 Provinces. Of these Provinces, Sokoto, the most considerable in point of area, is nearly as large as Scotland and Wales; Bornu is the size of Ireland; Kano is almost as large as Scotland; Kontagora-Borgu is slightly larger than, and Bauchi and Muri the size of, Greece; the Niger Province is as large as Serbia; Yola is as large as Denmark; and Nasarawa exceeds the area of Switzerland. It is only by realizing space, by realizing that months of travel still separate some Provinces from others, that the expense, to say nothing of other considerations, which would be entailed in gathering up all the administrative threads of such a territory into the hands of a staff of British officials, can be understood. I have never heard it suggested that the Lords of the Treasury parted enthusiastically with the meagre sum allotted to Northern Nigeria. One cannot imagine that their Lordships' satisfaction would increase if they were presented with a bill, not of a quarter of a million, but of two millions. The single Province of Kano, which, under the present system, is supervised by 17 political officers, and more than pays its own way, would require at least 300 officials if direct rule were established or the prestige of the Chiefs so weakened as to deprive them of all real

authority over the people; and this exclusive of a swarm of native officials who could not be done without in any case. That brings me to my next point. Direct rule would of necessity involve an enormous, directly paid native staff. For its every action the Government would be compelled to accept responsibility, and its members would, perforce, be largely composed of the class of native—the most undesirable type, it may be added—from which the policemen and soldiers are now recruited. Putting aside the question of expenditure altogether, can any sane man, disposed to look the facts squarely in the face and knowing anything of the country, contemplate with equanimity the consequences of such a *regime*? Then, assuming for purposes of argument the non-existence of these impediments, where would be the moral justification, let alone the purely political expediency, of sweeping away the rule of the Chiefs?

To be continued

## THE BREAKING-UP OF AFRICAN KINGDOMS, AND THE POSSIBLE CAUSE.

BY R. E. DENNETT.

From the West African Mail of 28/7/05.

We are living in a period of transition in Africa; old established kingdoms, for a long time tottering, are now crumbling away. With the exception of Abyssinia there is no unprotected Black kingdom governed by a Black king in Africa. Why should this be?

One of the reasons given is that the African has not willingly contributed, as he should have done towards the general welfare of the human race. The native is also blamed for the actual state of affairs because, owing to certain failing in his character, he has himself either destroyed the unity of his kingdoms, through war and anarchy, and so made them an easy prey to any strong power desiring to attack them; or through fear he has allowed himself to be governed by despotic brutes who have shocked the civilized world by their atrocious conduct, and so allowed himself to become numanned.

But we now have to face accomplished facts. The continent of Africa has been divided up between the European Governments, who will in the future influence and govern the people according to their ideas.

#### THREE SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT.

Broadly speaking, there are three schools of thought that the African has now to deal with.

The first is the very old school that believes with "General Bounce" that there is nothing like a stick for a Negro.

The second school believes that by administering justice in a firm and judicious manner, and suppressing such customs as may be considered harmful to the progress of the country, the Black man may be regenerated.

The third is the *laissez faire* school, that believes in taxing the White population, suppressing only atrociously barbarous customs and otherwise allowing the native to go on managing for himself as best he can.

The first form of administration may be dismissed from our minds as altogether too simple and crude, if not barbarous. The fate which overlook the native kingdoms of Dahomey and Benin will sooner or later overtake the European School which follows in their footsteps.

As to the second and third schools much may be said for both; and giving both credit for sincerity in desiring the welfare of the people, we must await results.

Both are apparently anxious to respect the customs of the peoples, but the former urges and excites the people to progress in thought and life towards ideals in religion and civilisation, which strike the native as foreign, but which the White man is convinced are common to all mankind, and will check degeneration and help to reform the people under its protection. The latter believe that as the people exist, and have existed for centuries, so they will continue to exist, and that having suppressed barbarous customs, the people will, of their own initiative, and upon native lines, rise to the heights of civilisation which in the older days they had attained, and that the result will be a native kingdom, in every way better than anything history tells us of as having been raised by the introduction of new methods and new blood.

Having no example before us of a thriving State which has not imbibed ideas from the stranger (Abyssinia accepted Christianity in the early Christian era) we may question the right of these people to experiment on the African.

So much also depends upon what is meant by "native" lines, and upon the answer to the question whether the character of the Black man will allow him to advance *unaided*.

#### WHAT IS MEANT BY "NATIVE LINES"?

If by native lines we mean those pure ideals which in the far-gone past the Black man evidently possessed, but gradually in his degenerate course has either lost sight of or so encumbered with superstition as to render useless, if not harmful; then there can be no doubt, if he can be taken back to them, that he should be governed on those lines.

But if by native lines we mean those secondary, sometimes apparently harmless, sometimes semibarbarous and altogether useless customs, which have been a drag in all his progress in the intermediate past, then it is certain that he should not be governed on "native lines."

And who is to be the judge as to what customs shall be maintained and what shall be abolished—the patient or the doctor? Most certainly the doctor in the final decision, but not before he has heard all his patient has to say in favour of its retention.

We should all blame the doctor who did not arrest the disease before it became fatal, if he could possibly have done so, just as much as if he had hurriedly and wrongly diagnosed the disease and so caused the patient's death.

The reason that there are so many schools of thought as to how the African should be governed is because the protecting Governments are acting in the dark, and do not know quite what to do, and because the Black man, instead of studying his own needs and scientifically expressing them, spends his energy in abusing the government for so-called errors, instead of helping it

to avoid them.

It is true that the Black man, in any airy irresponsible kind of way, tries to mystify the White man by bringing forward certain general theories of his own. For instance, it has been seriously suggested that there is a moral law for the Black man and quite a different one for the White man, and this theory has been well backed up by the so-called patriotic school of natives. Well, this is a question that European Governments must thrash out, and come to some decision about.

#### ON THE "MORAL LAW."

But what has moral law done for the African? Is the resultant Black man, after thousands of years of so-called unaided Negro civilisation under this Black moral law, a product of sufficient usefulness to warrant his being left to the same influences that have helped to make him what he is? Has the Black moral law produced a Black man in every way satisfactory, capable of making the greatest possible use of the land God has so long given him the usufruct of? If the answers to these questions are satisfactory, there is no more to be said, and the sooner we have leave him to himself the better.

If, on the other hand, the Black man compares unfavourably with other races under the so-called White moral law, then it must be conceded that this moral law is not good for him, and that to allow him to remain under it, to go on degenerating, is an international crime. To stand by and see the Black man influenced by what you can prove is bad for him, and will lead him to extinction or to become a curse to the world, is neither good policy nor right.

Being satisfied that there is only one God and one moral law for man, be he white, or black or any other colour, and that the plea that the Black man has a moral law of his own has only been brought forward by him in a desire to avoid certain responsibilities. It is the evident duty of the protecting Governments to do all in their power, in a logical and just way, to help the Black man to conform to it. The choice, however, must always rest with the Black man, as to whether he accepts this or no. Governments can bring the moral law to the Black man, but they cannot make him accept more of it than he wishes to do. He may choose between life and extinction.

A great deal of importance and weight has been given in this discussion in the native Press, to the last five Commandments of the laws of Moses, and a certain class of White man, forgetting how he himself falls, accuses the Black man of being peculiarly weak in this direction. Failings in the keeping of these parts of the moral law are sinful, of course but it is by no means of such importance in the keeping up of the strength and *morale* of a nation, as the observance of the first five. The respecting or non-respecting of the five Commandments results in what may be said to be the turning out of gentlemen and blackguards, and of course both these classes exist in the White man and in the coloured.

The observance or non-observance of the first five however, makes all the difference in the world in the moral strength or weakness of a race. The very fact that the Black man neither reaches the depths of vice nor the heights of virtue of the White races, may well be due to the different way in which the two races observe the first five Commandments.

### "RESTLESSNESS UNDER CONTROL."

Before the Governments occupied the West Coast of Africa, fathers brought their children to the European traders to act as their servants and to "learn some," as they used to put it. The parents received occasional presents from the traders, but the idea of paying the little ones anything for their services was never thought of; they were dressed and fed by the traders. On the other hand, when the boys arrived at an age, a standard of knowledge entitling them to pay, their first earnings were given to the steward or head boy under whose training they had learned "some." When the Governments urged by the different philanthropic societies, occupied the country, the traders, seeing that this form of employment might be looked upon as a kind of slavery, gave each boy a book entitling him to so much pay per month. The result was disastrous. No sooner had these little ones saved a trifle than their characters seemed to change. That sense of *restlessness under control* innate apparently in the Black man, asserted itself in these children, and they refused to give up their earnings to their fathers and in a fashion declared their own independence. Fathers attempted, by punishing these lumps, to bring them to a sense of subjection, but they went to the Government and complained of their fathers' brutality, and at last the weak fathers gave away.

It is very common for a man in a village to leave it in disgust and build a place for himself, thinking that by so doing he will release himself from the performance of certain duties.

The inhabitants of an entire village will leave one province for another, because they object to the burdens placed upon them by the chief of that province.

The sub-kingdom of Kakongo, after declaring its independence from the kingdom of Congo, was brought to confusion and ruin by the Mambuku (Minister for Foreign Affairs) of that sub-kingdom. Helped by the Basorongo, he overthrew the king of Kakongo, and reigned as a despot in his place. On his death each province elected to govern itself, and it was while provinces were waging war with province, town against town, that the white man came in and protected them from themselves.

The kingdom of Yoruba was disrupted in much the same way by this sense of *restlessness under control*. The Alafin of Oyo once held sway over his six great provinces, the Egba, the people of one of these provinces, declared their independence, and to-day we find these people divided into two great sections, one under the government of Ibadan and the other under Abeokuta. And each of these districts is governed by a group of so-called kings. And other districts and towns of the once great kingdom of Ife are now governed by petty chiefs calling themselves *kings*. It was the British Government that stepped in here to protect the warring natives against themselves.

Thus this *restlessness under control* and vaulting ambition that we have noticed in this child, the individual, and the chief of the province, has been the ruin of the kingdoms.

And we are told that the native is very jealous of his independence, and very much afraid lest the White Governments should in some underhand way take it from him!

If we take the history of the Church in Lagos, we find a still further illustration of this *restlessness under control*. After many years of earnest (if misdirected) toil, an Anglican section of the Church of Christ was established in Lagos. No honest man will deny the enormous debt due by the people of their country to this Church, and the educational facilities it inaugurated. It was not a White man's church but Black priests were ordained, and some of the highest offices in the church were held by Black men.

Every one has heard of the Black Bishop Crowther, and there were other Black Bishops administering the church also. The Yoruba Bishop Johnson was ordained on the condition that the church should have more freedom granted to it. The Bishop did not wish to break off all communion with the See of Canterbury, but he wished the church to be an independent African Church. Unconsciously Bishop Johnson was echoing the cry of the restless patriots who demand that Africa be left for the Africans.

(Ah! if the natives would only realize how ruthless is the march of progress, how little favour or grace there is about it, he would not vainly imagine that an exception is going to be made in his case.)

This idea of religious liberty fell upon fertile ground and after a dispute in the congregation of the church administered by the Bishop a sect separated itself not only from his church but from the mother church in Europe and became a truly African Church (the Church of Bethel).

## Letters to the Editor.

### ON PUBLIC NOTICE NO. 356.

West Africa,

October, 1911.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NIGERIAN CHRONICLE"

Sir,

I was surprised to read in your paper which I got this morning (the issue of the 29th Sept.) the notice of the Lagos Government re. ownership of land in Lagos by Government under the Crown of 1861. I do not understand or I have not fully grasped that meaning of the notice. Does it mean that the Government now claims all land in Lagos whether built upon or not as their own and that future enjoyment of ownership in lands now in private hands depends on the approval or not by the Government of the present owners' titles? If this is the meaning then there is a bad look out for our children, our children's children, and generations yet unborn. May I request you to read the notice very carefully and if you come to the conclusion that under it a covert attempt to possess our lands is made then I would ask you in the name of all that is dear to you and me and to all true lovers of our native town, and in the interest of the continued progress of our people to sound the alarm and that in the most vigorous tones possible.

In England an attempt is being made by men like Mr. Lloyd George to arrest the possession of lands from proud aristocrats and unscrupulous capitalists and

place control in the hands of the "State" for free enjoyment by the people, or rather by all classes of the community. Land is essential for true and unfettered progress among any people. Even Mr. Lloyd George and socialists in England do not attempt to drive the lordly owners from their lands all they try to do is to put such taxations on lands as will not pay the owners to hold them up for speculation or pleasure at the expense of the people's progress.

In England the state is the People and the People the State. In British West Africa the state is a collection of oligarchs and bureaucrats whose whole aim and policy seems to exploit the people.

The Full Court has made its pronouncement and the pronouncement is now being exchanged by the Government into political value. Surely the cession of Lagos could not have meant the abolition of all private ownerships in land and there must have been extensive areas, when the cession was made, owned by private people. These private owners might not have been able if asked in those days (nor can their descendants now) to show in black and white their titles to their lands; for reading and writing were not as extensive as now, and lands must have passed from hand to hand and from families to families under some verbal arrangement as must have been usual in those remote times. Are those who possess lands under the arrangement of former days now to be dispossessed? If so the sooner we bestir ourselves to attempt to write and rouse our people by all constitutional means possible to the great danger coming the better it will be for our country and for ourselves. The duty particularly falls on you to blow the horn.

May I ask under what conditions were Crown grants given in former years in Lagos, when the Government was less exacting than it is now? Surely in those days the Government, if it possessed all lands, would not have exercised its rights of possession over a portion only. What cases were those on which the Full Court pronounced lately which led to the Government notice in question? Why should not these cases go to the Privy Council the expenses to be defrayed by the general public? I hope you will try to interest the people and call their attention to the danger threatening them.

I remain, Sir,  
Yours truly,  
VERITAS.

*Continued from page 2.*

need to answer the questions raised by our correspondent whether the Government is now claiming all lands in Lagos whether built upon or not as its own. The notice says "No rights of property in lands in the port and island of Lagos.....will be recognised by the Government, save and except such as have been duly acquired from the Government. The wording of the notice is elastic as all Government measures are. It was only in our last issue that we published a statement by the Hon: the Attorney General that the provision of an ordinance was "decidedly inelastic" This inelasticity of course means not capable of general application. We have an instance of elasticity in the Land Expropriation Ordinance and how it is being worked. It will only be a question of interpretation to include lands with buildings thereon.

The second question is plain on the face of the Notice, for Government may not recognise owners' claims to land if such has not been conferred by itself between the 6th day of August 1861 and the 14th day of March 1910.

On the third question as to whether those who possess lands under the arrangement of former days (i. e. prior to 1861) are now to be dispossessed of their lands rests the crux of the matter. As we have stated over and again the Yoruba King although the warden of all lands in his Kingdom is not the owner thereof. Every inch of ground within the Yoruba Kingdom is the property of an individual or family or of a community of men. On this score the King himself owns land as an individual or as a member of a family or a community. Although King of Lagos and warden of the lands of the people of Lagos, Dosunmu had only Oke Baba as a family property. To utilise for public purpose any area within the town he would have to inform, and obtain the sanction of, the rightful owners. What Dosunmu then had the power to give away in perpetuity was the right of wardship and even this he reluctantly gave away. For him to sell over the rights of private ownerships in lands to a foreign government will be contravening the laws of his own country. That he may not know the meaning of what he signed, and that he was even reluctant to sign the treaty from what he took it to be are evident from what we have quoted above. Previous to the cession the natives were illiterate and all business were transacted orally and before accredited witnesses. Lands were held formerly without any documentary title. How then can it be expected from those who at that time had no document to present one now? Not long ago a Provincial Commissioner summoned some natives before him to show their titles to certain lands said to be required for public purposes. The witnesses were examined individually in private rooms and all to a man stated that they received the lands from their ancestors who had no necessity for Crown Grants. What then is the Government going to do with these people? Are they to be dispossessed of their ancestral lands asked our correspondent? Everybody is waiting to hear.

The origin of Crown Grants is traceable to the treaty of 1852 which stipulated that missionaries should be encouraged to stay in the town and build Chapels, Schools, Residences and Industrial Institutions for which the King with the consent of landowners gave large areas. These foreigners in order to secure their rights to this property asked for, and obtained a written document which possibly they prepared themselves and got the King to affix a stamp to (which stamp was evidently imported for him for that purpose) in ratification of the agreement. Reference to this stamp was made in Article 3 of the treaty of cession from which time Crown Grants come to operation. As a matter of fact grants can only be issued where a property is transferred from one individual to another. A Crown grant can only be issued by the Crown in the transfer of lands in his possession. No crown grant can be expected to be issued in the case of the transfer of lands owned by private individuals. Article 3 of the treaty of cession recognises this when it provides that the stamp of Docemo affixed to a document in the transfer of lands is proof that such lands are not the properties of private owners prior to or after cession. The condition under which Crown grants were issued was that the land under transfer must be the property of the Crown. To deprive owners of lands their property because they cannot show "Crown Grant" will be unrighteous.

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E. J. Alex: Taylor.

Hon: Secretary to the Committee.

Victoria Road, Lagos.

April 3, 1911.

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## CONTENTS

### News of the Week.

#### Home

"At Home" Government House.	1
General Meeting A. S. & A. P. Society	1
Opening of Legislative Council	1
The Lagos Races	1
Lecture on the care of children	1
The case of Yesufu Mama	1

#### Editorial

Governing on Native Lines	2
Letter to the Editor	
The Agrarian Question in Lagos	8
What the Natives think of the Building Regulations.	2

#### Political

Legislative Council Notes	8
Native House Rule Ordinance	5
The House Rule Ordinance in Parliament	7

#### Sports

Cricket	7
---------	---

#### Agricultural

"Cultivation of the Cabbage"	4
------------------------------	---

#### Miscellaneous

Northern Nigeria and its Problems	3
-----------------------------------	---

## NEWS OF THE WEEK.

### HOME

His Excellency the Acting Governor and Lady Egerton will be "AT HOME" at 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday next the 31st October.

His Excellency Sir Walter Egerton opened the session of the Legislative Council on Thursday October 26, at 2.30 p.m.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies has been pleased to notify that His Majesty will not be advised to exercise his power of disallowance with respect to Ordinance No. 17 of 1911, entitled "An Ordinance to legalize certain payments made in the year ended on the thirty first day of December, one thousand nine hundred and ten, beyond the expenditure authorized by law."

A Committee meeting of the Lagos Auxiliary of the Anti Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society was held on Wednesday afternoon the 25th instant at 4 p.m. at the Glover Memorial Hall.

#### Agenda:—

Report of Sub-committee &c

The Lagos Races will take place on the 15th, 17th and 18th proximo.

Miss Grewer the Sister Nurse at the Lagos Hospital gave a lecture to women last Saturday at the Glover Memorial Hall on the care of children and how to prevent Infantile Mortality. Mrs P. Oke a native nurse acted as interpreter.

In this connection we would also suggest that a similar lecture be arranged for fathers who have great influence with their wives and as a rule dictate what should be served to their children. These lectures would be given greater publicity and will do a world of good if printed in English and the Vernacular and circulated.

A workman Yesufu Mama by name collided with a labourer last Thursday week as he was returning home on his cycle. To prevent a fall upon the labourer the rider wheeled swiftly to the right where he again collided with a Mrs Bosanquet a European lady who was thrown down from her bicycle. This man Mama was arrested brought before the Magistrate last Friday and sentenced to a fine of Two Pounds or a month's imprisonment for colliding with the labourer and to six months imprisonment for colliding with Mrs. Bosanquet. An appeal was lodged against the Magistrate's decision. The case was reheard before the Acting Chief Justice on Monday when judgment was reserved. It is reported that defendant was let off yesterday with a fine amounting to £6 for both offences.

The New High Class School removed this afternoon from Samaritan House Broad Street, to Upper Shitta Street where the Principal hopes to continue his work as hitherto.

The crew of the H. M. S. Dwarf in the Harbour were entertained last Thursday at the Club House by the members of the European club.

A fire occurred at Ejirin Market last Friday when several losses were sustained.

### DIRECT INTER COLONIAL SERVICE BETWEEN LAGOS AND GOLD COAST

The attention of shippers is called to the Direct Inter-Colonial Service of Steamers between Lagos and Gold Coast ports, carrying passengers.

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# The Nigerian Chronicle

## GOVERNING OF NATIVE LINES.

The question of what ought to be the policy of Government in the British Possession in Nigeria is once more engaging the serious attention of those who have taken upon themselves the administration of these countries. The motive which led to British occupation of West Africa and principally of the Nigeria is said to be mainly philanthropic and humanitarian—"to assist defend and protect the inhabitants the better and to put an end to the slave trade." This means in effect that the peoples of Nigeria are unable to govern themselves well and therefore they must submit to the beneficent rule of someone who knows their interest better than they do themselves. In the prosecution of their tasks it became the duty of our European overlords to set up ideals as to what they think ought to be good for the native. The methods and ends prescribed vary as there are idealists.

There are those who emphasize his moral failure; who see in his heathen rites a moral darkness grosser than the proverbial darkness of Egypt and who came to the conclusion that his betterment lay in the way of his emancipation from his hellish night. They therefore set upon to make of him a christian and to place the advantages of education at his disposal.

There are those who maintain that the incompetence of native communities to govern themselves is due to the despotism of their rulers. "Through fear he (the native) has allowed himself to be governed by despotic brutes who have shocked the civilised world by their atrocious conduct and so allowed himself to become unmanned." These idealists see in British rule a panacea for all evils, the healing balm of barbarous practices an end to which the native states ought not only to aspire but to conform. There are a moderate section of this class, a formation of recent date and advocates of Government on Native Lines, who hold to the view that native rule could be improved and purified by British administrators while preserving the original system intact. Whilst the one advocates a wholesale substitution of Native rule by British rule, the other holds the latter as a means of reforming the former. Whilst advocates of direct rule urge and excite the native to progress in ideals which they are convinced are common to all mankind and will check degeneration and help to reform the people under its protection those who hold to indirect rule believe that suppressing barbarous customs the natives must continue to exist as he had existed in the olden days—a procedure which will result in a far better end than by any new method.

There is yet another class of Idealists who holds that the native is backward, unfit to manage his own affairs inasmuch as he has not been able to contribute anything which they know and appreciate to material progress of the world. That he is a moral failure since his moral law has not in every way produced satisfactorily a Black man capable of making the greatest possible use of the land God has so long given him the usufruct of. Therefore must he be exploited; be made the hewer of wood and drawer of water and forced to labour; for in this only they say lies his real happiness. These Idealist, from the hardness of their hearts, not only fall like the Angel of Light but sink into a deeper abyss of moral degradation. The Congo misrulers are examples of such.

To be Continued

# Letters to the Editor.

## THE AGRARIAN QUESTION IN LAGOS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NIGERIAN CHRONICLE."

Sir,

I have read with much interest your leading article in last issue on the Agrarian question in Lagos. I am of the opinion that the people should be definitely informed as to what is the intention of the Government. Some of us are foreigners residing in this country. We have bought lands from the natives who transferred them to us. These documents of transfer we have in our possession and nobody has ever doubted our rights to these properties. We too, of course, fearing nothing did not seek to consult the Government as to their rights over them believing that Crown Grants were only issued for such lands as originally belonging to Government. What are we to do under the present circumstance? Why must we suffer for the negligence of the Government (if it has any right at all) in not asserting its claims these fifty years.

As your Correspondent "VERITAS" averred you ought to blow the horn and the people bestir themselves. In our country (I refer to the Gold Coast) when there was the agitation against the Maxwell land policy we employed our lawyers to fight the question on the spot and deputed men to the Secretary of State to represent our grievances. Even at present my countrymen are concerned with a similar question as at Lagos but in a different form. The Kings and Chiefs led by the educated natives met recently in Cape Coast and sat in Conference over the question for several weeks. The people's point of view had been argued in the Legislative Council by Counsel specially engaged for the purpose and they were only waiting for a final decision of the Government which would have been given by this time. If satisfaction is not obtained they are quite prepared to take further steps, constitutionally of course, as far as I believe the Privy Council Council. I understood a very large sum of money has been raised for that purpose and more is being collected. What are the people of Lagos doing? If Lagosians are willing to let go their rights in that way we foreigners who invest money in lands in Lagos are not prepared to do so and we regard them as under moral and legal obligation to return to us what we have paid them for their lands.

I do not know Mr. Editor whether you will allow a foreigner to ask what is your "PEOPLE'S UNION" doing and what good national service is the money raised by public subscription to serve? Surely if there is ever wanting an opportunity this is one. *Verbum Sap.*

Yours truly,

A FOREIGNER.

## WHAT THE NATIVES THINK OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NIGERIAN CHRONICLE."

Sir,

You called attention last week to the Yoruba transla

Continued on page 8

## NORTHERN NIGERIA AND ITS PROBLEMS.

### GOVERNING ON NATIVE LINES.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT LATELY IN NIGERIA.)

(Continued from our last issue.)

#### NATIVE LAW AND CUSTOM.

Having indicated some of the quagmires into which direct rule would lead us, one may now pass to an examination of the foundations upon which native law and custom repose in the organized society of the North, as revealed by systematic inquiry extending over the past five years. Essentially the same ground-work is found in the more rudimentary pagan communities which have remained without the area of Mohammedan organization. Incidentally, it may be well to mark that Northern Nigeria, has not evolved powerful pagan organizations comparable with those of Yoruba and Benin in the South. The basis of the social system is the village community. A number of village communities form the tribal community. The partly hereditary, partly elective rule of the tribal community constitutes, with the Executive, the Government of the entire community. The ruler himself is the "Governor," against whose actions the people can appeal to native law and custom. For the welfare of that community the ruler is guardian. Land is the common heritage of the community. The ruler is trustee for the land. Upon him devolves the granting of rights of occupancy. The structural law of tenure is the right of occupier and use, not of owner. Private ownership of land is unknown. The cultivator is, in reality a licensee. Alienation of land is unknown. The unit of taxation is the village community. Each individual is supposed to be assessed according to his earning capacity. If he is an agriculturist he furnishes a proportion of his crop, which, in effect, is a rent paid to the community for the use of land. If an artisan, pays a tax upon his trade. If a herdsman, upon his cattle. The community as a whole is subject to specific imposts which assist in maintaining the Civil List of the ruler. The character of the taxes and imposts follows the requirements of the Koranic law modified, when considered expedient, by pre-Koranic customary law. Justice is administered by Judges conversant with the sacred books, appointed by the ruler and exercised on the principles of Koranic law. If a balance could be struck, it would probably be found that a system of this kind ensures a greater amount of human happiness than many of the forms of government even now existing in Europe. Indeed, the closer one's knowledge of African life and the more insight one obtains into the immense sea of human misery heaving beneath the crust of Western civilization, the more one is led to marvel at the shallow commonplace which picture the African wallowing in degraded barbarism. Like all institutions, the African system lends itself to abuse. Those abuses the British Administration has set itself to correct, while maintaining the system itself. Upon the Colonial Office continuing to support that policy, and upon the men who are applying it on the spot being enabled to go on with their work free from interference depends the future happiness and prosperity of the Nigerian

peoples, which, in effect, is at once the Imperial interest and the justification of Imperial rule.

#### LAND TENURE.

In an extensive territory, differing local circumstances affecting soil, population, occupation, distribution of power, and so on had obviously created different methods or rather kinds of taxation and variation in the formulae of government, assessment and levying of revenues &c. One question above all others had to be elucidated, that of the ownership of land—the basis of the whole social edifice. Sir Everick Lugard initiated three inquiries. They were vigorously prosecuted by Sir Percy Girouard and the R-ahibets. It then became apparent beyond all possibility of doubt that the land whether actually occupied or not, was national, that freehold property was foreign to all native ideas, and that, under native law and custom, the new rulers of the country were recognized as holders of the land in trust for the people and, thereby, the grantors of occupant's right. Sir Percy Girouard therefore urged that these cardinal principles should be given the force of law. Legislation which should embody them was, moreover, of additional moment for two reasons. First, because the opening up of the country was bound to give rise to the danger of alienation occupancy rights creeping in and being incorporated into native custom, out of which there would automatically evolved a customary sanction for the mortgaging of land, the creation of a class of landlords, a wide field for the European speculator in land, and a general break up of the native system. Secondly, because the approach of the railways, the development of roads, the increasing demand for foodstuffs, and the all-round intensifying economic pressure were bound, even more automatically to originate, independently of the industry of the cultivator an incremental value in the land. Before that prospect was realized by the natives and perhaps became under native law and custom the subject of private property (which would have meant the creation of vested interests difficult to displace), it was the obvious duty of Government, as trustee for the community, to step in and secure these expanding values for the future benefit of that community. But things move slowly in West Africa, and legislation of the kind referred to was novel—indeed, unique. West Africa's problems had never been thought out ahead before. Just as matters were ripening, Sir Percy Girouard was suddenly transferred to East Africa. But the Colonial Office was sympathetic, and there were men in Nigeria who, comprehending well the perils of leaving the land question unregulated, were determined to do their utmost to push the matter through.

#### A MOMENTOUS PROCLAMATION.

On January 1 of this year the most far-sounding measure of constructive statesmanship West Africa has ever known was put upon the Statute-book. "The Land and Native Rights Proclamation" consecrates the three main principles of native law and custom, first that the whole of the land, whether occupied or unoccupied, is "native land"; secondly, that the land is under the control and subject to the disposition of the Governor to be "held and administered by him for the use, need, and common benefit of the natives of Northern Nigeria"; and thirdly, that the Governor's power shall be exercised in accordance with "native laws and customs." For the rest, and without going into detail, the measure can be described as expressing the native system, and the natural developments of the

native system, in English. It is not, in Nigeria, an innovating measure, but a conservative measure; not an experiment, but a preservation of the *status quo*. It is not a measure of land nationalization, because land nationalization means State control of the land and all that is done upon it. What this measure does is to provide for the communalizing of the communal value of the land, leaving the occupier full control over the use of land and full benefit for his private enterprise upon it, with payment of rent to the community to which the land belongs instead of to a landlord. The individual's right to all that is due to individual work and expenditure, but not to the communal value, is secured. No freehold can creep in and no monopoly profit can be made out of the land. The "holding up" of land for speculative purposes is, in effect, penalized, while the man who is industrious is not made to pay more as the outcome of his enterprise. At the same time the basis is laid for a land revenue which, with the years, will be the chief source of income of the Government—the healthiest form of income, perhaps, for any Government. For the first time in the history of West Africa the art of governing the native on native lines has become consecrated in British legislation, and the pernicious tradition of applying the law of England to African land questions has been set aside. It is impossible to exaggerate the potentialities for good of such a departure from cruda, ignorant, and unscientific precedent. It will be the duty of the Colonial Office, to which the greatest credit is due for having sanctioned the Proclamation, to watch strictly that the principles laid down therein are not departed from in practice, and that, with certain modifications of method due to divergent and pre-existing conditions, these principles shall be applied in Southern Nigeria as well. That attempts to undermine the provisions and the spirit of the Northern Nigeria law will also may be unhesitatingly assumed.

## AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

The article which we reproduce below "The cultivation of the cabbage" we think, will be of great interest to some of our readers who make Gardening their hobby whilst with others it may serve to create the love for it. The principles of treatment given is applicable to most of the herbs that find place in the native kitchen. The presence of nitrifying bacteria in dung can be easily established. We had watched the effect of this manure in some native gardens on the Gambia the soil of which is similar to that of Lagos and can testify to the good results that were obtained. Gardening will prove a healthy diversion for those who find time hanging too heavily upon them and we therefore bring the following to their notice.

### THE CULTIVATION OF THE CABBAGE.

The cabbage crop in good hands is one of the most useful on the farm. It may be grown for sale or for feeding stock, but in either case we may take it that a good crop pays. There are two methods of planting cabbage; one is to drill the seed, the other is to prepare a seed bed on a small scale and to sow the seed by hand, covering the bed with netting to prevent its removal by birds. Sometimes the fly appears and carries off the crop, but this may usually be prevented by spraying with an emulsion of paraffin—a pint of the oil is mixed with two quarts of water in which one quart of soft soap has been

dissolved. A syringe is then used to churn the paraffin so that it mixes with the solution and converts it into an emulsion, which can then be diluted up to thirty quarts, when it can be used. In making a seed bed, and this applies to every kind of crop the soil selected should be rich, the cultivation be perfect, the tillth deep and fine, while it should have been abundantly manured with dung in the previous autumn. As the cabbages commence to grow they may be assisted by a dressing of nitrate of soda,† to which all plants with large leaves respond. A seed bed is preferable to ground which has been dug or trenched, so that the soil—which should be strong, for in this cabbage delight—may present a considerable surface from the top to the bottom of the trench into which the roots of the plant may find their way. If the ground is dug in the autumn, it may be left in ridges till the spring, when it may be dug again, raked down as level as it can be, and brought to a fine condition for the reception of the seed. Sowing should, if possible, be carried out when the soil is damp, or prior to a shower of rain. Seed may be sown in February for transplanting in the summer, and in April for autumn use, while if sown in October or November, it will be ready for transplanting in the very early spring. By adopting the method suggested, most varieties of cabbage can be grown throughout the year.

A sufficient number of plants may be grown on a seed bed to cover an acre of land from 1lb. of seed. A mistake, however, is too often made by sowing cabbage seed too thickly—the lines should be well apart and the seeds thinly sown, so that each plant obtains sufficient elbow room to enable it to grow with freedom. Thick sowing is followed by great waste and the growth of weaker plants, the majority of which will be unfit for transplanting. Where a field is drilled, the quantity of seed required will be from 5lb. to 6lb. per acre. In growing crops for market, no trouble should be regarded as too great, nor should expense be spared either in the provision of manure or cultivation. Good crops sometimes return large sums of money, while poor crops, which cost as much to grow, are certain to lose money where they are badly managed. The practice of the market gardener is to sow large quantities of dung in order to get his crop into the market at an early date; the soil is warmed by the decomposition of the dung, and in consequence the crop is ready earlier than the average cabbage crop grown upon the farm. Cabbages may be regarded as a fallow crop, enabling the farmer to clean his land with thoroughness and to grow a good crop of corn behind it.

I would point out for the benefit of all concerned with the cultivation of small plots of soil, such as market gardens and small holdings, that a hot summer is far more desirable than a wet one from every point of view. The sun is life to plants which are supplied with water sufficient for their needs, and it is this fact which accounts for the rapid and abundant growth in these countries in which both are freely supplied. I think it may be fairly claimed that during the recent drought no form of garden cultivation produced such great results as those which were cultivated upon what has been described as the French system.\*

\* The ordinary kerosine.

† The reader should follow weal season.

‡ Nitrate of Soda is ordinary Salt petre and can be purchased from our local shops. Ed. N. C.

## NATIVE HOUSE RULE ORDINANCE.

A MEMORIAL ADDRESSED TO THE HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY AND ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY.

TO THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

11th July, 1911.

SIR,—In a letter addressed to the Secretary of State on the 10th February last, the Committee of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society informed him that they proposed to defer further representations regarding the case of Eyttoyoh ("Jimmy Johnson"), about which correspondence had taken place, and the Native House Rule Ordinance in Southern Nigeria until inquiry had been made on the spot by the Organising Secretaries, the Rev. J. H. and Mrs. Harris. The Society has now received from Mr. Harris a full report of his visit to the Colony and of the operation of the Ordinance, and the Committee therefore beg leave again to approach you on the subject.

We are aware that "House" rule is said to be only a part of the native tribal system, under which the Head of a Head of a "House" is trustee for the tribe or community, and that the Ordinance of 1901 was intended to enforce the obligations of the Head as well as his rights. We were also glad to learn, from the answer in the House of Commons on the 19th February last, that the status of slavery is not recognised in Southern Nigeria, although we cannot find that it has ever been formally abolished in that Protectorate as it was in Northern Nigeria by the Proclamation of 1901.

But the information which the Society has received leads us to believe that the working of the Native House Rule Ordinance is accompanied by such undoubted features of slavery as the loss of personal liberty and the denial of freedom of contract, separation of families, restrictions on marriage, and forced labour through the medium of the chiefs, and we, therefore, cannot but feel confirmed in the opinion expressed in the Committee's letter of January 11th last—that the House Rule Ordinance is a revival of slavery.

Even should it be admitted that such a native custom as domestic slavery could be tolerated temporarily, with a view to abolishing it by gradual steps, we submit that to uphold and sanction it by British law runs entirely counter to the traditions of our country, and we cannot but believe that were public opinion here aware of the results to which it leads, the repeal of the Ordinance would be urgently demanded.

There are certain reforms which our Organising Secretary brought to the notice of Sir Walter Egerton, the Governor, when in Lagos, as being, in his opinion, imperatively necessary to remove the most objectionable results of the measure. These immediate reforms, which we venture to urge upon His Majesty's Government, are the following:—

(1.) That the words "or any other manner" should be deleted from the first section, limiting the claims of the head of a house to persons connected with him by birth and family ties. The additional words appear to open the door to transfers, which frequently take place on the death of the chief, whose "slaves" are divided along with his

other possession; they also admit of a form of peonage which ultimately develops into servitude.

- (2.) That freedom of contract should be extended to every adult without reference to third parties. A freer and more healthy current of labour would, we submit, be facilitated by encouraging individuals to enter into labour engagements for themselves.
- (3.) That the separation of domestic slave families, either on the death of the head of the house or any other occasion, should be rendered illegal.
- (4.) That provision should be made whereby a slave might obtain freedom by a payment either of money or labour; this custom of redemption is said to have obtained prior to the Ordinance, which has, in this respect, rendered the House system harsher than it was before.
- (5.) Further safeguards appear to be more desirable for liberty of marriage. It is not clear that a member of one house can contract a marriage with a member of another with the head's consent. This feature of the House Rule system was condemned by a Conference of bishops and clergy, held in Lagos in 1906, as giving rise to "domestic unhappiness" and "vicious living," and so causing injury to individual and public morality in the district.
- (6.) Lastly, the Committee feels very strongly that the machinery of Government should not be employed to force men and women back against their wills to the control of their masters, believing that this is entirely contrary to the spirit of the law against any British subject depriving a fugitive slave of his liberty. There is, we are told, abundant evidence that members of houses frequently make their escape across the boundary of the provinces where the Ordinance obtains into the Western Province or into Northern Nigeria, where they have been comparatively safe. Masters in the Eastern and Central Provinces have discovered that there is a possibility of their obtaining possession by charging runaways with larceny, and the fugitive is, therefore, often arrested on a warrant for stealing the canoe in which he made his escape or the clothes he is wearing, as well as for leaving his master.

The case of Eyttoyoh ("Jimmy Johnson"), about which this Society has been in communication with the Colonial Office, is one of many which illustrate the baleful operation of the House Rule Ordinance. Mr. Harris took the opportunity of being in Lagos to have an interview with this lad, whom he found to be in great fear of arrest, viewing with repugnance the possibility of being compelled (as he was unable to find the money which it was agreed that he should pay monthly to his master) to return to Chief Magbent. As the boy asserted that the master treated his slaves with great cruelty, Mr. Harris had the scar on his left arm and wrist examined by a medical man, who stated in a letter which is before us, that he believed them to have been inflicted by violence. As stated in my letter of the 11th January last, my Committee resolved to undertake the responsibility of guaranteeing the monthly payment above referred to, in the event of proceedings being taken against Eyttoyoh under the Ordinance and of Court directing that such payment should be made. This guarantee

the Committee confirms, in order that the boy may still enjoy his liberty. We were glad, however, to learn that the Governor does not approve of that agreement and does not anticipate that the payment will be required.

I am to ask your attention to the fact that cases arising out of this system are tried by native courts composed, almost entirely, of those interested in maintaining them, with the exception of the white official who presides, who seldom understands the native language. In such circumstances it is obviously very difficult for the slave to obtain justice.

My Committee, taking note of the statement in your letter of the 23rd January last, that an inquiry had been ordered into the working of the Ordinance, asks that immediate steps may be taken to introduce the reforms above indicated. I beg, further, respectfully to urge that the repeal of the measure may be taken into consideration without delay in order that it may be carried out as soon as possible. We would point out that the House Rule System would not be abolished by the repeal of the Ordinance, and that members of Houses would be free, if they wished, to remain with their masters. My Committee has good reason to believe that the House System seriously interferes with trade as the chiefs by means of the "trade tax," which they impose on members of Houses who obtain a little capital, acquire the savings of such young men as show enterprise, and thus development on the part of the natives is retarded and discouraged. Consequently we are advised that commerce would not suffer by the repeal of the Ordinance. Moreover, from information received by the Society, it would not lead to serious unrest, as the people are looking for the abolition of the measures, which give legal sanction to restrictions which, in many quarters, they have come deeply to resent.

I have, etc.,

TRAYNERS BUXTON,  
Secretary.

#### THE COLONIAL SECRETARY'S REPLY.

DOWNING STREET,

August 12th 1911.

SIR,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Harcourt to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 26th of June and the 11th of July, with regard to the operation of the Native House Rule Ordinance in Southern Nigeria.

2. In your letter of the 26th of June you refer to information which you have received that members of natives of Southern Nigeria are living in Fernando Po, and are deterred from returning to their homes by fear of the consequences under this Ordinance. Mr. Harcourt will be glad to make full enquiry into this matter; but before doing so he would be obliged if the Society would furnish him with as complete information as possible, apart from the case of Jabez Lloest, of which they have already given details, for communication to the Government of Southern Nigeria. He would be glad, also, to be informed whether the persons concerned or Mr. Harris have made any direct representations to that Government on the subject, and, if so, with what result. I am to add that the case of Jabez Lloest does not appear to have been previously brought to the notice of this Department.

3. In your second letter various general criticisms are put forward, together with suggestions for the amendment of the Ordinance. As the Society is aware Mr. Harcourt requested the Colonial Government some time ago to furnish him with a full report of the practical working of the House Rule system under the law in force. He knows that enquiries are being actively prosecuted by the local authorities, and he is taking steps to ensure that there will be no unnecessary delay in furnishing him with a final report. Until that report is received he feels that he cannot profitably consider any general suggestions such as the Society have been good enough to submit. These suggestions will be very carefully considered at the earliest opportunity; meanwhile there is one point on which Mr. Harcourt desires to remove all possibility of misapprehension. The House Rule system is not, as might be inferred from statements that have occasionally been made, in any sense a result of the Ordinance now under criticism. It was the basis of the social organisation of the country before the date of the Ordinance; it is still in force in districts to which the Ordinance does not apply; and, as observed in your letter of 11th July, it would remain if the Ordinance were repealed.

4. The system in its original form presented certain very undesirable features; and, to whatever criticisms the Ordinance in its operation at the present day may be exposed, it may at any rate be claimed for it and that it removed, as its promoters intended, the least desirable of these features. It rendered unlawful the former practice of recruiting households by the purchase of slaves; it abolished in the sight of the law the distinction of class by which a social grade of domestic slaves was recognised; and it set up a very important safeguard against oppression by requiring that all proceedings for the enforcement of the rights of the head of a house should be instituted before a European officer, instead of in the native courts, in which the influence of the ruling class was necessarily predominant.

5. Subject to the careful enquiry which His Majesty's Government will always be ready to institute as regards any individual case of hardship—and such cases can hardly be excluded under any system, however well it may be safeguarded—the question before the Secretary of State is to determine how far the traditional system of the country may with safety be further modified in the direction of individual liberty. To establish by law complete individual liberty in Eastern and Central Southern Nigeria would be to attempt a complete social revolution by process of law and would in existing circumstances only court failure and probably disaster. Mr. Harcourt will consider the whole question carefully and sympathetically under the best advice that he can obtain, and, to whatever decision he may come, he has no doubt that the Society will credit him with the desire to consult only the best interests of the native communities in complete accordance with those traditions which the Society desires to see upheld.

6. There remain two questions of fact on which the Society may be glad to receive information. First as regards the abolition of the legal status of slavery in Northern Nigeria, an express declaration was necessary in that Protectorate in view of the existence of fully constituted native courts administering Muslim law, under which, as the Society are no doubt aware, a slave has a recognised legal status involving certain

well-defined disabilities. In Southern Nigeria the conditions were different, but the Society may rest assured that any status of slavery formerly recognised there has been no less effectively abolished. The second point is with regard to proceedings under the Native House Rule Ordinance. The Society appear to be mistaken in supposing that it is left to the native authorities to deal with any case that may arise. Under Section 4 of the Ordinance all proceedings must be commenced in a District Commissioner's Court, and although the District Commissioner may in his discretion refer the matter to a Native Court, the case would even then, as such courts are now constituted, be heard before a European officer, on whom a very grave responsibility would rest if he acquiesced in a decision which he believed to be unjust.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) G. V. FIDDS.

### THE HOUSE RULE ORDINANCE IN PARLIAMENT.

The subject was brought forward in the House of Commons debate on the Colonial Office Vote, on July 20th, by Sir William Byles, a member of the Society's Committee, who quoted from Mr. Harris' letter on the subject, to show that if slavery did not exist in name in the Eastern and Central Provinces, natives were nevertheless subject to loss of personal liberty, denial of freedom of contract, and the break up and transfer of the units of a family to different owners. These conditions, Sir William Byles said, apparently arose from an ordinance introduced into the administration only ten years ago. By this sanction was given to a system as the result of which a trader who wanted native labour made his arrangements with the chief. These men must go where they are told, and must work at what wages, he determines and they are punished if they hire themselves to any other employer. He asked what the view of the Colonial Office was in regard to this native house system, and what is the trade tax which is imposed apparently upon thirty members of the population, who, perhaps are saving money for their own emancipation? He produced evidence from District Commissioners in that country who described the house system as one of slavery, and alleged that girls could be bought, and are bought and sold, with the sanction of the Government, into a state in which they are really and technically slaves. They were men who recognised as abominable the ordinance which they themselves have to administer and the decisions which they themselves are obliged to give. A young man going out from this country as a District Commissioner after a short experience wrote home: "People in England would be horrified if they knew the decisions which are given in these courts."

The Colonial Secretary, in his reply, referring to Sir William Byles' remarks, said that the native house system only applied to the Eastern province of Nigeria and was a legacy from the old protectorate that was taken over. It was introduced to abolish the difference between domestic slaves and members of the house, and to give the former the full rights of the latter; but at the same time it confirmed a certain tribal and chieftain authority which was still

necessary for local government there. It was a system which had worked fairly well, but it was not one which ought to be maintained. It was essentially temporary and transitional. The officer administering Southern Nigeria had been asked for a report on the subject. There had been a great deal of difference of opinion over the matter, and he thought he ought to wait for that report before he took any action in the matter.

### CRICKET.

A grand cricket match was played between the first Eleven of the Onitsha Club and Eleven Europeans residing at Onitsha at 3 p.m. of the 7th October.

The European team was Captained by R. D. N. Raikes Esq, Senior District Commissioner, Onitsha.

The 1st eleven of the Onitsha Club was captained by Mr. J. Knight.

There was improvement in the playing of the Onitsha Club, but their fielding was a bit weak.

Victory for the European Team by one run.

Mr. Raikes is to be congratulated for fixing up the fields and all other arrangements contributed to the success of the match.

COMMUNICATED.

#### EUROPEAN.

1	R. Raikes	Bowled Knight	2
2	Lt: Wilson	ct Williams Bowled	
		E. Williams	0
3	R. G. Miller	Run out	0
4	F. E. Wilson	Bowled Knight	0
5	Lt: Jackson	ct Tepowa Bld E.	
		Williams	18
6	Capt: Thompson	Bowled Knight	8
7	P. Holt	Bowled Knight	21
8	Dr. H. Ellis	ct Haastrop Bld E.	
		Williams	4
9	F. B. Smith	Bowled Gomez	9
10	F. L. Cobett	Bowled Knight	4
11	A. Robb	Not out	0
	Byes		3
	Legs byes		5
	Wide Balls		8
	No Balls		2
Total Score			<u>79</u>

#### 1st Eleven Onitsha Club.

1	E. Williams	Bowled Raikes	1
2	A. Tepowa	Bowled A. Robb	21
3	J. Knight capt:	Bowled Raikes	0
4	Cole	Bowled Capt:	
		Thompson	8
5	H. Williams	ct Lt: Wilson Bld	
		Raikes	0
6	A. Menson	Bowled Lt: Wilson	6
7	G. Haastrop	Bowled Raikes	3
8	S. Obidun	Not out	11
9	Alphonso Wright	Bowled Robb	11
10	Freeman	Bowled Raikes	1
11	S. Gomez	Bowled Lt: Wilson	5
	Byes		9
	Leg Byes		2
Total Score			<u>78</u>

Onitsha,  
7th October, 1911.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL NOTES.

BY OUR REPORTER

THURSDAY

The Opening Session of the Legislative Council today was most brilliant. His Excellency Sir Walter Egerton and the Officials were in Uniform and wore decorations.

All the Unofficial members save the Honourable L. Chadwick subscribed to the oath of Allegiance and took their seats some as Provisional and others as Extraordinary members. Several Annual Reports were laid on the table.

The Honourable J. R. U. Little asked the Colonial Secretary the following questions at today's session of Legislative Council:—

(i) "In view of the the serious losses sustained by some merchants through having their goods damaged in the Customs Warehouse by the recent flooding thereof, due to the floors of the Warehouse being below the level of the Street, will the Honourable Colonial Secretary state whether it is the intention of Government to compensate these merchants for their losses—if not, why?"

(ii) "Considering the very limited storage accommodation at present available for the storage of kerosene, can the Honourable Colonial Secretary inform this Council when that Government propose to erect the new Kerosene Magazine at Apapa?"

(iii) Will the Honourable Colonial Secretary state whether it is the intention of the Government to fill up that portion of the Lagoon lying between the Custom House Wharf and the shore; if so, when? Also whether an indication can be given as to the probable date upon which the ralling-in of the Custom House Wharfs will be completed?"

On motion of the Honourable the Acting Financial Commissioner Council approved the expenditure of the sum of £42,638 under various Heads

7 Motions appeared under the name of the Colonial Secretary one only of which was postponed.

The following appeared under the name of the Hon: Kitoyi Ajasa:—

"In view of the growing importance of the Colony of Southern Nigeria and its increasing revenue this Council do petition the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies to lay before His Most Gracious Majesty the King the humble request that it may please him to raise it to the dignity of a first class colony."

It came out in the discussion that the object of the motion is only a proposal to allow officials in Southern Nigeria to wear first class uniforms.

With the passing through of 2 Bills and the first reading of one, Council was adjourned until 2 p.m. of tomorrow.

FRIDAY.

At today's session His Excellency Sir Walter Egerton gave an elaborate address on presenting the Budget for 1912 the text of which, I believe, will appear in this paper. The Speech which lasted about

50 minutes touched upon the development in the trade and Revenue of Southern Nigeria, the increase in the population of Lagos, the High price of food, the Liqueur Question agitation, Railway Extensions, the deaths of Lawani, the Alafin of Oyo; Apampa, the Bale of Ibadan and about the Attah of Idah.

The Revenue for 1912 is estimated at £1,942,000 "practically the same sum as that realized in 1910." The Ordinary expenditures are estimated at a little less than £1,700,000 and the Extraordinary at £316,000. A vote of £400 has been inserted as a subsidy to the White Cap Chiefs. His Excellency closed with the following touching remarks:—

"The approaching completion of the new Government Offices, which have been in course of erection since 1906, and the provision therein of a Council Chamber worthy of the importance of this Colony will make this the last occasion on which the Estimates will be presented to you in this building and, as this is also probably the last occasion on which I shall have the privilege of laying before you the annual budget. I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the Members of this Council for the consideration and assistance I have received from all its Members, official and un-official, during the long period I have been privileged to preside over its deliberations. I cannot do more than express my hope that future years may bring forth the improvement in the general condition of the varied population of Southern Nigeria, equal development in its trade and equal progress in other directions as that I have witnessed since my arrival early in 1904."

The 1912 Supply Bill was left in Committee Stage after the second reading when a Sub-committee was appointed to report on the Budget. The destruction of Mosquitoes (Amendment) Bill was passed through the third reading. Other Bills were left in Committee Stage.

Council adjourned until 3 p.m. of Tuesday the 31st instant.

*Continued from page 2*

tion of the Building Regulation for the Sanitary District of Lagos. The natives themselves are now in a position to see what you have been pleading against in their behalf. One of the most to them objectionable clause is that which provides that all buildings must be 12 feet removed from the centre of the road. There are a good many streets in Lagos which are no more than 12 feet wide. It means that people living in such quarters will lose as much as 6 feet when they have to put up a new house. In view of the enhanced value of land this will be a great loss to owners. With this provision and  $\frac{1}{2}$ th the area left by law, small land owners are practically rendered homeless.

Our rulers are making an England of this place. They ought to know that conditions which obtain there do not obtain here. In England there are narrow streets where it is impossible for any street to be opened. Downing Street is one of these. If it is difficult to effect this in England where large areas are owned by individuals how much more will the hardship be heavy where there is no such consideration. It is like a rich flock owner depriving his poor neighbour of his ewe lamb.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I am Sir,

Yours truly,

OMO EKO.

BRITISH  
9 OCT 1912

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The Branch Boat will leave the Customs Wharf at 7.30 a.m.

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