



The obelisk of King Thothmes III at Karnak

AFRICAN GLORY

*The Story of Vanished
Negro Civilizations*

BY

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*DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY MOTHER*

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PREFACE

THE present study is an attempt to present certain aspects of Negro history; and as Africa is today generally regarded as the home of the Negro, the present study has taken on, in some respects at least, the character of African history. To attempt a presentation of Negro history, or indeed of African history, in so small a volume is to undertake an impossible task, yet it is a task that must be attempted.

Mr Thomas Hodgkin, former Secretary to the Oxford University Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies and a Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, writing in *The Highway* of February 1952, had this to say about Africa:

It is no doubt flattering to our vanity to imagine that the peoples of Africa were "primitive" and "barbarous" before the penetration of the Europeans, and that it is we who have "civilized" them. But it is a theory that lacks historical foundation. The Empire of Ghana flourished in what is now French West Africa during the dark ages of Western Europe. By the fifteenth century there was a university at Timbuktu. The Ashantis of the Gold Coast and the Yorubas of Nigeria possessed highly organized and complex civilizations long before their territories were brought under British political and military control. The thesis that Africa is what Western European missionaries, traders, technicians and administrators have made it is comforting (to Western Europeans) but invalid. The eruption of Western European colonizers into Africa—with all the effects of their religion and their schools, their gin and their guns, their cotton goods and their systems of administration—is only an event, though a very important event, in the history of the African peoples.

If, therefore, we wish to understand the national movements that have emerged in Africa—and have reached their most mature and advanced stage in West Africa—we have to begin by trying to rid our minds of the European preconceptions that influence our thinking on this subject. This is not easy, since most of the available material on African affairs is presented from a European standpoint—either by imperial historians (who are interested in the record of European penetration into Africa), or by colonial administrators (who are interested in the pattern of institutions imposed by European governments upon African societies), or by anthropologists (who are often, though not always, mainly interested in the forms of social organization surviving in the simplest African communities, considered in isolation from political

developments in the world around them). We shall probably have to wait a little while for the real history of Africa to be written by African scholars for an African reading public.¹

I do not pretend to be one of those African scholars who will one day make the real history of Africa available for the whole world to read. My only desire is to fire the imagination of African scholars and historians, who alone can do full justice to the history of the continent of Africa.

Writing in a country where there are visible records of European penetration and where it is almost impossible to travel ten miles along the seashore without coming across the massive battlements of an old fort, one is constantly reminded of three centuries of slavery. Even a century and a half ago, "black ivory paid better than palm oil, kernels, or even gold, and the great barracoons in the forts were never empty of slaves brought down from the interior and waiting to be shipped away."²

Today some of the old forts have been whitewashed and are used as post offices, rest-houses, prisons, and police stations by the Gold Coast Government. So far as other forts are concerned

great trees and dense bushes grow in the dried-up moats; tall grass flourishes in the roofless quarters; the rusty old guns on the bastion have fallen away from the carriages, which can no longer bear the weight, and they lie about in helpless disorder covered with the masses of tangled vines and creepers, which seem to be trying to smother away from sight with the green curtain of Nature the ugly murderous works of forgotten generations.³

It was in this same slave coast that the Gold Coast peoples preserved their highly developed system of political organization. Sir Hugh Clifford, a former governor of the Gold Coast, writing in *Blackwood's Magazine* of January 1918, had this to say of the Gold Coast African:

Much the most notable achievement that can be placed to his credit is his invention, without the assistance of extraneous influence, of the democratic system of government and the State

¹ Thomas Hodgkin, "National Movements in West Africa," *The Highway*, February 1952, pp. 169-70.

² Hesketh J. Bell, in an address to the African Trade Section of the Incorporated Chamber of Commerce of Liverpool, on: "The History, Trade, Resources, and Present Condition of the Gold Coast Settlement," May 1, 1893.

³ Hesketh J. Bell, *idem*.

socialism, which are the basic principles upon which his tribal polity is founded. Recent innovations, as I have indicated, tend seriously to undermine this system ; and it is interesting to note that while European political theorists are apparently working their way back to a state of things closely resembling that which the Twi-speaking peoples long ago evolved for themselves, the latter are displaying an inclination to discard them as an immediate and inevitable accompaniment of their first real and solid advance toward a higher standard of civilization.

Whether the present political, social, and economic changes in the Gold Coast and the rest of Africa represent the African's "first real and solid advance toward a higher standard of civilization" can be judged from the pages that follow. Even though it has not been possible to attempt a systematic history of every corner of the African continent, the material selected has been such as not to leave out too many parts of it.

The idea of attempting a study of Negro history came to me nearly ten years ago when I was undertaking research work on West Africa. The final attempt at putting the collected material on paper arose from the need to present a systematic course on "Glimpses of Negro Past" to some members of the People's Educational Association in the Gold Coast.

I am indebted to my father and to my wife for their help and encouragement. I was also fortunate in having my manuscript read by several friends, and I am grateful for their suggestions and assistance.

J. C. deG-J.

Sekondi, June 1954



INTRODUCTION

THERE are two ways in which we can deal with the subject of African history. The first is to treat Africa as a whole and give an overall historical account without any special reference to racial types; the second is to regard Africa as the "Land of the Negroes" and to give a history of the Negro race.

The first method—that of treating Africa as a whole without special reference to race—may be criticized by those who regard the Egyptians, the Ethiopians, the Moors, and Berbers as belonging to groups which are foreign to the African continent, or at least entirely different from the Negro population. The second method—that of treating Africa as the land or home of the Negro race—can be criticized because the actual evolutionary area of the Negro species of *Homo sapiens* is unknown to us at present.

There have been several attempts to determine the original home of the Negro, and some of the theories which have arisen have been dictated by reasons other than scientific, factual, and objective. In trying to find out the original home of any one branch of the human family, we shall avoid many pitfalls if we recall the words of H. G. Wells:

We have to remember that human races can all inter-breed freely and that they separate, mingle and reunite as clouds do. Human races do not branch out like trees with branches that never come together again. It is a thing we need to bear constantly in mind, this remingling of races at any opportunity. It will save us from many cruel delusions and prejudices if we do so. People will use such a word as race in the loosest manner, and base the most preposterous generalization upon it. They will speak of a "British" race or of a "European" race. But nearly all the European nations are confused mixtures of brownish, dark-white and Mongolian elements.¹

With H. G. Wells's words to guide us, let us now try to discuss and examine some of the theories and ideas held about the original home of the Negro. The subject has assumed tremendous importance in recent years, and it

¹ H. G. Wells, *A Short History of the World* (Heinemann, 1927), pp. 49-50.

would be criminal negligence on the part of Africans not to examine the theories as they make their appearance in print. A whole section of South Africa's Witwatersrand University is devoted to researches into the origins and distribution of the Negro race. A number of theories described as being as "plentiful as flowers in spring" have made their appearance. The prejudices inherent in these theories have been endorsed and presented to the English-speaking world in general by Professor M. D. W. Jeffreys.

Professor Jeffreys' views have been published in the September 1951 issue of the *West African Review* under the title "The Negro Enigma." Professor Jeffreys writes:

The Negro in Africa is divided linguistically into two main groups. The Sudanic speaking Negroes of West Africa and the Bantu speaking Negroes of the Congo, East and South Africa. All are of one race and are remarkably uniform in appearance.

The Black Belt, anthropologically speaking, is that area on the earth's surface that comprises the dark-skinned races. Excluding the American negroes who were brought there by Europeans the black belt extends from Africa, via India, to Melanesia and Australia. In this great arc the position of the Negro is the enigma. At the two ends, or horns, are people who are Negroes, but in the centre there are none. The centre is occupied by a dark-skinned race, the Hindu, but he offers no difficulty. He belongs to the same race as the "European," namely the Caucasian, which is divided into the light-skinned Caucasians—the inhabitants of Europe—and the dark-skinned Caucasians, the inhabitants of North Africa, Asia Minor and India.

Professor Jeffreys continues :

How comes it then that east and west, India is flanked by Negroes? That is the puzzle: i.e. that there are Oceanic and African Negroes separated from each other by Arabia, India and Malaya? Let us view the problem from another angle. The Caucasian comes from an old human stock—a stock that is today called Modern Man. Modern Man goes back a long way in time. The Swanscombe skull found in Great Britain is dated 250,000 years and is our stock, not Negro. The skeletal remains dug up by the Leakeys in East Africa are us, not Negro. Boskop man, found in the Cape, is dated 50,000 years and falls into our group, not that of the Negro.

There are no Negro skulls of any antiquity—the oldest known is about 6000 B.C. The two Grimaldi skulls, one of a woman and the other of a boy, are not Negro skulls. They merely show some Negro features.

So the enigma deepens: all the evidence points to the Negro being a comparatively recent race and here is the old Caucasian race in a continuous stretch from Britain to India and yet on either side of India are Negroes.

Professor Jeffreys continues, and here comes the final rub:

Now in Africa there is continuous evidence, unlike anywhere else on the globe, of man's uninterrupted occupation of the earth for close on a million years. Africa is thus today accepted by many scientists as the cradle of the human species. Thus, in Africa from the Old Stone Age to modern times, Modern Man is the tool maker. Nowhere is the Negro, unlike the Bushman, associated with any of these stone-age cultures.

We have quoted enough of Professor Jeffreys to indicate that here you have the foundations of a *herrenvolk* theory worse than anything ever propagated by Hitler. You have also a theory which, correctly interpreted, makes the Negro a stranger, an interloper, and a newcomer in Africa. Professor Jeffreys' views, taken in conjunction with the views of Dr Lothrop Stoddard, an American, should make us think very seriously indeed. This is what Dr Stoddard has to say about the Negro:

From the first glance we see that, in the Negro, we are in the presence of a being differing profoundly not merely from the white man but also from those human types which we discovered in our surveys of the brown and yellow worlds. The black man is, indeed, sharply differentiated from the other branches of mankind. His outstanding quality is superabundant animal vitality. In this he easily surpasses all other races. To it he owes his intense emotionalism. To it, again, is due his extreme fecundity, the Negro being the quickest of breeders. This abounding vitality shows in many other ways, such as the Negro's ability to survive harsh conditions of slavery under which other races have soon succumbed. Lastly, in ethnic crossings, the Negro strikingly displays his prepotency, for black blood, once entering a human stock, seems never really bred out again.¹

Sir Harry H. Johnston, whose explorations and researches in Africa earned him the Hon ScD of Cambridge University, has something to say about the early-man specimens to which Professor Jeffreys refers. Sir Harry Johnston writes:

The successor and supplanter of *Homo primigenius* in Western Europe was a generalized type of *Homo sapiens*, represented by the

¹ L. Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Colour*, p. 90.

Galley-Hill man inhabiting south-east England, France, and central Europe some 150,000 years ago—to judge by the approximate age of the strata in which his earliest remains have been discovered. This man of the Thames estuary (Galley-Hill is in north Kent, near Dartford) resembled somewhat closely in skull-form and skeleton the Tasmanian aborigines and like them possessed considerable negroid affinities.¹

Elsewhere, Sir Harry H. Johnston, relying partly on the works of Sir Arthur Keith and W. L. H. Duckworth, writes as follows:

There are certain anatomical differences between the existing Negroes of Asia and Oceania on the one hand and the Negroes of modern Africa on the other. Whether the African Negro was the first human colonizer of Africa, or was preceded by more brutish or more generalized type, such as the Galley-Hill man, is not yet known to us. But from the little we possess in the way of fossil human remains and other evidence it seems probable that every region of Africa, even Algeria and Egypt, once possessed a Negro population. In Mauritania (Morocco to Tripolitania) these ancient Negroes were partly driven out by prehistoric Caucasian invaders and partly absorbed by inter-marriage, the mixture resulting in the darkened complexions of so many of the North African peoples. In Egypt a dwarfish type of Negro seems to have inhabited the Nile delta some 10,000 years ago; and big black Negroes formed the population of upper Nubia and Dongola as late as about 4,000 years ago.²

It is easy to see that Sir Harry H. Johnston's views, which are in part based on actual historical facts and in part on the examination of fossil human remains, do not correspond with the views of Professor Jeffreys.

Discoveries made by Dr Verneaux and a group of French scientists and archæologists in southern and western France and Italy show that from 30,000 to 40,000 years ago the population of these regions was negroid in features, and this group was later displaced by the Cro-Magnon (a type which might have been a cross between the Caucasian and the Mongolian). Sir Harry H. Johnston, commenting on the same theme, says:

A glance however at the populations of Italy, France, Spain, Wales, and southern Ireland shows the observant anthropologist that both in nigrescence and in facial features the ancient

¹ Sir Harry H. Johnston, *A History of the Colonization of Africa*, p. 2.

² *ibid.*, p. 5.

negroid strain has never been completely eliminated in these lands.¹

Those who postulate theories with the object of removing all Negro traces from Europe and from the Mediterranean do so with the avowed object of establishing as pseudo-scientifically as possible the alleged inherent and perpetual supremacy of the Nordic race. Yet of the dawn of civilization in the Mediterranean basin, in the valleys of the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Tigris, H. G. Wells records:

Three main regions and three main kinds of wandering and imperfectly settled people there were in those remote days of the first civilizations in Sumeria and early Egypt. Away in the forests of Europe were the blond Nordic peoples, hunters and herdsman, a lowly race. The primitive civilizations saw very little of this race before 1500 B.C.²

Those who would like to see white supremacy maintained at all costs, those who would like to introduce *herrenvolk* theories, would do well to read Sir Charles Darwin's recently published book entitled *The Next Million Years*. In this book Sir Charles (who is the grandson of the great Victorian scientist) repeatedly states that there is no scientific evidence of any difference of ability between the races. Sir Charles further states that the average skin-colour of the human race will get darker and, furthermore, that in economic and military power Africa and Asia will wrest the leadership from Europe. C. P. Snow, commenting on Sir Charles's findings and forecasts, writes:

It means, incidentally, that the racial discrimination which has been the least creditable feature of the period of White hegemony is not only wicked; it is worse than wicked, it is criminally foolish.³

Whatever the future may hold for the Negro is not of immediate importance to us, as we are here interested mainly in the Negro past.

It must be noted that we have not yet succeeded in finding out the original home or the evolutionary area of the Negro. At one time, India was held to be the original home of the Negro—a theory which conflicts sharply with that of

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 4.

² H. G. Wells, *A Short History of the World*, p. 59.

³ *John o' London's Weekly*.

Professor Jeffreys, since he claims the Indians as 100 per cent Caucasian in origin. Sir Harry H. Johnston, writing on the possibility of India being the original evolutionary area of the Negro, states:

There is a strong underlying negroid element in the mass of the Indian population, and in the southernmost part of the great peninsula there are forest tribes of dark skin and strikingly Negro physiognomy, with frizzled or woolly hair. There is a negroid element in the gentle Burmese; and in the Andaman Islands—geologically little more than a depressed peninsula of Further India—the dwarfish people are absolute Negroes of the Asiatic type. . . . In the more eastern among the Malay islands—especially in Buru, Jilolo, and Timor—the interior tribes are of obvious Negro stock. Still more marked is this in the case of New Guinea, and most of all in the Bismarck archipelago and northern Solomon Islands. In these last the resemblance of the natives to the average Negro of Africa is most striking, although the distance is something like 8,000 miles. Negro affinities extend east of the Solomon archipelago to Fiji and Hawaii, and south to New Caledonia, Tasmania and even New Zealand. On the other hand, Africa for many thousand years has been obviously the chief domain of the Negro.¹

We can see for ourselves that the distribution of the Negro race or negroid races is very wide indeed. The present distribution, coupled with the discovery of fossil human remains found in several parts of the world, including Europe, have led to the following questions being asked:

(i) Did the Negro originate in Europe (southern Europe), as the discoveries of Dr Verneau and others would seem to indicate?

(ii) Did the Negro originate in India, as the wide Asian distribution of negroid peoples would appear to endorse?

(iii) Did the Negro originate in North Africa and thence spread eastward to Persia, India, Malaysia, and Oceania? The presence in southern Persia of the remnants of an ancient negroid population—the people referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures as the Elamites—would seem to endorse some such theory as implied in this question.

(iv) Did the Negro originate in Central Africa in the

¹ Sir Harry H. Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

region of the Great Lakes, as appears to be the view of Professor Seligman?

Whatever the correct answer may be, Negro and negroid people have inhabited and continue to inhabit large areas of the earth's surface. In Africa, where the Negro is found completely at home, it has been noted that his distribution at one time covered Egypt, Morocco, Tripolitania, Tunisia, and Algeria. The appearance of other races in North Africa modified the predominantly negroid character of the population, but even in the modification, to repeat a phrase from Sir Harry H. Johnston, "both in nigrescence and in facial features the ancient negroid strain has never been completely eliminated in these lands."

If even the Egyptians have Negro blood in their veins, then it is safe to assume that a study of the history of any part of the African continent is also a study of Negro history.

In this book we can only hope to touch on some of the salient landmarks in the history of this vast continent. Its full size, in comparison with other continents, is best seen on a globe, where the other continents are deprived of the artificial extensions which Mercator's projection gives them. From north to south Africa has a length of some 5,000 miles and a width in its northern section of roughly 4,600 miles.

Professor Groves asserts that "it is the paradox of this vast continent that while sharing in the earliest history of the human race, it was yet not opened up until late in the nineteenth century."¹

Africa, with its estimated population of some 140 to 165 million, is sparsely populated in relation to its huge size. Several factors have contributed to this low density in population, but this aspect of our study will come up for full treatment when we are dealing with the slave trade. For the present we shall focus our attention on the northernmost section of the continent, more particularly on Egypt, where the earliest African civilization is known to have originated.

¹ C. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, p. 1.

1

THE BEGINNING OF NORTH AFRICAN HISTORY

“THE prehistoric native of Egypt, both in the old and the new Stone Ages, was an African,” and there is every reason for saying that the earliest settlers came from the south. Sir Ernest A. Wallis Budge is of opinion that

there are many things in the manners and customs and religions of the historic Egyptians, that is to say, of the workers on the land, that suggest that the original home of their prehistoric ancestors was a country in the neighbourhood of Uganda and Punt.¹

Excavation and archæological research show quite clearly that Egyptian graves of the new Stone Age (that is from 10000 to 4000 B.C.) are found beyond the cultivated lands on the very fringes of the desert. This illustrates the value set on the lands. The dead body was often wrapped in a reed mat, similar in appearance and form to the “bark cloth” of modern African peoples. Sometimes the body was wrapped in the skin of an unidentified animal of the gazelle family. At a later date, and indeed in historical times, we find the dead man being passed through a bull’s skin, just as is done to many dead African chiefs in several parts of tropical Africa.

The Egyptians, like most Africans, did not think that man’s existence ended with death, and we find their graves containing pots of food, flint knives, weapons, and other items which the dead might need in the next world.

The master of an Egyptian household slept on a rectangular bedstead of much the same shape as the *ankarib* which is still in common use everywhere in the Sudan. Other members of the family slept on mats, and the slaves often slept on the bare ground.

Sir Ernest A. Wallis Budge, who was at one time Keeper

¹ Sir Ernest A. Wallis Budge, *Egypt*, pp. 21-2.

of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, states:

There is no evidence that the Egyptians of the new Stone Age had invented the art of writing, but there is abundant proof that they could draw pictures of the symbols of their totems and sacred animals and objects. These symbols are found painted on pots at Nakadah and are supported on standards fixed in the prehistoric boats; many of them reappear in the names of gods in the historic period, and they form the oldest Egyptian hieroglyphs known. They are very important as showing that the earliest attempts to write in Egypt were made by native African Egyptians.¹

Round about this time, or during the period under review, there came into the Nile Valley from the south (some say from the direction of Abyssinia) the wonderful race of Dynastic Egyptians. There is no doubt that these Dynastic Egyptians had Negro blood in their veins, even though they appear to have been somewhat mixed. Exactly when they invaded Egypt from the south is not certain. Historians and Egyptologists give dates varying from 5869 to 3315 B.C. E. Meyer, the well-known Egyptologist and author of *Ägyptische Chronologie*, published in Berlin, 1906, claimed that he had ascertained the date as 3315 B.C. astronomically; but H. R. Hall, author of *Ancient History of the Near East*, on page 173 of the *Cambridge History*, Book I, thinks Meyer's date too late and proposes 3500 B.C. for the First Dynasty.

All authorities, however, agree that the Dynastic Egyptians invaded Egypt during or before the fourth millennium B.C. They populated and ruled the narrow valley of the Desert Nile as far south as the First Cataract. They also ruled and populated the broad delta to the shores of the Mediterranean.

To the south of the First Cataract were people of mixed origin—Egyptians, Hamites, and Negroes of the Nubian race. Beyond the Second Cataract the population of the Nile Valley, while Dynastic Egyptian rule lasted, was entirely Negro.

Before Dynastic rule began Egyptians were ruled by two independent kings. The first Dynastic ruler of Egypt was Narmer and not Menes, whose real name was Aha. Menes or Aha was the second ruler of the First Dynasty.

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 42.

By the end of the Third Dynasty, Egypt was very prosperous and her king was both god and man and was reputed to be the greatest, the richest, and the most powerful ruler in the world. It was left to Seneferu, the second ruler of the Fourth Dynasty, to increase the imperial might of Egypt and to build up the State funds to an unprecedented degree. Seneferu made raids into the gold-producing country of the Sudan and brought back large quantities of gold, 7,000 captives, and 200,000 oxen and goats. He established Egyptian might in Sinai and took complete possession of the whole of the great copper-producing district. His successor, Khufu, found too much gold in the State coffers and decided to spend money lavishly. Khufu (who is called Kheops by Herodotus) is famous as the builder of the largest of the three great Pyramids of Giza. The Pyramid which he built was nearly 480 feet high when finished, had a square base of nearly 760 feet on each side, covered an area of roughly fourteen acres, and contained 5,750 tons of stone.

Pepi I Merira, the third ruler of the Sixth Dynasty, had the reputation of being a great and warlike king; his reign was a long one, lasting fifty years. He traded with the Sudan and was on friendly terms with its chiefs. It was during his reign that an army of full-blooded Negroes from the Sudan co-operated with the Egyptian forces in a sea and land attack on Palestine. The combined operations were completely successful. During the Twelfth Dynasty the rulers of Egypt found it necessary to make war on Nubia and to conquer the country. The conquest was completed by Usertsen III, the fifth ruler of the Twelfth Dynasty, who was on the throne for thirty-eight years. He set up a stele at Samnah prohibiting any full-blooded Negro from passing that place. In the sixteenth year of his reign Usertsen III celebrated his victories over Nubia by erecting two huge granite stelæ with the following hieroglyphic inscription:

I am the king; [my] word is performed.

My hand performs what my mind conceives. . . . I attack my attacker. . . . The man who retreats is a vile coward; he who is defeated on his own land is no man. Thus is the Black. He falls down at a word of command, when attacked he runs away—when pursued he shows his back in flight. The Blacks have no courage, they are weak and timid, their hearts are contemptible.

I have seen them, I am not mistaken about them. I seized their women, I took their goods, I stopped up their wells, I slew their bulls, I reaped their crops, I burnt their houses. I am speaking the truth. . . . My son who maintains this boundary is indeed my son; he who allows it to be thrust back is no son of mine, and I never begot him. I have set up a statue of myself here, not only for your benefit, but also that ye should do battle for it.

Sir Ernest A. Wallis Budge states that "the brutal treatment of the Nubians by the king suggests that he had other than Egyptian blood in him."¹ This was indeed the case; for marriage with types outside the national boundaries, such a common feature with royal families, had so changed the blood of the dynastic family as to render it no longer Egyptian.

The Twelfth Dynasty came to an end after two more kings had followed Usertsen III on the throne of Egypt. The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Dynasties were apparently contemporaneous, and Egypt appears to have been divided in two, with two independent kings. It was during the Thirteenth Dynasty that Nehsira, a full-blooded Negro, was able to force his way on to the throne of Egypt. Some historians regard him as a usurper, but the fact remains that he became king of Egypt.

We are informed by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (*circa* 37-95) that during the reign of Timaus Egypt was invaded by men of ignoble birth who came from the eastern parts. These invaders burnt down Egyptian cities, demolished the temples of the gods, treated the Egyptians in a most barbarous manner, slew some of the people, and carried women and children away as slaves. These invaders, according to Sir Ernest A. Wallis Budge, were Aryans and not Arabs, as some writers are inclined to think. They founded the Fifteenth Dynasty, and their first king was Salatis.

The invaders were known as "Hyksos" or "Shepherd kings." One of the Egyptian princes nearer the Black Belt who at a later date dared to oppose the Hyksos received very rough handling. This Egyptian Prince, who was known as Seqenenra III, died while fighting the Hyksos, and his

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 94.



mummy, which is at present in Cairo, shows that his left cheek was laid open, his lower jawbone broken, his tongue bitten through, his skull fractured and the brain protruding, and that he had received a dagger-thrust above the eye. Ahmes, the third son of Seqenenra III, was finally responsible for the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt.

The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus states that many Jews left Egypt when the Hyksos were driven out, and he actually refers to the Book of Exodus. It is not unlikely that the Jews who had arrived with or after the Hyksos conquerors should have fled when a Pharaoh came "who knew not Joseph." It must, however, be pointed out that not all Egyptologists and historians accept Josephus's attempt to link the expulsion of the Hyksos with Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt. Josephus says that the Israelites numbered 600,000 men, not counting women and children. There is a great deal of controversy about Josephus's narrative, and we must pass the story over in silence.

Ahmes I became the first ruler of the Eighteenth Dynasty, which lasted from 1580 to 1355 B.C. He reigned for about twenty-five years, and we know that he carried his fight against the Hyksos right into Palestine. He besieged the city of Sharukhana (called Sharuhen in Joshua xix, 6), and captured it after six years.

Egypt has known many invaders and conquerors in historic times, but the Nubian invasion of that country should be of special interest to us. The Nubians (the Blacks whom the non-Egyptian Pharaoh Usertsen III despised) were yet to become masters of Egypt. In the twenty-first year of his reign, the Nubian king Piankhi, son of Kashta and Shepenupt (the date is given as 721 B.C.), moved northward with his Nubian army. He captured Thebes and Memphis. In that same year Piankhi became the undisputed master of Egypt. The stele which he erected to commemorate his victory is in the British Museum. On this massive granite pillar which the Nubian Piankhi erected at Napata was inscribed in hieroglyphs the account of his conquest of Egypt.

We read of one of Piankhi's governors in II Kings, xvii, 4. Hoshea, king of Israel, sent presents to So (or Shabaka

or Sibi). In the account one would mistake So for the king of Egypt. However, So (Shabaka) was not king but Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian army. In the inscriptions of Sargon king of Assyria (722-705 B.C.), the Nubian prince Shabaka (or So or Sibi) is definitely given his correct titles: that of the Turdan of the Pharaoh of Egypt, or the Commander-in-Chief of the army of the king of Egypt.

Shabaka became the first king of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, commonly known as the Nubian Dynasty, which lasted from 715 to 660 B.C. This Dynasty was followed by the conquest of Egypt first by the Assyrians, then the Saites, and then the Persians. These conquests covered the period 663-361 B.C.

This brings us to the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.), to the Egypt of the Ptolemies, and on to the Egypt of the Romans.

When Alexander of Macedon marched into Egypt in 332 B.C. he was hailed as a deliverer, a saviour, for the Egyptians hated their masters, the Persians, because of their cruelty. Alexander founded the maritime city of Alexandria, which became the largest seaport of the eastern Mediterranean and the chief market of the eastern world.

When Alexander the Great died, his vast Empire was divided up. Egypt fell to the lot of Ptolemy, favourite general of Alexander, who was to administer the country on behalf of Arrhidæus, the son of Philip II of Macedon. Arrhidæus's rule lasted six years and four months, and he was followed by Alexander II, son of Alexander the Great. Alexander II died in 311 B.C., and in 306 B.C. Ptolemy the general became king of Egypt as Ptolemy I, Soter. Ptolemy I, whose reign lasted twenty-one years, was the founder of the Museum and Library of Alexandria. Ptolemy II, Philadelphus (309-246 B.C.), built a lighthouse on Pharos, which was one of the "Seven Wonders of the World." It was during his reign that the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek and Manetho wrote his world-famous history of Egypt.

The last days of the Ptolemies were full of murders and intrigues among members of the royal family; for example, Ptolemy IX supplanted his brother Ptolemy VIII and

Ptolemy X murdered his wife Cleopatra Berenice. Ptolemy XII expelled his sister Cleopatra and caused his guardian Pompey to be murdered after the Battle of Pharsalia. Julius Cæsar reinstated Cleopatra in 47 B.C. Ptolemy XII found a watery grave, and in that same year Cæsar appointed Ptolemy XIII as co-regent with Cleopatra, who soon caused him to be murdered. Julius Cæsar then appointed as co-regent Ptolemy XIV, Cesarion, his son by Cleopatra. Cleopatra herself committed suicide at the same time as did her lover Antony, after Octavianus (later Augustus Cæsar) had defeated Antony at the Battle of Actium in 30 B.C. From that date Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire.

We have dealt at some length with Egypt, but it must be borne in mind that we have actually covered a period of 10,000 years. We must now take a quick glance at the rest of North Africa and move rapidly nearer our own times.

CARTHAGE AND AFTER

THE historical colonization of Africa by alien peoples begins with the exploits of the Phœnicians in Mauritania. The Dynastic Egyptians who came from the south were Africans or negroid peoples, and could therefore not be numbered among the alien colonizers of Africa.

The Phœnicians were Semitic people who, originally, appear to have resembled the Jews in race and language. They are said to have inhabited the south-western shores of the Persian Gulf and to have made their way up the River Euphrates and across the Syrian desert to the Mediterranean about 2,000 years before the birth of Christ.

These Phœnicians later became associated with such commercial cities as Tyre and Sidon. As if seeking for new markets, they set forth from their maritime cities and roamed the North African coast as far as the Straits of Gibraltar. In about 1100 B.C. they founded the city of Utica, which occupied a site at the mouth of the Majada River in north-east Tunisia. Other cities founded by the Phœnicians about this time were Lixus on the Moroccan coast and Cadiz in southern Spain.

In about 822 B.C. a party of Phœnicians from the city of Tyre, under the leadership of a princess called Elissar, sailed for Africa and founded Carthage (Tunisia) or Kart Hadas—the new town. Princess Elissar, daughter of the King of Tyre, and afterwards known as Dido (immortalized for us by Virgil), is said to have fled from her native city after her brother, on succeeding to the throne, murdered her husband for the sake of his wealth. Dido secretly took ship accompanied by a body of disaffected citizens who had revolted against the patricians.

Virgil tells the story of Æneas and his followers escaping from burning Troy and making their way to the coast of Africa. He tells of the meeting between Dido and Æneas and of the generosity, kindness, sympathy, and the affection

and understanding with which Dido treats him. But Dido falls madly in love with Æneas, who no doubt still has his mind focused on the destruction of all that he holds dear in this world, the destruction of his city, Troy. The time comes for Æneas to take his leave of Dido, and as he sails away, Dido orders a funeral pyre to be erected and then mounts the pyre to her end, the smoke towering into the skies as if to say a last farewell to Æneas.

Some historians accept the story as told by Virgil, others prefer the story that Dido, founder of Carthage, committed suicide in order to escape the attentions of the king of the Getulæ, who wished to marry her, and because of her vows to her late husband. Whether one accepts the first or the second story, it is true that Dido had an unnatural and tragic end.

St Augustine, the African Bishop, as a young man studying in Carthage, used to ask uneducated people if Æneas had ever visited Carthage, but no one seemed to know. When Augustine ventured to ask the professors the same question, these learned men replied in the negative. In his *Confessions*, Augustine comments on the tears he had shed over a tragedy which never took place, and held that these tears were shed because education was conducted on wrong lines.

The city of Carthage grew and became so important that, like Rome, it was associated with a new culture and a new civilization, and the language of its people, Punic, was to influence men's minds and thoughts even as its rival's language, Latin. But Rome and Carthage were not always rivals.

The Carthaginians and the Etruscans who founded Rome on the banks of the River Tiber were close allies—so close, in fact, that Aristotle asserts that the Etruscans and the Carthaginians constituted one city-State and that they were both out to destroy Greece. The first treaty of friendship between Carthage and the Rome of the Etruscans or the Tarquins is said to have been signed in 509 B.C., and nearly 200 years later—that is, in 343 B.C.—according to the Roman poet Livy, a Carthaginian embassy came to Rome. Since the Etruscan kings were expelled from Rome in 510 B.C., the treaty of 509 B.C. could only relate to the Etruscans' occupying Fort Veii, a few miles from Rome.

When in 475 B.C. the Etruscans were defeated in a naval battle by the Greeks of Syracuse at the same time as the Gauls invaded Italy from the north, Etruscan power vanished and Veii fell to the Romans or the Latins. The Eternal City now became the stronghold of the Latins, and Carthage lost an ally in Rome.

We have already noted that the Carthaginians were Phœnicians, and it was because of the latter-day pre-eminence of Carthage that it, like Rome, gives its name to a whole people. But the Phœnicians, or the Carthaginians, were not always a great and powerful people, and we find that nearly a century before their treaty of friendship with the Etruscans—that is, in 600 B.C.—Niku (Necho) II, the last but three of the native Egyptian Pharaohs, commissioned a captain of the Phœnicians (whose ships were stationed in the Gulf of Suez) to sail round the continent of Africa. According to Herodotus, this journey took three years.

The story of the journey which Hanno, the Carthaginian, made along the north-west and the west coasts of Africa in about 520 B.C., with a fleet of sixty ships and a human complement of 30,000, has been told often enough, and the account is so realistic and factual that there is no doubt about the journey having been made. We are interested in these early voyages along the west coast of Africa in so far as they establish the first links of that part of Africa with the early civilizations which were centred around the Mediterranean. In any case, whatever significance these early African voyages have for us will be discussed at length when we come to consider the history of West Africa.

For the present we must concentrate our attention on the Phœnicians, or Carthaginians, in North Africa, on the expulsion of the Etruscans from Rome, and on Rome becoming, not an ally, but an enemy, of Carthage. And what of the city of Carthage itself, around which our story is told?

Carthage, as we have already noted, was founded by the Phœnicians in about 822 B.C., or some seventy years before the founding of Rome by the Etruscans, in 753 B.C. Some historians are of the opinion that Rome and Carthage were founded round about the same time, since excavations carried out in the Roman forum have brought to light Etruscan tombs of a much earlier date than 753 B.C.

The great cities of Rome and Carthage were destined, within five centuries of their being founded, to be engaged in a life-and-death struggle. We cannot draw an accurate picture of Carthage at the beginning of the first Punic War. In fact, the Carthaginians are unfortunate in this, as in many other matters, since most of what we know about them has come down to us through their worst enemies, the Romans.

The city of Carthage round about 300 B.C. was the epitome of grandeur and pomp. It contained several imposing temples, a fortress, and many magnificent buildings. It was encircled by a triple line of fortifications which secured it against all comers. Immediately beneath the towering walls were rows of tall houses, six storeys high, on either side of three streets which led down to the harbours. To the north and again to the west of the city lay the great suburb called Megara. Megara was full of villas and lovely gardens, the property of the idle rich, the homes of prosperous Carthaginians.

If one included the suburbs as part of the city, its circumference was twenty-three miles. Its population numbered more than 70,000.

Carthage, like Rome, was a walled city with walls of immense thickness. Into these were built horseshoe-shaped stalls to accommodate 200 battle elephants, stables for 1,000 horses, magazines for war materials, and barracks for soldiers.

Carthage, also like Rome, possessed a forum. This was situated in the lower town near the two commercial ports of the city. There was also a circular war harbour called the Cothon. It had

trireme docks all round, radiating like spokes of a wheel, and before each dock a couple of tall pillars of the Ionic order stood, forming part of a colonnade that surrounded the whole harbour. In the centre of the island stood the Admiralty buildings and the Admiral's Palace, from which the sound of the trumpet used to convey his orders to the warships. . . . Opposite the island were the baths, on the foundations of which the Turkish Palace of Dormiche now stands. Not far off was an extensive pottery and beyond that one of the Punic cemeteries.¹

¹ Mrs Steuart Erskine, *The Vanished Cities of Northern Africa*, p. 45.

Carthage possessed libraries, baths, restaurants or public messes, and theatres. But enough has been said of the city of Carthage, though not enough of the manners, customs, religions, and occupations of the people. What of the inhabitants? The Carthaginians were said to be arrogant, valiant in battle, and prone to love wealth. It became a common saying in the ancient world that no questions were asked about how a fortune was made in Carthage.

Since Carthage was a city-State the citizens of Carthage could not, properly, be described as a nation. Moreover, the Carthaginian army was full of other African peoples who had been hired to fight the Punic Wars, but it remains true that the central core of the army was made up of Carthaginians, who were known as the Sacred Band.

What led to the conflict between the Sacred Band and the imperial might of Rome? To answer this question properly, we must recall that when Alexander the Great died in 323 B.C. the vast Empire which he had conquered was divided up among his generals and companions. One of his kinsmen, Pyrrhus, became King of Epirus, and for a time took on the role of conqueror. He defeated the Romans in 280 B.C. at the Battle of Heracles, and in the following year he again defeated the Romans at Ausculum. Pyrrhus then turned his attention to Sicily, but this new extension of Pyrrhus's military might was frowned on by the Carthaginians, whose city was the greatest in the then known world. Carthage therefore sent out a fleet either to persuade or force the Romans to continue their struggle against Pyrrhus. Pyrrhus was losing ground, but that was not the end of his worries, for reports soon reached him that the Gauls were raiding south into Illyria (modern Serbia and Albania) and into Macedonia and his own kingdom of Epirus. Pyrrhus concluded a hasty treaty with the Romans and retired swiftly from the Sicilian battlefield in 275 B.C. with these words: "How fair a battlefield we leave to the Romans and the Carthaginians."

The Romans were quick to extend their power to the Straits of Messina, but over on the Sicilian side of the Straits was the Greek city of Messina. This city, however, soon fell into the hands of a gang of pirates, and Carthage, which had always been a maritime power, had to remove this nuisance

which was so close to her own shores. The Carthaginians suppressed the pirates in 270 B.C. and stationed a garrison in the city of Messina. The pirates appealed to Rome, and the Romans, ever quick to realize their own interests, welcomed the invitation. In 264 B.C. the first Punic War began, with Rome and Carthage disputing the mastery of the world.

For two years Carthage was busy building up her armed forces. Troops were enlisted in Gaul, Spain, and Africa, where thousands of Numidian horsemen and Numidian elephant-riders were drafted into the Carthaginian army. The issue was soon joined, but both at Mylæ in 260 B.C. and at Ecnomus in 256 B.C. the Carthaginians were defeated. Again, fifteen years later, in 241 B.C., during the last naval action of the first Punic War, Carthage was defeated. Carthage sued for peace, and the resulting peace lasted twenty-two years. There had been twenty-three years of war, and now twenty-two years of peace, but only peace between Carthage and Rome, for both city-States had other battles to fight during those years.

In 218 B.C., under Hannibal, the Carthaginians, whose power in Spain extended to the Ebro, crossed the river, thus declaring war on Rome,¹ who had before committed acts of unprovoked aggression on Carthage by seizing the rebel Carthaginian possessions of Corsica and Sardinia.

The young Carthaginian general, by his remarkable exploits, earned the honour of being regarded as one of the most brilliant commanders in the whole of history. Hannibal defeated the Romans in battle after battle until Scipio the Elder, Africanus Major, famous for his charm, set himself to entice the African Numidian kings away from their Carthaginian alliance.

The Numidians, assisted by Rome, rose up against Carthage, and the threat that faced the city-State was indeed a serious one. Hannibal, when told that a Roman army had crossed over into Africa, had to make his way back home to defend his own city. In 202 B.C., at the Battle of Zama,

¹ By virtue of the agreement concluded between Hasdrubal (Hannibal's brother-in-law) and the Romans in 228 B.C. the Ebro became the boundary between the two spheres of influence. The crossing of the Ebro was therefore regarded by the Romans as a declaration of war.

under the very walls of the city, Hannibal was decisively defeated for the first time. Scipio Africanus had conquered Carthage, and Carthage sued for peace.

Hannibal was appointed dictator or sole ruler of Carthage after the defeat. The Carthaginians, who were known to crucify their own defeated generals, made the man who lost the Battle of Zama dictator! This, perhaps more than anything else, shows the high esteem in which Hannibal was held everywhere.

Hannibal the general, Hannibal the dictator, set about rebuilding the conquered city of Carthage. He reformed the fiscal system and succeeded in paying off the great subsidy owing to Rome. Later on he began to reorganize the army, a development which did not escape the notice of Rome. Remembering those sixteen years when she lived in fear of the unconquerable Carthaginian enemy at her gates, she at last protested and demanded that Hannibal should be given up. Hannibal was not given up—he was allowed to escape; but when at last it became clear that the Romans were ready to pursue him to the ends of the earth, Hannibal, once master of Spain and Italy, the dictator of Carthage, poisoned himself.

Hannibal was dead, but Carthage was still alive, and every day saw the resources of the great city being replenished. As Carthage rebuilt her strength, Rome became jealous and alarmed. Cato, who had visited Carthage more than once and had seen the growing splendour and might of this African city, had maintained for several years a parrot-like cry in the Roman Senate and ended every speech of his with the words *Delenda est Carthago*—"Carthage must be destroyed."

The fifty-three years of peace between the two cities was now to be ended.

Rome was at last to give expression to Cato's wishes, and in 149 B.C. she went to war with Carthage—the third and the last Punic War—upon the most shallow and artificial of grounds. Scipio Æmilius, the adopted son of the eldest son of the great Scipio—Scipio the Elder, Africanus Major—was given the task of carrying the third Punic War into Africa. The Carthaginians were unable to fight, more particularly since their sister Phœnician city of Utica had

gone over to the Romans and had given them every assistance in landing a huge army. When a brother opens the door to the murderer of his brother, then is the deed unspeakable. As Brutus's stab rendered Cæsar powerless to strike, so did the disaffection of Utica render the Carthaginians powerless to strike back at the enemy.

Carthage sent an embassy to the Roman general Scipio Æmilius declaring that she was willing to agree to any terms. Rome was given a hundred Carthaginian hostages; all instructions and orders given by the Romans were obeyed; but still the Roman Senate would not say what was to be the fate of Carthage. Next, the Romans demanded that all arms of every sort were to be delivered by the Carthaginians to the Roman headquarters. Soon long lines of wagons were jolting along the road between Carthage and Utica, until every engine of war, every catapult, and every cannon-ball had been delivered up to the Romans. What was to be the fate of Carthage? the Carthaginians asked; and still no reply was forthcoming.

Finally, the Carthaginian embassy was summoned before the Roman general and informed that Carthage was to be destroyed and the Carthaginians were to retire inland some fourteen miles from the sea.

The Carthaginian ambassadors were stunned into silence; they then begged for mercy, but the Roman general replied that he was under orders from the Roman Senate and that the Senate must be obeyed.

Carthage was waiting—the Carthage that had been founded by the Phœnicians but inhabited by peoples from all parts of North Africa and the Sudan; Carthage, the metropolis of the African continent, awaited her fate.

The delegation of thirty Carthaginians made its way back into Carthage and walked mournfully through the streets in a silence more eloquent than words. Some citizens, suspicious and dreading the news they were about to hear, in their desperation threw stones at the delegates, who nevertheless moved slowly and silently on to the Forum; and there, before the much-aggrieved citizens, the death sentence passed on the African metropolis by the Roman Senate was made known to the people.

Pandemonium reigned in Carthage: people were torn to

pieces; Italians in the city were dismembered; Carthage was ready for the end. Then, the white heat of anger over, they considered the defence of their beloved city. Their arms were with the Romans at Utica, but this did not deter the Carthaginians, who quickly shut the city gates and resolved to defend themselves to the last, in spite of the fact that there were no warships in the port, that the arsenals were all empty, and that all the horses and elephants had been surrendered to the Romans. Carthage rose to the occasion: the city was soon turned into a huge factory. Even the temples became workshops for making catapults, and women cut off their hair to be made into fibres to operate the catapults; men, women, and children worked night and day in shifts. For three years the Carthaginians fought back until Scipio secured an entrance by making an assault over a specially constructed dike.

As Scipio's forces poured into Carthage, the Carthaginians turned round for the last desperate stand. Scipio had entered by the mercantile port, but his advance to the market-place and into the streets of Carthage was disputed inch by inch. For six days and six nights the fight went on. The Romans had to storm the streets. They had to fight from house to house, and even on the roof-tops the battle was maintained to the bitter end.

The most determined of the defenders shut themselves up within the triple fortifications that surrounded the Byrsa, where they defended themselves until the Roman advance made it untenable. Then a band of suppliants came from the Temple of Eshmun, bearing rods, and asked permission for the remaining population to leave the city. The permission given, some fifty thousand men, women and children filed through the gates to find themselves adrift in the world.¹

The street-fighting, or massacre, was extraordinarily bloody, and when the citadel capitulated only about 50,000 of the Carthaginian population remained alive out of a quarter of a million. They were sold into slavery, and the city was burnt and then elaborately obliterated. The ground around the blackened ruins was ploughed and cultivated as a sort of ceremonial effacement.

But before the last curtain fell, some 900 Roman soldiers,

¹ Erskine, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

deserters, together with the most valiant Carthaginians, shut themselves up in the temple of Eshmun and sold their lives as dearly as they might.

And Hasdrubal, an unworthy member of the great Barcine family, gave himself up to Rome, while his heroic wife slew her children and then stabbed herself to escape the humiliation of a Roman triumph.¹

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 69.

3

AFRICA ROMANA

THE fact that the Romans were able to conquer and destroy Carthage by allying themselves with Numidian and Mauritanian kings and chiefs, and finally with the citizens of Carthage's sister Phœnician city Utica, has already been stressed.

The Numidian and Mauritanian kings and chiefs allied themselves to the Romans because they desired home rule or self-government, and for that reason they wanted the power of Carthage destroyed, as Carthaginian influence was already making itself felt in their internal and external affairs. But no sooner had the Numidian kings and chiefs assisted Rome to destroy Carthage than Rome picked a quarrel with them and annexed their country. The Mauritanian kings, who occupied part of modern Morocco and Algeria, had hoped to exercise self-determination and enjoy full self-government, but this was not to be. Within the hundred-odd years from the fall of Carthage in 146 B.C. to 42 B.C., Rome incorporated or absorbed into her Empire the regions equivalent to western Tripolitania, Tunisia, and all the coastal regions of Algeria and Morocco. Rome also annexed the old Greek colonies in Cyrenaica, and in 30 B.C. added the newly acquired territory of Egypt to the Cyrenaican possessions in order to form a Roman province.

North Africa, from Egypt to Morocco, was now in Roman hands. Roman explorers crossed the high Atlas Mountains to the south of Morocco and penetrated deep into the Sahara desert. The Roman general Suetonius Paulinus, who was afterward a conqueror of Britain, penetrated deep into the interior of Africa in A.D. 50, and he is credited with having reached some of the head-waters of streams flowing south into the Niger River. One of these streams which, after Paulinus's discoveries, became known to Roman geographers as the "Ger," is still known as "Gir" by the present-day inhabitants of these upper reaches of the Niger.

It must not be imagined that before Roman explorers began to move or penetrate into the interior of Africa there were no contacts between the Sudan and the northern parts of our present West Africa, on the one hand, and between North Africa, Egypt, and the Mediterranean world, on the other. In fact, reports about the Sudan and the interior of West Africa were reaching Carthage and Rome long before the destruction of Carthage. Products from the Sudan and West Africa were to be seen both in Carthage and in Rome and also in the principal cities of the Mediterranean world.

Sixty-nine years before Suetonius Paulinus's penetration into the upper reaches of the Niger in A.D. 50 we read of another Roman general named Septimus Flaccus undertaking a three months' march across the Sahara desert to reach the "blackman's country." That was in 19 B.C. We have no account of the results of Septimus Flaccus's expedition into West Africa, but we do have accounts of a similar journey undertaken by a Roman explorer by the name of Julius Maternus some years later, at the very beginning of the Christian era. Julius Maternus reached Lake Chad, Kanem, and Bornu in northern Nigeria, and he seems to have been impressed by the large number of rhinoceroses which he found in the Lake Chad area. Julius Maternus's march southward took four months, as compared with the three months taken by Septimus Flaccus.

One authority asserts:

These are the only recorded attempts of the Romans to reach the Sudan across the Sahara desert; but that intercourse had been going on for hundreds, if not thousands, of years between the Libyans and Hamites of Northern and North-Eastern Africa on the one hand, and the negroids and Negroes of the Lake Chad and Benue regions and of the whole Niger basin on the other, there can be little doubt, from a variety of evidence.¹

The same authority, Sir Harry H. Johnston, continues:

Roman beads are dug up in Hausaland and are obtained even from the graves of Ashanti chiefs; and some of these differ but little from Roman beads found in the mud of the Thames or amidst the ashes of Pompeii. Even ideas of Roman and Greek Christianity filtered through the Libyan and Sahara deserts and reached countries beyond the Niger.

¹ Sir Harry H. Johnston, *A History of the Colonization of Africa*, p. 48.

Before we can talk of later developments in Roman Africa, such as the establishment of Christianity, the Roman persecution of Christians and Jews, or the carrying of Christian and Jewish ideas of religion as far south as Borgu, to the west of the Lower Niger, we must for a time focus our attention on two great Romans, Julius Cæsar and Augustus Cæsar, and also on the ruins of Carthage.

A story is told of Julius Cæsar encamping near the ruins of Carthage, after he had been in Alexandria with Cleopatra. Cæsar was then virtually master of the world. Those months had been followed by the victories in Pontus and by the defeat of the remnants of Pompey's army commanded by Scipio and Cato at the Battle of Thapsus. Scipio had committed suicide. Juba, king of Numidia, had committed suicide in front of the gates of his own capital city, Zama, when he found those gates shut against him. Cato, who was holding out against Cæsar in treacherous Utica, had no possible chance of success. Cæsar was indeed master of the situation.

When he was encamped near the ruins of Carthage in 46 B.C., waiting for Cato in Utica to surrender, Julius Cæsar had a dream. He dreamt that he saw a great army of men and that he heard their bitter weeping. When he awoke, he scribbled words on his tablets that led to the rebuilding of the doomed city. I say "doomed" city because the ancients believed that there was a curse on the city of Carthage. Not long after Julius Cæsar had planned the rebuilding of the ruined city of Carthage, he lay dead in the Forum in Rome, with twenty-three gaping wounds in his sides. Cæsar, because he had dared to plan the rebuilding of a cursed city, had himself been destroyed, so at least some of the ancients thought. The curse was still working, they remarked under their breaths. Upon Cæsar Augustus, however, devolved the unpleasant duty of ignoring the curse and, in accordance with established religious convention, carrying out the dead Julius Cæsar's written instructions.

Carthage was rebuilt in the finest Roman architectural style. The builders worked under military discipline, and soon the temples, palaces, baths, theatres, high houses, and market-places sprang up on the old sites. A new Forum was erected, the villas and lovely gardens of the Carthaginian



suburb of Megara reappeared. Some of the stones and pillars of the destroyed city were used to rebuild the new city and Carthage rose again, greater and far more magnificent than ever before. Utica and Carthage were joined by a splendid road in the true Roman style and blockhouses were built at intervals along the route in order to protect the caravans against robbers. Other forts and cities soon made their appearance, and with the rebuilding of Carthage the prosperity of North Africa increased tremendously. The Carthage which the Romans had destroyed was to be supplied with fresh, clear water conveyed by a specially constructed aqueduct which brought the water from ninety miles away. Julius and Augustus Cæsar had in part atoned for the sins of the past.

Now let us say something of the life, manners, customs and occupations of the people of North Africa under the Romans, and of their natural surroundings.

There appears to have been a modification of the climate of North Africa since Roman times, though this point must be made very cautiously. The elephants which the Carthaginians caught and trained were at one time roaming the length and breadth of North Africa. Now they are virtually extinct in that area. Leopards, lions, and ostriches were very common in North Africa in Roman times; now no lions and leopards are to be found there.

The Romans are often blamed for the extermination of the elephant and indeed for the extermination of other wild animals of North Africa, and there is justice in the charge. The Roman Games involved the destruction of many wild beasts. The Emperor Augustus Cæsar tells us that 3,500 African animals were slain in the twenty-six Games which he gave to amuse the people of Rome. Pompey, at the height of his power, gave a show to the Roman populace in which he displayed no fewer than 600 lions, of which 315 were males. Julius Cæsar gave a similar show in which he exhibited 400 lions.

Elephants were killed by the Romans for their ivory. According to Pliny, the cartilage of an elephant's trunk was a super-special delicacy served from Roman kitchens. The destruction of animals therefore can be said to have been achieved by man rather than by geographical factors or

changes in the climatic conditions of North Africa. What of the vegetation?

North Africa was regarded by the ancients as the "granary of Rome." Under the Emperors it had to supply as a tax to the imperial exchequer a quantity of wheat sufficient to feed half the Roman plebeians, estimated at about 350,000. The size of the country does not give us a guide to its productivity, for a large country the size of North Africa could afford to feed half the plebeian population of Rome even if its land was not particularly fertile or productive. But North Africa during Roman times was noted for its cornfields and olive-groves.

Now what of the people who made up *Africa Romana*? To answer this question, we must get a clear idea of who the Romans were who ruled North Africa. The Romans were not a conquering race that subdued all the known world and yet succeeded in keeping its blood pure by some sort of racial segregation or *herrenvolk* theory. "Rome" was never the name of a race or stock or of a homogeneous people. The links that bound one Roman to another were not those of blood, race, colour, or even religion, but those of a common law and a common civilization. Thus Saul, later known as Paul, was a Roman citizen even though he was a Jew. Julius Agricola, the Governor of Britain, was a Gaul; the poet Virgil was a Gaul; Seneca, the political philosopher, was a Spaniard; the Emperors Trajan and Hadrian were both Spaniards; the Emperor Septimus Severus was an African, and the Emperor Caracalla was half African and half Syrian.

Now that we know something about the origin, antecedents, and race of some of those who controlled the Roman Empire from the very top, we can approach the study of the people of Roman Africa more objectively.

The population of Roman Africa was divided into two unequal parts: those who benefited by the Roman government and those who did not. The majority of the people, needless to say, belonged to the second group. At the top of the social scale were the great landlords, whose estates were managed for them by overseers; then came the magistrates, the soldiers, the merchants, and the town or city dwellers who had become Roman citizens.

These Roman citizens, sons of Africa but Romans just the same, frequented the schools and public libraries, and enjoyed all the very many and real blessings and advantages of Roman civic life. There was no difference whatsoever between them and the European-born Romans. These Romanized Africans lived in splendid villas, became generals, professors, and governors, and when Christianity came they were made bishops.

One English writer records:

At the height of Roman power in North Africa, the population of Italy was actually declining and there was never any vast number of Roman colonists in the racial sense of the word. The Romans knew nothing of those modern emotions which are to us so powerful and omnipresent that we can hardly imagine a civilization from which they should be absent; she had neither colour prejudice nor religious intolerance in the days of the Republic. The Christian martyrs of the early church suffered because they were felt to be a menace to the State, propagating doctrines subversive to good order and discipline: they were regarded as the Communists of their day. But highly cultivated Roman opinion considered all religions to be essentially the diverse manifestations of one great truth, and had no conception of that white heat of missionizing zeal which would put whole populations of unbelievers to the sword or send men to the scaffold and the fire for the sake of a disputed theological definition.

The same English writer continues:

All that part of the make-up of men's minds came later, as did the acute sense of differentiation of race and consequent antagonism which may be summed up in the phrase "colour bar."¹

It is clear that an African who was a Roman citizen could rise to become an emperor or a bishop, and contribute to the culture, the civilization, and the imperial power of Rome. What part, then, did Roman Africa play in the first few centuries of the Christian era? The masses of the African population in *Africa Romana* ploughed, tilled, and planted the lands; they quarried the stone and marble and built the houses, temples, the theatres, the bath-houses, and the roads. They dug trenches, trod the grapes, and produced the wine. They pressed the oil and did most of the manual work. They spoke Punic, the language of Carthage, and they lived for the most part in their own villages.

¹ Jane Soames, *The Coast of Barbary*, pp. 30-31.

The Romanized Africans, however, spoke Latin, lived in the towns and cities and were at home in Carthage, in Rome, or in any other part of the Roman Empire. Their next-door neighbour could be a Jew, or a Spaniard, or an Italian.

Life in North Africa was not always peaceful, however, and in A.D. 115 we read of a rebellion in Cyrenaica. As a result of the suppression of this rebellion all the Jewish tribes in Cyrenaica fled southward in two waves. One wave went by way of Air and across the Bend of the Niger to the Senegal and Futa. In the Senegal and Futa this group of Jews was joined by another who had taken a more westerly direction by way of southern Morocco and the Mauritanian Adrar. There is perhaps no group of people in the western Sudan who have more Jewish blood in them than the pastoral Fulani of Futa, who, by mixing with the people on the shores of Lake Chad, passed on their Jewish blood to the areas around Kanem and Bornu several centuries later.

Soon after the rebellion in Cyrenaica in A.D. 115 there were certain important developments in North Africa. Christianity, which had already gained an African convert in the person of the Ethiopian mentioned in Acts viii, 26-40, was to make headway in Egypt and other parts of North Africa, notably in the new Carthage.

Christianity appears to have been introduced into North Africa sometime before A.D. 180, because on July 17 of that year there took place the trial and execution in Carthage of some of the first martyrs of the African Church. Twelve of them were executed on that day—seven men and five women. All twelve were Africans who enjoyed Roman citizenship. The leader of the party was a twenty-two-year-old African woman by the name of Perpetua. She was married and had a child.

These African Christians did not belong to Carthage, but came from Numidia. They were taken to Carthage in chains and there tried for their faith. Perpetua's brother, Saturninus, was among those executed and so was a slave-girl by the name of Felicitas, who gave birth to a child just before she died. If you go to the place where the new Carthage once stood, you will find still standing a chapel dedicated to St Perpetua, built with some of the pillars and stones from the Carthage of Hannibal's day.

At the time that the twelve African Christian martyrs died in A.D. 180 there were living two great African personages: Septimus Severus, who later became Emperor of Rome; and Tertullian, one of the greatest of Church leaders. We shall deal with Tertullian when we come to consider such other high African Church dignitaries as St Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, and St Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. For the present, however, we shall deal with a non-Christian African personage—Septimus Severus.

Septimus Severus was born at Leptis Magna, in what is now known as Tripolitania, in A.D. 146. He belonged to the class of Romanized Africans already mentioned, and he is said to have received a good education in his native province. He spoke Punic as his mother tongue and learned Latin later as a foreign language. It is recorded that his sister never learnt Latin, and directed her Roman household in the Punic language.

Septimus Severus, after his education was completed, adopted an official career and became a civil magistrate. Later he became a military commander, and this took him to Rome. He proved himself to be an able and popular military leader, and after the murder of Marcus Aurelius's worthless son Commodus, Septimus Severus, supported by the provincial legions, made good his claim to the imperial throne of Rome in A.D. 193.

One of the Roman governors tried to challenge Septimus Severus's claim to the imperial throne. This governor, Clodius Albinus, Governor of Britain, collected all the forces he could muster and crossed over to Gaul in A.D. 196, and in the following year met Septimus Severus in a great battle near Lyons in France. Clodius Albinus was defeated and killed.

Septimus Severus, now firmly established on the throne of the Roman Empire, at once sent a legate named Virius Lupus to take over the command in Britain. Virius Lupus was faced with a very difficult task because Clodius Albinus, by taking all the available Roman forces with him to Gaul in his bid for the imperial throne, had left the Antonine Wall unprotected, and the Mæataë, one of the Scottish tribes, had broken through and overrun northern England. In the end Lupus was able to restore law and order and to

repair part of the Antonine Wall, but this could not save the situation.

According to the English historian, Collingwood, the Emperor Septimus Severus

was a man of intelligence and determination; and he made up his mind to cut the losses due to the mistaken forward policy of Antoninus Pius, and go back to the plan of Hadrian. The northern wall was abandoned forever; the southern was so thoroughly repaired and reorganized, that later historians sometimes credited Severus with the building of it. From Wales, Chester, and York on the south, to the outposts lying far beyond Hadrian's Wall in the north, legionary fortresses and auxiliary forts were rebuilt, sometimes with alterations of design, increasing their strength—narrower and more defensible gates and new platforms for artillery—and the successors of Severus carried on the work he had begun, until the defences of Britain were in a thorough state of repair and efficiency.¹

Septimus Severus was a man of an unusually forceful personality. This is easily seen from the numerous extant reproductions of his features. The triumphal arch erected to commemorate one of his eastern campaigns still stands in Rome. Recent excavations carried out by Italians in Septimus Severus's African home town, Leptis Magna, revealed the magnificent monuments with which he endowed his native city.

All historians are agreed that the Emperor Septimus Severus retained the imprint of his African birth and education all his life. He was bilingual, and so were all his compatriots. When Severus was Emperor, his sister came to see him in Rome. He quickly packed her off home again because she made herself ridiculous at Court by her absolute ignorance of the Latin language. Septimus Severus himself, though he grew to like Latin literature and became Emperor of Rome, retained all the habits acquired in his youth, and it is recorded that throughout his life he never lost his taste for African cooking, and that special foodstuffs, including fruits and vegetables, had to be brought from Africa to Europe to supply his table.

During the period of Septimus Severus's reign—A.D. 193 to 211—African interests and affairs received special atten-

¹ R. G. Collingwood, *Roman Britain*, p. 38.

tion. Septimus is said to have been responsible for camel-breeding in Africa. Many people imagine today that the camel is indigenous to Africa, but this is not the case. It was the good sense of an African Emperor, who recognized the value of that animal to the inhabitants of the sandy waste of that continent, which made it possible for the camel to be so common there today.

Septimus Severus saw to it that the Prætorian Guard was reorganized and the higher posts filled by promotion from all the legions on service. He was thus able to do away with the undesirable practice of filling the posts only with officers actually stationed in Italy.

Under Septimus Severus both the civil and military administration of the Empire took on a more military character, and retired army officers were often given jobs formerly done by civilians. Septimus Severus owed his rise to the army, and he never let the army down.

An English historian writes:

It is of peculiar interest to remember that this amazing career terminated in Great Britain. Faithful to his life-long preoccupation with military matters, Septimus Severus spent the last three years of his reign in Britain reorganizing and strengthening the defences of its northern frontier. He was accompanied by his son, Caracalla, who succeeded him, and it is said that so long a sojourn in one of the most distant and barbarous of the provinces was in part due to an attempt to keep that son away from the deleterious and corrupting influence of the Court.¹

In Britain, Septimus was not content with a purely defensive policy. While engaged in strengthening and partly rebuilding the Hadrian Wall, he made repeated attacks on the Scottish tribes. The campaigns must be regarded as a display of military force, intended to convince the tribes of Scotland that the Romans did not wish to skulk behind their fortifications, but that they were prepared to give battle at any time.

Three years of active campaigning by an African unaccustomed to the climate of Britain was too much for his health and the Emperor Septimus Severus died in York on a cold day in February A.D. 211.

¹ Jane Soames, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

Was the British campaign worth while? This is what Collingwood, the authority on Roman Britain, has to say:

After the stormy history of the frontier in the second century, its complete calm in the third comes as a striking contrast. We hear of no attempts at invasion from the north. If there were any, they were unsuccessful. Hadrian's Wall, restored by Severus, gave Britain a century of peace.¹

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 39.

THE NORTH AFRICAN CHURCH

A HISTORIAN, commenting on the last days of the Roman Empire in Africa and elsewhere, writes:

Just as Gibbon started from a presumption which was in reality a prejudice and based all his work upon it, so today we all tend to emphasize those elements contributing to the death of Rome which march with our own preoccupations and appear to bear out the contemporary economic, social, religious, and racial theories which happen to appeal to us. There is, however, general agreement upon the fact that Rome was not murdered, but died of a mortal disease the symptoms of which were apparent long before the final crisis set in, and the African Emperor Septimus Severus was probably not far wrong in the palliative he adopted to stave off the evil day. His preoccupation with the efficiency of the army, quite apart from personal considerations, arose from the instinctive knowledge that without it all was lost.¹

There are some historians who believe that Rome fell because she threw her doors too wide open and that this permitted even Africans to become State and Church dignitaries. There is no need here to attempt a reply to this point of view.

Roman power weakened when the power and efficiency of the Roman army deteriorated. Various reasons have been given for the deterioration of the power of the army—some of which are economic, some social, and some religious.

The Roman army began to lose its efficiency and vitality a few decades after the death of the Emperor Septimus Severus. The downward phase in the power of imperial Rome is said to have begun with the state of monetary inflation which began in the middle of the third century, and which made it more and more expensive to bring in new recruits to the Roman army—fast becoming a long-service mercenary force.

Inflation, coupled with high prices, caused widespread

¹ Jane Soames, *The Coast of Barbary*, p. 47.

misery in the lower classes, the working classes, and peasant families. Taxes due to the imperial exchequer became more difficult to collect: there were attempts at evasion, and the collectors, who found their standard of living falling quickly as a result of high prices, either misappropriated some of the funds or became susceptible to bribery.

Money-lending became common, commerce declined, and finally a new force—a new religious force—was to take out of the body politic what little energy remained. This factor, which was perhaps as important as the military and economic factors already mentioned, was destined to change the world. During the reign of Augustus Cæsar an event took place which is commemorated daily, even by those who refuse to acknowledge its importance. I mean the birth of Christ.

The African Emperor Septimus Severus is said to have begun the persecution of the Christian Church in A.D. 193, but we read of the martyrdom of Felicitas and Perpetua happening as early as July 17, A.D. 180, thirteen years before he became Emperor.

It is true that in A.D. 202 Septimus Severus, fearing that the rapid growth of the African Church might prove inimical to imperial stability, issued an edict whereby fresh conversions to both Christianity and Judaism were forbidden. The edict was not intended to abolish the Christian religion, but merely to hold it in check; however, the enemies of Christianity made use of the edict to persecute the Church. It must be noted that the early Christians were expecting the second coming of Christ to take place any day, and because of this some of them went out of their way to court martyrdom. An Emperor of Rome could not have soldiers walking up to their commanding officers and handing in their swords with the words: "The carrying of a sword is incompatible with my religion." Any religion which teaches its followers not to bear arms in defence of the State will be persecuted in any country and in any age. Some of the early Christians refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the Emperor in certain matters. This could only be interpreted as an attempt to undermine the authority of the State.

As the years passed and generations went by without the second coming of Christ becoming a reality, the "doubting

Thomasess" and the more realistic among the Christians began to make their peace with the State; and the State in turn began to make use of the Church. However, the change of attitude took some time, and we must of necessity consider the history of the transitional phase.

We have already said something about the beginnings of the Christian Church in Carthage and in Numidia. We shall now say something briefly about the Church in Egypt.

It has already been stated that we do not know exactly how and when Christianity was first introduced into Africa; but we have noted the first record in the New Testament of an African being converted to Christianity. The African in question came from Meroe, a place on the Nile midway between Aswan and Khartoum. Meroe was the capital of a Sudanese kingdom which reached the zenith of its glory and power in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., or about the time of the Nubian Dynasty of Egypt and a few decades afterward. At the beginning of the Christian era this Sudanese kingdom, with its capital at Meroe, could still boast of a queen mother, whose official title was Candace.

Tradition has it that the Apostle Thomas passed through Egypt and the Red Sea on his way to India. We must not, however, set too much store by this tradition.

Eusebius of Cæsarea (c. A.D. 260-339) informs us that John Mark, the evangelist, was an active missionary in Egypt and first established churches in the city of Alexandria. It is not, however, until the time of the episcopate of Demetrius of Alexandria (A.D. 189-232) that the Church in Africa, with particular reference to Egypt, appears on the slate of history.

The Church was then fully established and had its own bishops. Demetrius of Alexandria is said to have appointed three more bishops for the Church in Africa—Pantænus, Clement, and Origen. His successor increased the number to twenty-three.

Pantænus became the founder of the world-famous Catechetical School of Alexandria, a centre of Christian scholarship without rival in the then Christian world. Clement and Origen in turn became the most distinguished heads of this world-famous theological institute.

It was an Egyptian by the name of Anthony who became

the father of the eremitic life—the life of a hermit. He was a young man of twenty when he heard the story of the rich young ruler. Anthony sold all his earthly possessions and retired into the Sahara desert. Many Christians followed his example, and we have it on record that a number of full-blooded Negroes from the regions further south joined Anthony's band of hermits.

It was left to another Egyptian Christian to be the founder of the monastic life. I refer to Pachomius, who established the first Christian monastery on an island in the Nile in the Upper Thebaid. Monastic life became very popular in Egypt and tended to undermine the military and economic life of the country; and in A.D. 365 we find a law of the Valens which decreed that all who left the cities of Egypt for the monastic life of the desert should be compelled either to return to discharge or perform their civic duties, or else to hand over their property to relatives who would be under obligation to perform those duties.

In the Emperor Valens' day the persecution of the African Church had ceased. The persecution of African Christians came to an end with the rise of Constantine as the undisputed master of Rome and the West in A.D. 312. The Church, once it was free from persecution, was soon to develop internal problems which we shall consider later. For the present we shall deal with some of the outstanding African Christians, and also with the factors which led Rome to alter her attitude to the Church, and in this connection we shall turn to Carthage and Numidia.

Professor C. P. Groves, former Professor of Missions in the Selly Oak Colleges in Birmingham, writes:

A certain Namphamo, claimed as the first martyr, also came from Numidia, the name in this case being Punic. As from this point the story of the Church in Africa unfolds before us, we find a devotion under persecution not excelled elsewhere, and a fervent fidelity to the faith expressed in Puritan ideals that gave Montanism a second home in Africa. The names of Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine add an imperishable lustre to the history of the African Church.¹

Professor Groves no doubt had also in mind the courage

¹ C. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, p. 59.

and fidelity of Perpetua, who ended her suffering by directing the weapon of an inexperienced gladiator against her own breast.

Yet another historian writes:

The three great names that bring honour to the African Church are Tertullian, the first of the Church writers who made Latin the language of Christianity; Cyprian, bishop and martyr; and Augustine, one of the most famous of the "Fathers of the Church."¹

Tertullian was born in Carthage about A.D. 155. He studied Latin, Greek, and rhetoric, and possibly completed his studies in Rome. Later he became head of a Montanist community in his own native city of Carthage.

Tertullian (a contemporary of the Emperor Septimus Severus) seems to have been impressed with the economic, social, religious, and cultural development of his country. It was through Africa that he could see the world, and we find him writing in his *De Anima*:

Surely a glance at the wide world shows that it is daily being more cultivated and better peopled than before. All places are now accessible, well known, open to commerce. Delightful farms have now blotted out every trace of the dreadful wastes; cultivated fields have overcome woods; flocks and herds have driven out wild beasts; sandy spots are sown; rocks are planted; bogs are drained. Large cities now occupy land hardly tenanted before by cottages. Islands are no longer dreaded; houses, people, civil rule, civilization, are everywhere.²

Here indeed was an African pleased with the progress of his country. Yet all this was 1,700 years ago. Tertullian died about A.D. 222, and at that date the African Church had some seventy to ninety bishops.

Cyprian, the next African divine to command our attention, lived in the same century in which Tertullian died. Cyprian was forty-six years old when he experienced what he called his "heavenly birth." He belonged to a well-respected family in Carthage. He studied rhetoric and later became a professor of philosophy before he entered the Church. Inside the Church he rose to become Bishop of Carthage.

During Cyprian's day the persecution of the Church

¹ Mrs Stuart Erskine, *The Vanished Cities of Northern Africa*, p. 80.

² Tertullian, *De Anima*, XXX, quoted by Harnack in his *Mission and Expansion*, III, p. 275.



appears to have been gathering force. The multitudes which frequented the amphitheatres had begun to love to see Christians die. "Washed and saved!" they would cry derisively when the blood began to flow. Eventually these bloodthirsty people began to raise the cry "The Bishop to the lions!" The authorities decided to gratify the people's desire for Cyprian's blood, but he managed to escape.

Cyprian carried on his work from what we would call today "the underground," and in this way served the persecuted Church for several years. He explained his flight from certain death with the words, "The white rose of the crown of labour might be as fair as the red rose of martyrdom."

But the time came when Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, after all wore the red rose of martyrdom. He was to hear the authorities sentence him to death with the words: "It pleases that Thrascius Cyprian be beheaded with the sword." Cyprian's only reply was *Deo gratis*. He had escaped and laboured for the Church; now that his earthly labours were over, he was prepared and ready to face death, and in the words of one historian, "he died magnificently, giving twenty-five pieces of gold to the executioner."¹

By the time we come to the next great African divine, St Augustine, the persecution of African Christians, which reached its peak during the last two years of Diocletian's reign (A.D. 284-305), had ceased. Diocletian's abdication caused a temporary cessation in the persecutions, and shortly before his death in 313 we find the Emperor Galerius issuing an imperial edict granting toleration to the Christian Church.

When in A.D. 312 Constantine the Great became sole ruler of the Roman Empire of the West, he abandoned all divine pretensions and put Christian symbols on the shields and banners of his troops. In a few years Christianity had become firmly established as the official religion of the Roman Empire.

Forty years after Constantine had become sole Emperor of the Roman Empire of the West and adopted Christian symbols there was born in Africa one of the greatest men the Church has ever known. St Augustine was born at

¹ Mrs Stuart Erskine, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

Tagaste in the province of Numidia on November 15, A.D. 354. One historian describes him as by far the greatest figure of the last days of Roman rule in North Africa.

We have already noted how the decline of the imperial might of Rome was dictated by economic, social, and religious factors, and how usury, the decline in trade and commerce, and the crushing burden of taxation, told heavily on the masses; and how the rich, in order to escape taxation, retired from the cities to the country villas.

One historian, commenting on this exodus from the cities, writes:

The empire, essentially a federation of municipalities, tried unavailingly to prevent a movement which weakened and depopulated the cities; and at the same time delivered over the populace more and more completely into the hands of the great landlord, whose wealth depended upon their labour.

It was in such a world, torn by civil strife and threatened by barbarian invasion under the splendid but fading shadow of Rome, that St Augustine's genius flowered. The Church in Africa had produced great men before his day; the writings of Tertullian and St Cyprian both testify to its keen intellectual vitality; but neither achieved his stature—the last and noblest product of Roman African civilization. We learn a great deal about that civilization from the *Confessions*, the product of a mentality strikingly sympathetic to the European mind, though bearing the imprint of its African origin.¹

The same historian continues:

St Augustine is far more comprehensible to a European audience today than are contemporary North African authors—a fact which is in striking disproof of modern racial theories, for it is community of philosophy which makes for affinity far more than the accident of birth.

St Augustine's *Confessions* are said to belong to that small group of autobiographies of the very first class, comparable to Pepys and Jean Jacques Rousseau.

St Augustine's *Confessions* are the most familiar and intimate documents, whether he is approaching God, to whom they were made, or man, for whose benefit they were written down. He conceals nothing and is extremely modern in his point of view.²

¹ Jane Soames, *The Coast of Barbary*, p. 60.

² Mrs Steuart Erskine, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

From the *Confessions* we know a lot about St Augustine's life. His mother was St Monica, a pious woman with aristocratic prejudices; his father was a pagan, Patricius. Patricius adored his little boy and decided to give him the best possible education. He sent Augustine to Madauros, the old Numidian city of King Syphax and the birthplace of Apuleius, author of *The Golden Ass*. Here Augustine studied the classical Latin authors and found them congenial; he always afterward regarded Latin as his second language. Greek, however, he found difficult and to the end of his days he regarded it as a foreign language.

St Augustine tells us of his school days—how he prayed to God, with no little ardour, to be saved from a whipping at school, and that it was a prayer which in the eternal wisdom remained unanswered.

Augustine was sent to Carthage to complete his studies. In those days, according to Augustine's account, Carthage was a sink of iniquity. During the three years which he spent in that city, however, he tells us that he enjoyed life like any other citizen; he frequented the amphitheatre to see the bloody encounters of the gladiators, and he loved gambling. St Augustine was in later days to wonder why he never married, for he lived for fifteen years with a woman to whom he was deeply attached.

Augustine's early life, then, was perhaps in some ways like that of many an African of today. His mother, St Monica, was a very possessive woman, and though Augustine idolized her and owed his conversion largely to her example, she had no desire that her son should leave Africa. But at the age of twenty-eight Augustine was to go over to Milan and Rome by tricking his mother. At Milan, Augustine met St Ambrose, who has since been credited with having been responsible in part at least for his conversion.

St Monica soon followed her son to Italy. In Milan and in Rome she was proud to see him a Christian and a teacher of rhetoric; but on her way back to her native Africa, she died at Ostia, the port of Rome, and was buried there.

Following the death of his mother, Augustine returned to Africa with the sole object of founding a monastery and shutting himself away from the cares and temptations of the world. The Church was quick to recognize his rare gifts,

and the bishopric of Hippo was literally forced upon him. From now on we find him engaged in all the religious, social, and political conflicts of his time. He wrote several important treatises, the greatest being the *City of God* and the *Confessions*.

Let us now examine some of his writings. Professor George H. Sabine, in his book *A History of Political Theory*, has this to say:

The most important Christian thinker of the age now under discussion was Ambrose's great convert and pupil, St Augustine. His philosophy was only in a slight degree systematic, but his mind had encompassed almost all the learning of ancient times, and through him, to a very large extent, it was transmitted to the Middle Ages. His writings were a mine of ideas in which later writers, Catholic and Protestant, have dug. It is not necessary to repeat all the points upon which he was in substantial agreement with Christian thought in general and which have already been mentioned in this chapter. His most characteristic idea is the conception of a Christian commonwealth as the culmination of man's spiritual development. Through his authority this conception became an ineradicable part of Christian thought, extending not only through the Middle Ages but far down into modern times. Protestants no less than Roman Catholic thinkers were controlled by St Augustine's ideas upon this subject.

His great book, the *City of God*, was written to defend Christianity against the pagan charge that it was responsible for the decline of Roman power and particularly for having caused the sack of the city by Alaric in 410. Incidentally, however, he developed nearly all his philosophical ideas, including his theory of the significance and goal of human history by which he sought to place the history of Rome in its proper perspective. This involved a reinstatement, from the Christian point of view, of the ancient idea that man is a citizen of two cities, the city of his birth and the city of God . . . on the one side stands the earthly city, the society that is founded on the earthly, appetitive, and possessive impulses of the lower human nature; on the other stands the city of God, the society that is founded in the hope of heavenly peace and spiritual salvation. The first is the kingdom of Satan, beginning its history from the disobedience of the angels and embodying itself especially in the pagan empires of Assyria and Rome. The other is the kingdom of Christ, which embodied itself first in the Hebrew nation and later in the Church and the Christianized empire. History is the dramatic story of the struggle between these two societies and of the ultimate mastery which must fall to the city of God. Only in the Heavenly City is peace possible; only the spiritual kingdom is permanent. This,

then is St Augustine's interpretation of the fall of Rome; all merely earthly kingdoms must pass away, for earthly power is naturally mutable and unstable; it is built upon those aspects of human nature which necessarily issue in war and the greed of domination.

Elsewhere, Augustine asserts that unless a State is a community for ethical purposes and unless it is held together by moral ties it is nothing except "highway robbery on a large scale."

The death of St Augustine marked the beginnings of severe set-backs for the African Church, for the Vandals who had invaded Africa shortly before Augustine's death proved to be ruthless masters. In the next chapter we shall deal with the Vandal invasion and occupation of North Africa, but for the present it is worth recording that the Vandals occupied and ruled North Africa for a period of some one hundred and four years, after which they were conquered by the Byzantine Empire. With Byzantine rule in Africa, the African Church which had shrunk in size and importance under the Vandals, began to show new life and assume a fresh importance.

The ninety-four years of Byzantine rule in Africa is a convenient point to round off that section of our historical study which deals with the Church in Africa. Byzantine rule in Africa began in A.D. 533, but for convenience we shall go back 200 years, to the time when the Emperor Constantine put aside all divine pretensions and adopted Christian symbols—that is from A.D. 312.

With Constantine's coming to the imperial throne of Rome the persecution of the North African Church came to an end. But now that it was free from persecution the Church was fast developing an internal conflict. The dispute centred around the two African Church dignitaries, Arius and Athanasius, and concerned the relationship of Christ the Son to the Father. The storm-centre of the dispute was Alexandria, but its repercussions were to affect Christians outside Africa.

The dispute reached such a pitch of acrimony that in A.D. 325, the Emperor Constantine used his influence to have the first Œcumenical Council called, at Nicæa, to settle the controversy. The result was the Nicene Creed. (The original

is different from that used in the churches today.) In spite of the Nicene Creed, the controversy continued. The union between the divine and the human in Christ formed the pivot of the later stages of the controversy. Those who did not accept the Nicene Creed or the theory of "God the Son" were known as Arians, or the followers of the African divine, Arius. Those who accepted the Nicene Creed were, strictly speaking, the followers of Athanasius. The Empire supported the Creed, but, notwithstanding, Arianism spread even into central Europe, and the Arian controversy deepened.

The controversy continued for more than a century, and in 451 the Council of Chalcedon was convened by an imperial edict with the sole object of resolving the dispute once and for all. Some 600 Church dignitaries attended the Council, which decided on the following formula, namely that Christ was "perfect alike in His divinity and perfect in His humanity, alike truly God and truly man. . . . The same Christ in two natures unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably." The Council's decision was not accepted by the African Christians, and the Emperor had to send troops to Africa to maintain law and order. Those African Christians who endorsed the formula of the Council of Chalcedon were dubbed "Melkites" or "Cæsar's Christians."

We have seen the rise of the Christian Church in Egypt, in Carthage, and in other parts of North Africa. We have also noted the long controversy which split the Church in two. Religious history, whether we like it or not, tends to have a political bias in the long run, and in the circumstances there is no need to apologize for so much emphasis on religious issues.

So far as the North African Church was concerned, the opportunities for missionary work lay to the south.

Here along the Nile Valley, beyond the southern boundary of Upper Egypt, was the region of Nubia, with Abyssinia lying beyond to the south-east and impinging on the Red Sea coast. Nubia, known also as Ethiopia to the ancients, was not a single political unit in Byzantine times; the southern boundary of Egypt varied with political and military fortunes, but may be taken as passing just below the First Cataract, and including the

island of Philæ, the most famous centre in all Egypt in Roman times for the worship of Isis, and one of the last pagan strongholds to yield to Christianity.¹

Nubia lay directly to the south of Egypt, between the Second and the Fifth Cataracts. The people were of negroid stock like the Bantus of today (a mixture of Hamitic and Negro blood). The Blemmyes, a negroid people of more pronounced Hamitic origin, occupied the area directly to the east of Nubia in what is generally referred to as the Nubian desert. The Blemmyes from time to time invaded Upper Egypt, and when, in the middle of the third century A.D., they conquered the kingdom centred around Meroe, they became even more menacing to Egypt.

The Emperor Diocletian (284-305) withdrew the Roman legions from the regions south of the island of Philæ on the Nile, and brought full-blooded Negroes from the western desert, the Nobadæ, to settle there and to serve as a buffer State. It is interesting to note that the Nobadæ made common cause with the Blemmyes to attack Egypt. "In a treaty with the Emperor, by which the peace was secured for a century, a special clause made provision for the Nobadæ to visit the temple of Isis at Philæ."² The Negroes of Nobadæ were converted to Christianity during the reign of Justinian (A.D. 527-565), the Roman Emperor of the East who defeated the Vandals and brought the North African provinces back into the Roman Empire.

An old man by the name of Julian, a presbyter in attendance on the patriarch of Alexandria, Theodosius, is given the credit for having converted the Nobadæ. It is interesting to note that before Julian went out to preach the gospel to the Negroes of Nobadæ, he obtained the approval of the Empress Theodora, wife of Justinian. The Emperor was not opposed to the preaching of Christianity to the Nobadæ, but he did not care for Julian because Julian was a Monophysite, one of the group who were opposed to Cæsar's Christians. Justinian sent an embassy to try to forestall Julian, but Theodora ordered the embassy to be detained so that Julian could reach the Nobadæ first, and she threatened to behead the governor of Thebais if he refused to detain

¹ C. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, p. 47.

² *ibid.*, p. 49.

the Emperor's embassy. Needless to say the Empress had her way. A bishop of Nobadæ, one Longinus, was appointed in A.D. 568.

It will be remembered that the emperors and empresses of Rome began by persecuting the Church in Africa. We later found the persecutions giving place to toleration, and finally to the acceptance of Christianity as the official religion during the reign of Constantine. Two hundred years later, during the reign of Justinian and Theodora, we find a further development in the attitude of the State, which was now actually engaged in sponsoring missionary activity.

Professor Groves writes:

But more than this, the Church was recognized as a pillar of the State, so that to propagate the Christian faith was at the same time to consolidate the imperial power. Justinian pursued the policy in Africa of encouraging to become Christians all those chiefs and kings who sought his goodwill. He gave it as a definite instruction to his administrators that they should do all they could to incline the people to Christianity. In the case of native rulers, an investiture with robes of office and the bestowal of honorific titles went with the change.¹

Professor Groves continues:

Religious propaganda for imperial expansion was the policy. As Mesnage drily remarks, it was found more economical to make use of the Gospel than military power for the security of distant territories!

The quotation should be of interest to us, more particularly when we find modern negrophobes like Dr Stoddard urging Christianity upon Africans. Dr Stoddard writes:

Of course Christianity has made distinct progress in the Dark Continent. The natives of the South African Union are predominantly Christianized. In east-central Africa Christianity has also gained many converts, particularly in Uganda, while on the West African Guinea coast Christian missions have long been established and have generally succeeded in keeping Islam away from the seaboard.

Dr Stoddard continues significantly:

Certainly, all white men, whether professing Christians or not, should welcome the success of missionary efforts in Africa. The

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 68.

degrading fetishism and demonology which sum up the native pagan cults cannot stand, and all Negroes will some day be either Christians or Moslems. In so far as he is Christianized, the Negro's savage instincts will be restrained and he will be disposed to acquiesce in white tutelage. In so far as he is Islamized, the Negro's warlike propensities will be inflamed, and he will be used as the tool of Arab Pan-Islamism seeking to drive the white man from Africa and make the continent its very own.¹

It is interesting to note how the religious theme developed by Dr Stoddard links up with the political and economic factors. In the same chapter (he was writing in 1920) he has this to say about future trends in Africa:

Fortunately the white man has every reason for keeping a firm hold on Africa. Not only are its central tropics prime sources of raw materials and foodstuffs which white direction can alone develop, but to north and south the white man has struck deep roots into the soil. Both extremities of the continent are "white man's country" where strong white peoples should ultimately arise. Two of the chief white Powers, Britain and France, are pledged to the hilt in this racial task and will spare no effort to safeguard the heritage of their pioneering children. Brown influence in Africa is strong, but it is supreme only in the north-east and its line of communication with the Asiatic homeland runs over the narrow neck of Suez. Should stern necessity arise, the white world could hold Suez against Asiatic assault and crush brown resistance in Africa.²

What has history to teach us? We have seen the motives that led imperial Rome to encourage missionary work, and we have had the views of a modern American negrophobe who wishes to encourage missionary work. Let us now have the views of a French politician, the Voltairian Republican, Maurice Martin du Gard, as he set them down in 1931:

The gospel to the Blacks no longer contains any dangers. Apart from diseases and the hardships of the climate there is nothing any longer to threaten the missionaries. . . . From the mere fact of the continued presence of our flag it follows that the influence of Roman Catholicism must spread itself considerably. . . . And the native is more easily approached when his customs and language have become known, and particularly when he has made his submission! . . . The spiritual aims of the missions are in accord with our interests.

¹ Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Colour*, pp. 96-7.

² *ibid.*, pp. 102-3.

He continues:

Certain missionaries are still misguided in their desire to convert all the Blacks. This is not desirable, for too rapid an assimilation would cause an all-round outbreak of Catholicism of an unrecognizable kind, of a kind possibly detestable to French Roman Catholics! . . . For the present the teaching of the missions should not be more religious than social. It is by teaching the natives kindness, a true generosity of heart and renunciation that they will be won over the easiest.¹

After the views of Dr Stoddard and those of the French politician and Roman Catholic, Maurice Martin du Gard, let us have the views of a missionary—a Protestant missionary: Henri Junod. Henri Junod has the reputation of being an objective ethnographer, and this is what he writes:

I speak of resignation. It is necessary to the Blacks, for despite all that has been written on the fundamental axiom of the absolute equality of mankind, they are an inferior race, a race made to serve.²

He continues:

It would only be harmful to them to cover up this evident fact under a pile of sentimental eloquence. I once heard a black orator develop this theme at the Paris Geographical Society: "But," said he, "there is no less glory in serving well than in governing well, and Christ himself came on earth to teach us how to serve."

But the Protestant missionary himself has plenty more to say on this theme:

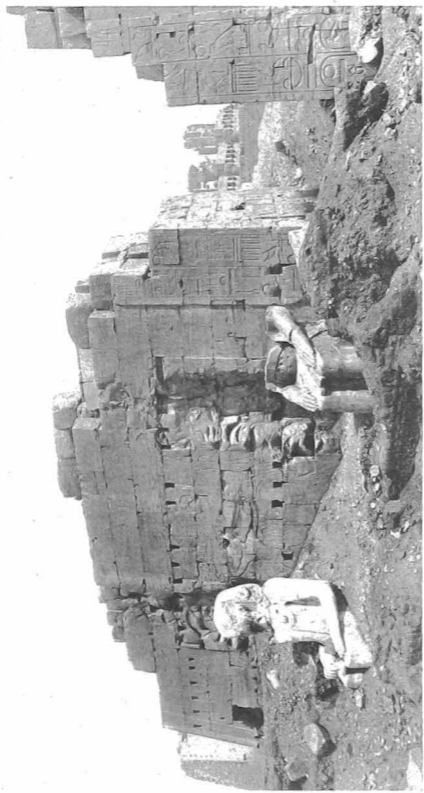
Christianity alone will make out of the Black a servant satisfied with his lot, for it alone can bring him to a free and voluntary submission to the plans of Divine Providence. . . . Everyone, I will even say the whole of humanity, is deeply concerned that the Negro should accept the position assigned to him by his physical and intellectual faculties. Without the arms of the natives, the gold mines of Johannesburg, which have built up the prosperity of South Africa, would cease to exist from one day to the next, for it is these arms which accomplish the entire manual labour in the extracting of the gold. Then again, when we consider the immense plains on the coast of Delagoa, the valleys of the Nkomati, the Limpopo and the Zambesi, how could these fertile

¹ Maurice Martin du Gard in *Courier d'Afrique*, quoted by Raymond Michelet in *Negro: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Cunard.

² Henri Junod, *Ba Ranga*, French edition, p. 482, quoted by Raymond Michelet.

territories be exploited if the Blacks refused their aid? In these tropical latitudes the European dies of fever, especially if he starts working the soil himself . . . and the white man's role is that of the organizer, the master, under whose watch must work the million arms of the native population.

There is your outspoken missionary of today. Compare his functions with the functions of the missionaries whom the Emperor Justinian sent out 1,400 years ago.



Memorial of Queen Hatshepsut at Karnak



SOME ANTIQUITIES OF ZIMBABWE IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA

- (1) Vulture's head; (2) Model of ruins; (3) Oxen; (4) Head of man;
 (5) Hunt (the hunter is shown as suffering from steatopygia); (6) Round massive tower

THE VANDALS IN AFRICA

WHEN Count Boniface, Roman Legate in Africa, sent an invitation to the Vandals to come over in order to assist him to govern the five provinces of North Africa, he opened up a new chapter in African history. Why did Count Boniface choose to betray Rome and to rebel against its imperial might? The explanation is that, having been summoned to Rome, he received reports before he set out that the Empress Placidia was resolved on his ruin; he therefore sought to protect himself as best he could, and in the end turned traitor.

Count Boniface's wife was a Vandal, and it was only natural that he should have sought help from that quarter. We do not know what other reasons Boniface had for inviting the Vandals to Africa, but the invitation was sent, in spite of the eloquent protests of St Augustine, Bishop of Hippo.

Who were the Vandals? They are said to have been a Germanic or Teutonic tribe who were apparently pushed out of their original home near the shores of the Baltic by other, more powerful, tribes. They seem to have moved southward via the upper Danube, through Gaul, and on into northern Spain, where they settled down to form a small nation. In A.D. 411 (when St Augustine was fifty-seven years old), they were granted official status as federated Roman subjects allied to the Empire and holding lands from it. The Vandals, however, were soon pushed out of their new home by another Teutonic group, the Visigoths. The Vandals now came to live in southern Spain, and were daily in danger of being pushed further south—perhaps into the sea.

Count Boniface's invitation therefore was very welcome, and the Vandals there and then took the serious decision to leave Spain forever. The whole community, numbering 80,000 men, women, and children, embarked with all their earthly possessions from the Spanish port of Tarifa in 429.

This tremendous invasion found Africa unprepared. Count Boniface realized his mistake when it was too late, and the irony of the situation was that he found no city in which to seek refuge except Augustine's city of Hippo. Boniface held out in Hippo for fourteen months, but he had to surrender the city to the Vandals in the end.

As the Vandals encircled the city, Augustine lay seriously ill. He had lived through three months of the siege before he fell victim to a fever. He had to give up his active duties and lie awaiting his end, but even then the people flocked to him. There were even those who came to ask him to heal the sick. In short, they demanded a miracle. To a young man who came to be healed, the dying Bishop of Hippo said, "My son, you can see in what state I am; if I had power over illness, I should begin by curing myself." As one historian has remarked, these were "typical words coming from the most sincere of mortals. In the end he slipped quietly away in the silence broken by the chanting of the psalms, and before the city was given up."¹ Thus died Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in 430, at the age of seventy-five. The city fell in 430 and with its fall began the rule of the Vandals in Africa.

Genseric, sometimes called Gaiseric, who had now become King of the Vandals, was to have his conquests recognized by Rome by the Convention of Hippo in 435. Genseric was small in stature, ugly, and lame. He was a silent man who believed in translating his thoughts into action. Rome was quick to acknowledge the extent of his power and to accept him as a vassal king ruling over certain provinces in *Africa Romana*, but with no powers over Carthage and the Pro-consular province. Genseric's son was a hostage in the hands of the Romans, but no sooner had he secured his son's return than, ignoring all promises, he attacked and captured Carthage in 439.

Genseric, Rex Vandalorum, had a long and eventful reign of forty-eight years. In the middle of his reign the Roman Empress Placidia died, and her son, Valentinian III, a weak man with a violent temper, killed his firmest supporter. Valentinian was soon murdered by Maximin, who compelled Valentinian's widow, the Empress

¹ Mrs Steuart Erskine, *The Vanished Cities of Northern Africa*, p. 83.

Eudoxia, to become his wife. Eudoxia sent for Genseric to avenge her husband's death, but, like Count Boniface before her, she was to live to regret having ever sent an invitation to the Vandals.

Valentinian III was murdered by Maximin on March 16, 455. Genseric duly arrived in Italy, and killed Maximin on June 12, three days later he entered Rome unopposed, and for fourteen days the Vandals sacked and pillaged the city. Genseric returned to Carthage in August of the same year, bringing with him the widowed Empress Eudoxia and her two daughters, the Princesses Eudoxia and Placidia. In addition to the human booty, Genseric brought with him from Rome many articles of great value, including the golden roof of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus and the sacred vessels from Solomon's Temple of Jerusalem, which had been brought to Rome by Titus.

Genseric married Princess Eudoxia to his eldest son. The former Empress Eudoxia and Princess Placidia, however, managed to escape from his Court, and eventually reached Europe.

We have seen how Genseric treated Rome and those who governed her. How did he treat the conquered Africans who once formed part of *Africa Romana*? He gave all the richest African nobles to be slaves to his sons and chief followers, and distributed all the best lands among the Vandals. These lands became known to history as Vandal lots. The African people were forced on to the poorest lands, and these were so heavily taxed that life became a burden.

The Vandals were hated by the Africans, and the African poet, Draconthus, was thrown into prison for describing his life under Vandal rule in these words:

The chains wound me; the tortures overwhelm me; poverty wastes me; I am covered with rags. People who knew me and strangers turn from me; my life is oozing away; my parents know me no longer; my many slaves have fled; my clients despise me.

It is said that the Vandals remained a distinct group; that they never merged into another society nor were transformed or modified by travel, but kept themselves always apart, and that eventually, through their very inability to adapt, they perished.

It has been said of them that

their rapacity knew no bounds, their cruelty was abnormal; they laid waste and never rebuilt. They found Africa flourishing and they left it desolate, with its great buildings thrown down, its people reduced to slavery, and the Church of Africa—so important in those early days of Christianity—practically non-existent.

How did Vandal rule in Africa come to an end? In 530, or just a hundred years after the Vandals first set foot in Africa, Gelimer, Genseric's great-grandson, became king. There was some dispute about the validity of the succession, and Justinian, who was then Emperor of the East (the Roman Empire was again divided into East and West after Constantine had unified the two halves), decided on the reconquest of the African provinces.

This task was entrusted to Belisarius, who sailed from Constantinople (modern Istanbul in Turkey) in 533. The Vandal forces under Gelimer were totally defeated, and Gelimer gave himself up.

We now enter upon the history of Africa under Byzantine rule, or, in other words, of the Byzantine Empire.

The Byzantine occupation of Africa, which lasted for ninety-four years, appears to have been of great benefit to the city of Carthage; but the majority of the African people seem to have fared nearly as badly under it as under Vandal rule. The official chronicler, Procopius, who accompanied the Byzantine General Belisarius, wrote:

Justinian, after the defeat of the Vandals, took no trouble to ensure the complete occupation of the country. He failed to realize that the best guarantee of authority resides in the goodwill of the subject, but made haste to recall his general, Belisarius, whom he unjustly suspected of aspiring to the Imperial Crown, while he himself, administering the African provinces from a distance, pillaged and sucked them dry at his pleasure. He sent agents to estimate the value of the soil, instituted new and heavy taxes, himself claimed all the best lands, forbade the Arians to practise their religion, and ruled the army very harshly, continually putting off the dispatch of reinforcements.

This policy led to troubles which were bound to end in disaster.¹

Procopius must be numbered among the most outspoken of Government-paid historians; and it is difficult to imagine

¹ Procopius, *History of the Wars*.

any Colonial Office historian of today writing as boldly about any happening in any part of the Colonial Empire, let alone daring to predict disaster, a prediction which turned out to be only too true.

The city of Carthage, as stated earlier, appears to have derived some benefits from Byzantine rule. A contemporary writer, a monk by the name of Salvianus or Salvian, describes Byzantine Carthage in these words:

Where are there more abundant treasures than with the Africans? Where can we find more prosperous commerce—shops better stocked? The prophet Ezekiel said of Tyre: "thou has filled thy treasury with gold and silver by the extent of thy commerce," but I say of Africa that her commerce enriched her so much that not only were her treasuries filled, but she seemed able to fill those of the whole universe. . . . Carthage, formerly the rival of Rome as regards power and warlike quality, was she not afterward her rival in splendour? and in imposing majesty? Carthage, the Rome of Africa, held in her bosom all the treasures of the State; here was the seat of government and of all the institutes of the State; here there were schools for the liberal arts, audiences for philosophers, chairs for professors of all languages and for every branch of law.

THE MOSLEM INVASION OF AFRICA

IT has been pointed out that the Emperors of the Roman Empire who had at first persecuted the Christian Church were in later years to become more tolerant and were even to adopt Christianity as the official religion. Later still, in Justinian's reign, the State was actively engaged in missionary work, and we find Julian receiving the Empress Theodora's permission to preach Christianity to the Negroes of Nobadæ.

Passing reference has been made to the views of certain European, white, scholars regarding the preaching of Christianity to the Blacks, and it has been shown, through the words of a French politician, that the interests of the State and the Church were one and the same. Maurice Martin du Gard's views could be held to express the views of the Byzantine Emperors who governed Africa after Justinian's general, Belisarius, defeated the Vandals in A.D. 533.

It has been stated that Julian was a presbyter in attendance on the Patriarch of Alexandria, Theodosius. What was the significance of the position of Patriarch of Alexandria? When we have answered this question we shall know something of the state of affairs in North Africa on the eve of the Arab invasion; we shall also know something of Byzantine rule in the late sixth and early seventh centuries A.D.

Egypt was governed from Alexandria, an Egyptian city which was more Greek than Egyptian in character. Even today the city is full of Greeks, and some people refer to it as Greek Alexandria: the city founded by Alexander the Great of Macedon.

Under Byzantine rule Alexandria was both the temporal and spiritual capital of Egypt. The Greek Orthodox Church controlled the city, and the Church was in turn controlled by the Emperor of the East—the Emperor of the Byzantine Empire or the eastern half of the Roman Empire.

The Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church in Egypt was usually appointed by the Emperor of Byzantium, just as the

Archbishop of Canterbury is today appointed by the Queen. The Patriarch of Alexandria was not only the head of the Church in Egypt, he was also the head of the State—the Prefect of Egypt, to give him his correct administrative title.

Under Byzantine rule the Patriarchs of Alexandria spent a great deal of their time and energy persecuting the non-Orthodox Christian Churches, such as the Monophysite or Jacobite Church, which had become the national Church of the Egyptians or the Copts, as contrasted with the people of Greek origin. The Coptic Church was a nationalist Church, and was the true expression of African nationalism.

It is worth noting that during the late sixth and early seventh centuries A.D. the Negroes of Nobadæ, the Negroes of Nubia, and the half Hamitic Blemmyes (the Fuzzywuzzies of Rudyard Kipling) were in complete control of Upper Egypt, and by religious ties and part racial affinities had close sympathetic links with the masses of Egypt.

In 616 the Persian armies under Chosroes II invaded Egypt and held it for ten years. Some history books give the date for the Persian conquest of Egypt as 619; but the conquest was actually completed in that year, the twenty-ninth of the reign of Chosroes II, King of Persia. The Persians drove the Abyssinians out of western Arabia, and even followed them up into eastern Abyssinia.

Byzantine and Persian forces had come into conflict, and the Persian forces had won the day; but that was by no means the whole story—the specific conflict was only an episode in a larger context, a context which affected even men's minds.

H. G. Wells writes:

In both Persia and Byzantium it was an age of intolerance. Both Empires were religious empires in a new way, in a way that greatly hampered the free activities of the human mind.

Of course the oldest empires in the world were religious empires, centering upon the worship of a god or a god-king. Alexander was treated as a divinity and the Cæsars were gods in so much as they had altars and temples devoted to them and the offering of incense was made a test of loyalty to the Roman State. But these older religions were essentially religions of act and fact. They did not invade the mind. If a man offered his sacrifice and bowed to the god, he was left not only to think but to say practically whatever he liked about the affair. But the new sort of

religions that had come into the world, and particularly Christianity, turned inward. These new faiths demanded not simple conformity but understanding belief. Naturally fierce controversy ensued upon the exact meaning of the things believed. These new religions were creed religions. The world was confronted with a new word, Orthodoxy, and with a stern resolve to keep not only acts but speech and private thought within the limits of a set teaching. For to hold a wrong opinion, much more to convey it to other people, was no longer regarded as an intellectual defect but a moral fault that might condemn a soul to everlasting destruction.¹

Some of the rulers of the world found in the new creed religions a means of using and controlling the wills of men. In the Roman Empire, Constantine the Great had made use of the Christian religion for precisely that reason, and in Persia, Ardashir I turned the ancient Persian religion of Zoroaster (or Zarathustra) into a State religion for exactly the same reason that led Constantine to adopt the Christian faith.

The two religions appeared to be mutually exclusive, and they stood out as being in direct conflict. All ideas were suspect, and founders of new faiths stood in danger of being exterminated. This was indeed the age of intolerance, the age which made scientific progress impossible, for "science demands before all things the free action of an untroubled mind."²

In the sixth century the champion of Christianity, the Emperor Justinian, had been pitted against Chosroes I, King of Persia and champion of the Zoroastrian religion. In the early seventh century the champions of the two opposing faiths were the Emperor Heraclius of Byzantium and Chosroes II of Persia, who appears to have had the upper hand. He captured Antioch, Damascus, and Jerusalem and his armies reached Chalcedon in Asia Minor. In 619 he was in full occupation of Egypt. But the Persian occupation was shortlived, for in 626 the Emperor Heraclius sent an army against the Persians and at the Battle of Nineveh in 627, the Persian army was routed and subsequently driven out of Egypt. There is no doubt that Chosroes II was ready to mend the broken fortunes of Persia, but in 628, a year

¹ H. G. Wells, *A Short History of the World*, pp. 180-1.

² *ibid.*, p. 182.

after Nineveh, he was deposed and murdered by his son, Kavadh, who immediately signed a peace treaty with the Byzantine Empire, since he felt that the policy of mutual destruction being followed by Byzantium and Persia was the quintessence of folly.

Byzantium and Persia had fought their last war. But few people as yet dreamt of the storm that was even then gathering in the deserts to put an end for ever to this aimless, chronic struggle.¹

The Emperor Heraclius was in Syria restoring order when a letter reached him. It was in Arabic, and had been delivered at the imperial outpost at Bostra, south of Damascus. It is held that it had to be interpreted to Heraclius, since Arabic then was an obscure Semitic-desert language. The letter was signed by someone who called himself "Mohammed the Prophet of God" and it demanded that the Emperor should acknowledge the One True God and to serve him.

A similar letter reached Kavadh, King of Persia, at Ctesiphon. We do not know what Heraclius did or said on receiving Mohammed's letter, but it is recorded that Kavadh was so annoyed that he tore it up and bade the messenger begone.

Another religion had appeared on the scene, and its founder was actually calling upon the two great rulers of the world to submit to it. Who was this Prophet Mohammed who was so bold as to demand the acceptance of his religion by two great rulers who had State religions of their own?

Mohammed was born in 571, six years after the death of the Emperor Justinian. Some hold that he was born in Mecca, though others believe that he may have been born in Medina.

Mohammed, or the Praiser, appears first in history as the young husband of the widow of a rich merchant in the city of Mecca. He was an Arab of the Quraish tribe of western Arabia, and was born to a poor but well-respected and influential family. When, later, marriage brought him money and leisure, he developed mystical leanings.

Mecca was at that time the centre of a pagan cult famous throughout Arabia. This cult centred upon the worship of a wonderful black stone (El Ka'aba)—the

¹ H. G. Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

remains of an immense meteorite. Side by side with the worship of this stone was the worship of a goddess named Allat. "Allat" was to become the origin of the name "Allah," applied by Mohammedans to the Supreme God. "Allah" acquired a masculine sense, although in its original form the word was feminine.

The period 571-632, the sixty-one years which marked the period in which the Prophet Mohammed lived, is of supreme importance to the history of Africa, and indeed to the history of the whole world. The history of Africa after Mohammed was entirely unlike anything that had gone before. North African history changed completely during the middle of the seventh century A.D. Those sixty-one years in which Mohammed lived are of cardinal importance to us even today, for Islam was born then, and the followers of the Moslem faith date the birth of their religion to the Hegira, the flight from Mecca, which took place in 622, ten years before the death of Mohammed. On that flight Mohammed was accompanied by his faithful friend and disciple, Abu Bekr.

It was probably in 611, when Mohammed was about forty years of age, that he began to develop prophetic characteristics similar to those of the Hebrew prophets some 1,200 years before him. Mohammed talked first to his wife about the One True God and later preached to his servants and close associates whom he gained as disciples.

Mohammed based his religion largely on the Jewish Scriptures, some Christian ideas, and one or two ideas from the Zoroastrian faith of Persia. He declared that he was the last chosen prophet of God, entrusted with the task of bringing the perfect religion to depraved humanity. He maintained that Abraham and Jesus Christ were his fore-runners and that it had been ordained by God that he should complete and perfect the revelation of God's will.

Mohammed was a man of sweet disposition, with a personal magnetism which could win over men's minds. He was something of a poet, and this enabled him to set down religious verses in rhyming couplets, a form which made it easier for his followers to commit them to memory. These religious verses, Mohammed asserted, had been communicated to him by an angel. He also claimed to have had a

“strange vision in which he was taken up through the heavens to God and instructed in his mission.”

In 623—that is, a year after the Hegira: the flight from Mecca—Mohammed attracted attention by establishing himself at the Palm Oasis of Yathrib or Medina, not only as the leader of a raiding band of Arabs, but also as the leader of a new mystic religion.

But the people of Mecca were determined to hunt down Mohammed, and war broke out between Mecca and Medina. It is easy to understand the situation. Mecca was already the centre of a well-established Arab religion, and thousands of pilgrims went there every year to worship the wonderful black stone—El Ka'aba—and the goddess Allat. And here was Mohammed preaching a new religion which was to destroy Ka'aba and Allat and bring financial ruin to the whole host of priests, government officials, and merchants who made money out of the thousands of pilgrims who came to worship in Mecca. Vested interests dictated that Mohammed must be destroyed, and Mohammed understood the situation only too well, for when at last a treaty was signed between Medina and Mecca, Mohammed ruled that Mecca was to be the holy city for converts to the new religion and that pilgrimages to Mecca were to continue, as had been the practice in pagan times. In 629 Mohammed returned to Mecca as its master, only a year after he, in his capacity of an Arab bandit operating from Medina and as the founder of a new obscure religion, had been so bold as to send envoys to Heraclius, Emperor of Byzantium, and to Kavadh, King of Persia, and to Tai-tsung, Emperor of China, calling upon these mighty rulers of the world to worship the One True God, whose prophet was Mohammed. It must be recorded that the Emperor of China not only received Mohammed's messengers well, but allowed them to build a mosque at Canton which survives to this day—the oldest mosque in the world.

Mohammed, now master of Mecca, did much to spread his power and influence over the whole of Arabia. Those last few years found him married to a number of wives, far in excess of the number he had stipulated for his followers.

Mohammed has been described as a mixture of personal vanity, greed, cunning, self-deception, and quite sincere

religious passion. He left the world with a book of religious instructions—the Koran—which is held to have been either divinely inspired or communicated to him from God. One historian writes:

Yet when the manifest defects of Mohammed's life and writings have been allowed for, there remains in Islam, this faith he imposed upon the Arabs, much power and inspiration. One is its uncompromising monotheism; its simple enthusiastic faith in the rule and fatherhood of God and its freedom from theological complications. Another is its complete detachment from the sacrificial priest and the temple. It is an entirely prophetic religion, proof against any possibility of relapse toward blood sacrifices. In the Koran the limited and ceremonial nature of the pilgrimage to Mecca is stated beyond the possibility of dispute, and every precaution was taken by Mohammed to prevent the deification of himself after his death. And a third element of strength lay in the insistence of Islam upon the perfect brotherhood and equality before God of all believers, whatever their colour, origin or status.

These are the things that made Islam a power in human affairs. It has been said that the true founder of the empire of Islam was not so much Mohammed as his friend and helper Abu Bekr. If Mohammed, with his shifty character, was the mind and imagination of primitive Islam, Abu Bekr was its conscience and its will. Whenever Mohammed wavered Abu Bekr sustained him. And when Mohammed died, Abu Bekr became Caliph (successor), and with the faith that moves mountains he set himself simply and sanely to organize the subjugation of the whole world to Allah.¹

The events which followed belong not only to the specialized field of African studies, but to the much wider field of world history. The Moslem conquests which followed Mohammed's death are described as being the most amazing in the whole of world history. Within two years the Byzantine army was smashed by Caliph Abu Bekr at the Battle of Farmuk, a tributary of the Jordan; and the Emperor Heraclius, overpowered and enfeebled by dropsy, was to see his newly-made conquests in Syria, Damascus, Palmyra, Antioch, Jerusalem, and elsewhere snatched away by the Arabs. Three years later, in 637, at Kadessia, the Persian army under a very able general, Rustam, fought for three days against the Arab Moslem forces; however,

¹ H. G. Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

the Persians could not stand up against the religiously inspired Arab fighters. Persia fell; but the Moslems had by no means completed their conquests.

Moslem forces pushed far into western Turkestan, and eastward they carried everything before them until they met the Chinese.

So far as Africa is concerned the first Arab or Moslem attack came eight years after the death of Mohammed. In 640 Amir ibn-al-As invaded Egypt. Kuros, Patriarch of Alexandria, who had become Prefect of Egypt in 630, was still the ruler and the Byzantine viceroy in Egypt. Amir ibn-al-As captured Pelusium, slew the garrison, and by 642 Egypt had become a province of the Empire of the Arabs. Many historians hold that the Arabs had an easy victory in Egypt and other parts of North Africa; but one historian writes:

It is not true to say that they carried all before them immediately; they met with fierce resistance and were more than once driven back. But history has largely forgotten the details of the struggle; the magnitude of the final success has obliterated the unsuccessful opposition of North Africa to its new rulers.¹

In 642 the Arabs were in control of Cyrenaica. During 647-8 Arab forces under Abdullah-bin-Zubeir and Abdullah-bin-Abu-Sarh invaded Tripoli and there fought, conquered, and killed a Byzantine governor by the name of Gregory the Patrician, who had previously rebelled against Byzantium and had assumed the pompous title of "Emperor of Africa."

The Arabs pushed their conquest into Tunisia and Algeria, but later the governor of southern Tunisia paid them 300 quintals of gold to induce them to evacuate his country. They accepted the gold and withdrew, but returned at a later date, and by 672 the Moslem invaders of Africa were firmly established in Tunisia and had founded the city of Kairowan to protect their lines of communication with Egypt and to serve as a permanent garrison of defence against native resistance.

The exact date of the founding of Kairowan (Qairowan) is given as A.D. 671—the year 50 of the Hegira. The city

¹ Jane Soames, *The Coast of Barbary*, pp. 90-1.

was founded by Oqbar-ben-Nafi, and Arab historians, who are sometimes rather fanciful in their descriptions of events, narrate that he did not wish to build the city on the coast because it could easily be attacked, and that he therefore wandered through what was then impenetrable forest full of wild beasts and venomous serpents. Oqbar-ben-Nafi is said to have addressed the wild beasts thus: "O you, serpents and wild beasts, know that we are the companions of the Prophet of Allah! Retire from this place where we have decided to establish ourselves. If we meet you later on, you will be killed."¹

The Arab writers state that the serpents and wild beasts, taking the hint, retired from the place and for forty years not a single snake was seen within miles of the holy city. Oqbar-ben-Nafi (or Oqba-bin-Nafa), founder of Kairowan (Qairowan), the third holy city of the Moslems, is also credited with having resumed the reconquest of North Africa after the Arabs had been bribed to leave Tunisia in 648. In 669 Oqbar-ben-Nafi overran Fezzan and was appointed governor of Ifriqiah, now the modern Tunis. Dinar Bu'l Muhajr was appointed to succeed Oqbar-ben-Nafi and carried the conquest of North Africa westward as far as Glemsan, on the borders of modern Morocco. In 681, Oqbar-ben-Nafi was sent back as governor and he continued the conquest still further westward and on to the Atlantic seaboard.

Oqbar-ben-Nafi's second term of office as governor lasted for only a year, for the indigenous inhabitants of North Africa, finding the rapacity and greed of the Arabs equal only to those of the Romans, Greeks, and Vandals, decided to rise up against Arab rule. The North Africans rallied under the banner of one Kuseila and defeated and killed Oqbar-ben-Nafi in 682. Kuseila ruled as King of Mauritania for five years, but in 688 he was defeated and killed by fresh Arab forces.

His position as leader of African resistance was quickly taken up by a relative—a woman named Dahia-al-Kahina. Under her leadership the Africans fought back valiantly and drove the Arab army into Tripolitania.

The Arab general, Hassan-bin-Numan, was successful in capturing Carthage in 698. But his victory was shortlived,

¹ Mrs Steuart Erskine, *The Vanished Cities of Northern Africa*, pp. 151-2.

for Kahina, rallying the African forces once more, drove Hassan from the city.

The position was becoming desperate, however, and Queen Kahina, the brave defender of Africa, ordered a terrible devastation of the fertile districts of Byzacene so that lack of food and shelter might deter the Arabs from returning. This devastation led to the deterioration of the magnificent country, and to this day the results of that last desperate act by Kahina are to be seen written in the very soil of southern Tunisia.

Kahina was finally defeated and slain by Hassan-bin-Numan in 705, and with her death came the end of one of the most resolute attempts to keep Africa for the Africans.



THE ARAB CONQUEST OF AFRICA

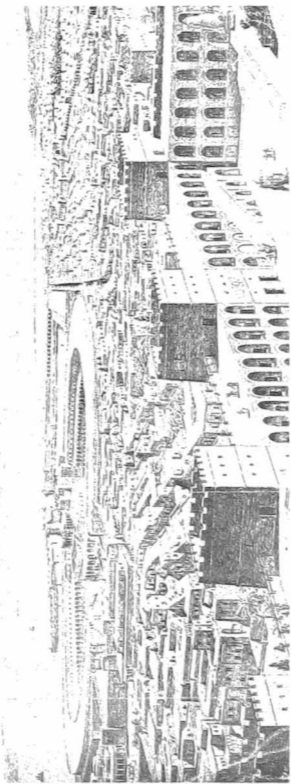
THE Arab conquest of North Africa was no walk-over, except perhaps in Egypt, where the Arabs were received as deliverers from the cruel rule of Byzantium.

The resistance put up by Kuseila of Mauritania and by his relative Kahina reflected the African mood of the period. In fact, so fierce and determined were the African counter-attacks that an Arab governor once remarked that the conquest of Africa was impossible; and that scarcely had a Berber tribe been exterminated when another came to take its place. However, after Kahina's defeat and death in 705 African resistance eventually weakened.

Hassan-bin-Numan, now Arab governor of Egypt, was able to rebuild the third holy city of the Moslems, which had been destroyed a few years earlier by Kuseila, but it was Musa-ibn-Nusair, the successor of Hassan-bin-Numan in 708, who carried out the final conquest of North Africa. He conquered the whole of Morocco, except Ceuta (Count Julian, governor of Ceuta, was able to repel the Arab forces and keep his territory independent of Arab rule, as will be seen), and this gave him command of the western route to the Sudan.

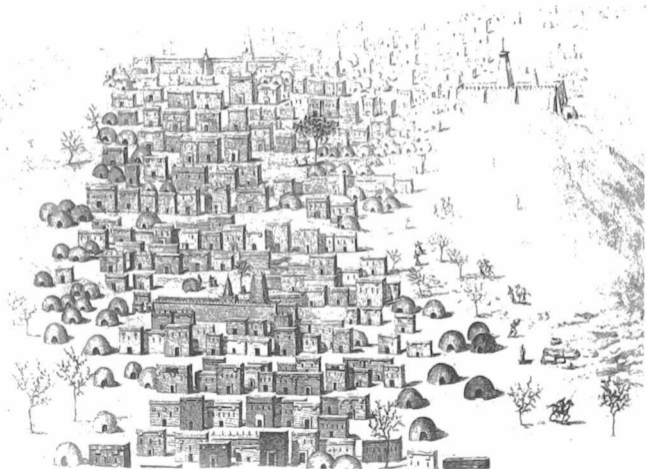
Among the African chiefs converted to the Islamic faith during the Arab invasion of Morocco was a great general known as Tarik. Tarik's name is given by one historian as Tarif ibn Zarcas, but it is safe to stick to plain Tarik. Tarik was given the rank of general in the Arab army by Musa-ibn-Nusair. Musa later left Tarik in charge of Tangiers and made him governor of Mauritania. All this happened within eight years of Kahina's abortive effort to keep Africa for the Africans.

The African Tarik, now governor of Mauritania, entered into friendly relations with Count Julian, governor of Ceuta. It was then that Tarik discovered that Julian was on very bad terms with his master, Roderic, the Gothic king of Spain.



A reconstruction of Carthage at the height of its power

A drawing of Timbuktu made by the first European reputed to have entered it. The principle on which the city was built was a completely functional one; the streets were all built in one direction and that adapted to the normally prevalent direction of the winds



Roderic, a profligate prince, had ravished Julian's daughter, and Julian was looking for a way to avenge the dishonour done to his family. Count Julian urged the African Tarik to invade Spain, but the suggestion had to be carried out cautiously. Tarik accordingly informed Musa-ibn-Nusair, who had appointed him governor, that he intended crossing the straits to survey and examine the possibilities for an invasion.

In 711 General Tarik, accompanied by 100 horses and 400 soldiers, crossed over into Spain, and it is said that Count Julian accompanied him on this exploratory mission. Tarik landed near the present Spanish town of Algeciras, where, finding the country almost defenceless, he ravaged the neighbouring towns with his small force and returned to Africa laden with spoils. Tarik gave an account of his mission to Musa-ibn-Nusair and later that same year he sailed again for Spain, this time in command of an army of 7,000 Africans.

Tarik crossed the straits and landed on the isthmus between an escarpment, then known as Mons Calpe, and the continent. This second venture was to be a more serious affair than the first; Tarik therefore sought to secure his communications with Africa. Realizing the immense advantage which Mons Calpe commanded, Tarik ordered a castle to be built on it so that he could retire there and hold out should he meet with reverses in battle. Part of this castle is still to be seen today.

Tarik left a garrison at the foot of Mons Calpe (which the Africans renamed, in compliment to their general, Gebel Tarik—the Hill of Tarik—a name which was subsequently corrupted by the Spaniards into Gibraltar). General Tarik and his African army surprised and captured several Spanish towns, among them Heraclea, which was only four miles from the rock of Gibraltar. King Roderic soon heard about the invading army and he set about gathering a huge force to oppose Tarik. After a series of skirmishes, the two armies met near Xeres in Andalusia. The conflict was a bloody one, but Tarik was victorious and soon became master of Spain.

The conquest of Spain was an African conquest. They were Mohammedan Africans, not Arabs, who laid low the

Gothic kingdom of Spain. Professor C. P. Groves remarks that the Arab leader, Musa-ibn-Nusair, "apparently taken by surprise at the speed of events, hastened across with an army the following year and completed the conquest, thus associating Arab arms with the final victory."¹

Now let us consider North Africa, and Africans like Tarik who appear to have embraced the Mohammedan faith so readily. The first African convert to the Mohammedan faith was Bilal, a slave. Mohammed himself referred to Bilal as "the first fruits of Abyssinia." This African slave is still famous throughout the Moslem world as the first *mu'adhdhin* (now *muezzin*)—the officer who chants the call to prayer. It is said that some of the Africans embraced the new religion as their only hope of survival; others because the Christian Church under the Vandals and the Byzantines had been squeezed dry, until it was now poor and weak. It is interesting to note that Kuseila, the king of Mauritania who gave the Arabs so much trouble, together with his lieutenant Sekerdid, accepted the Moslem faith, thus renouncing their allegiance to the Christian religion. Both Kuseila and Sekerdid renounced Mohammedanism at a later date. Kuseila then had the illluck to be taken prisoner by the Arabs, and he quickly submitted to Islam again in order to escape death. But, since Kuseila died fighting the Arabs, we can only conclude that he was never a true convert to Islam.

Kuseila's relative and successor, Queen Kahina, was of the Jewish persuasion and not a Christian. She never gave up her faith, but strangely enough she advised her two sons to do so and to embrace the Islamic religion, which they did.

According to the Arab historian Ibn Khaldoun, the two sons of Kahina became loyal Moslems and the elder was granted the chieftainship of his people after his mother had been defeated and slain. Perhaps Kahina was wise in her advice, for to embrace the Mohammedan faith meant survival.

Another factor which served to spread Mohammedanism was the system of intermarriage practised by the Arabs. For example, the sons of the Arab leader Musa-ibn-Nusair took African wives, whose sons rose to distinction. Yet another factor which stimulated the spread of the Islamic

¹ C. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, p. 79.

religion in North Africa was the Moslem conquest of Spain, which was commonly regarded as a joint African and Arabian venture and which was to bring benefits to both races. Yet another reason has been given, this time by a woman historian, for the rapidity with which Mohammedanism displaced Christianity in North Africa. This historian holds the view that

many of the tenets of the Moslem faith are well adapted to a southern climate, particularly its attitude toward women. Polygamy and the harem are comprehensible, even possibly the best solution, in a climate where feminine maturity and decay are attained at ages which seem to us respectively childish and comparatively youthful.¹

We have already noted that at the time of the death of Mohammed in 632 Egypt was in an unhappy state. In 631 the Emperor Heraclius had appointed an ecclesiastic, Cyrus (sometimes known as Kuros), as both patriarch and imperial representative.

Cyrus did not like the views of the Egyptian or Coptic Christians and sought by repressive means to force the Egyptian Christians to become more orthodox. The feeling against Cyrus and the Emperor Heraclius became very strong indeed, and when in 640 Arab forces under Amir ibn-al-As invaded Egypt, the invaders were regarded by the Coptic Christians as deliverers from an oppressive imperial rule.

Thus the Christian Church, or more specifically the nationalist Coptic Church in Egypt, survived the invasion.

The Arabs granted religious toleration to the inhabitants of Egypt; however, the Coptic Church began to decline slowly as a result of taxes which the Arabs imposed on the Christians. Converts to the Islamic faith were exempted from poll-tax; but six years after the African General Tarik had conquered Spain for Islam we find the Governor of Egypt proposing that in future converts should not be exempted from the poll-tax, as every new convert meant a fall in the imperial revenue. Omar II (717-720), who was then the Caliph, replied piously to the governor in these words: "God sent Mohammed to call men to a knowledge of the truth and not to be a collector of taxes."

¹ Jane Soames, *The Coast of Barbary*, p. 93.

The practical administrative issues involved, however, made it impossible for Omar II's pious standards to be maintained, and new converts were required to pay taxes. In 744, a century after the Arab conquest of Egypt, we find a governor of Egypt again exempting new converts from taxation, and it is recorded that 24,000 Christians renounced Christianity in order to escape paying taxes.

The Egyptian Christians were placed under a number of disabilities which were intended to make them feel that they would be better off if they changed their religion. At one time Christians were compelled to wear yellow cloaks and turbans. A century and a half later, Al Hakim, the mad Caliph of Egypt, ordered all non-Moslems to wear black. Three centuries later we find Christians being ordered to wear blue, and Jews yellow.

In spite of all these insidious attempts to stamp out both Christianity and Judaism in Egypt, these two faiths survived.

The taxes were at times very severe, and several revolts were staged by the Egyptian Christians in opposition to them. In A.D. 927 the abbot of the monastery of St Mary Deipara, in the Nitrian desert west of the Nile, visited Baghdad to secure a remission of the poll-tax demanded of the monks.

The monastery of St Mary Deipara possessed a very famous library, and the Abbot is said to have brought with him, from Mesopotamia, Syria, and Arabia on his return from Baghdad in A.D. 932, no fewer than 250 rare volumes, which were added to the existing extremely rich collection of manuscripts.

The remnants of the Coptic Church in Egypt have survived to this day, and there is no doubt about its having decreased in size over the centuries. Self-preservation has been given as one of the reasons which prompted some of the early Christians to desert their Church. The pressure of taxation has already been mentioned as another. Romance may also on occasion provide a motive. No Christian might marry a Moslem woman, and it is not unlikely that love quite often triumphed over faith. Then, lastly, the intermittent persecution of Christians served to drive some of them into the arms of their persecutors.

What has been said of Christianity in Egypt is not true for

the rest of North Africa. At the time of the Vandal invasion in 429, the North African Church, excluding Egypt, possessed 675 bishops. Fifty-five years later—that is in A.D. 484—the number of bishops had decreased by 110. About fifty years later, when the Vandals were defeated by Belisarius, we find instead of the original 675, only 220 bishops. Two hundred and twenty bishops attended the Council of Carthage, which Justinian ordered to be convened in 534. Justinian also decreed the restoration of all church buildings and appurtenances which had been seized or confiscated by the Vandals. In addition to these blessings on the Church, Justinian recognized the Bishop of Carthage as a metropolitan, and conferred special privileges on the churches of his diocese.

According to Leclercq, non-Catholic Christians, Jews, and pagans were all made subject to certain disabilities.¹ No doubt Justinian's intention was to make the population feel that it would be better off in the Church than outside it.

Professor C. P. Groves, commenting on this phase of the history of the Church in Africa, says:

Religious propaganda for imperial expansion was the policy. . . . The policy was so far successful as to bring within the pale of the Church a number of Berber peoples not hitherto touched—to bring them in, that is to say, as far as the ruler's nominal assent was given. Such conversions, presumably not based on catechetical instruction, and undertaken from political motives, were just as permanent as the political interests of those concerned.²

Given a new situation in which these political and material interests changed, the robe of office of the North African chief could be as easily doffed as it had been donned, together with the religion of the imperial Court which it symbolized.

The century or more of Byzantine rule in North Africa shines with fresh converts to the Christian faith, yet most of the conversions were superficial. "With the Arab invader came a challenge to all easy loyalties and an uncovering of the situation as it really was."³

"The African Church, once the home of Tertullian, of Cyprian, and of Augustine, came to an end, because the only

¹ H. Leclercq, *L'Afrique Chrétienne* (1904), II, pp. 247-9.

² *op. cit.*, p. 68. ³ *ibid.*, p. 68.

peoples it had really won were swept away.”¹ The thin top layer of Romanized Africans was ripped off with the advent of Islam and, with it, the hope of Christianity in North Africa.

The eighth century A.D., which saw the rise of Arab power and of the Islamic faith in North Africa and the conquest of Spain by African and Arab forces, also saw Arab pressure being exerted on the Tuaregs, who then lived in the Fezzan just south of Tripoli. These Tuaregs were forced to migrate southward, and for a time lived in Bornu in northern Nigeria, but they were later driven out again, and they now live in Air, to the north-west of Kanem and Lake Chad.

In Europe the combined African and Arab Moslem forces had reached the Pyrénées Mountains by 720. The advance continued into France, but in 732 the advance was halted in the centre of France at the Battle of Poitiers,² which appears to have taken place somewhere between Poitiers and Tours. The Moslem forces were defeated by Charles Martel and were thrust back to the Pyrénées; but beyond that point Europe was unable to dislodge them for centuries.

From that time the history of the Iberian Peninsula becomes linked with the history of Africa, and to some extent with the history of the Arab world. From 715 to 760 Spain was governed by the Caliph of Baghdad, who exercised direct control over the whole of North Africa and Spain. But in 758, forty-seven years after Tarik's conquest of Spain, there arrived in southern Spain a refugee prince of the house of Omar, whose name was Abd-ar-rahman bir Muawiya, and who, after thirty years of almost incessant warfare, wrested all Spain from the Baghdad Caliphate and founded the most splendid of the Arab Dynasties in Spain—that of the Omiyads, which lasted till about 1020.

It is interesting to note that the army employed by the Arab Dynasty in Spain was made up principally of Africans from Morocco, and some Slav, Austrian, and German slaves who had been bought from Charlemagne and his successors.

It was because the conquering army in Spain was largely made up of Africans from Morocco that we hear such phrases

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 89.

² Poitiers was the scene of three famous battles: The defeat of Alaric II by Clovis in 507; the defeat of the Moors; the Black Prince's victory in 1356.

as "the Moorish invasion of Spain," and why Shakespeare's hero Othello is a Moor, and why the word "blackamoor" exists in the English language, a word which leaves no doubt as to the colour of the army of occupation in Spain and Portugal.

To begin with, there was an intolerant self-sufficiency among the Arabs which made the Koran the only source of learning and the only book worth reading. This made the development of science and true knowledge impossible, but the intolerance was soon to give way to a new wave of learning. The organization of education throughout the Moslem world began in the eighth century, and by the ninth learned men in the schools of Cordoba in Spain were corresponding with learned men in Kairowan, Cairo, Baghdad, Bokhara, and Samarkand.

The Greek classics were rediscovered and Aristotle came into his own. The museum at Alexandria, so long neglected, became the centre of research and learning. Mathematics, medicine, and the physical sciences received fresh attention. The clumsy Roman numerals were soon ousted by the Arabic figures which we use to this day, and the zero sign first came into general usage. Arabic words like "algebra" and "chemistry" became universal words.

In astronomy, Arabic names such as Algol, Bootes, and Aldebaran were to be commonly accepted. Today we still talk of the alchemists, or the Arab experimental chemists who discovered many metallurgical and technical devices and whose work on alloys, dyes, distilling, tinctures, essences, and optical glass literally revolutionized the world.

The term "Arabic" we intend in a cultural rather than a racial sense, for the Arabs did not believe in any *herrenvolk* theory and freely intermarried with those they conquered.

From the Chinese the Arabs learned how to manufacture paper, and they in turn transmitted the knowledge to Europe and the rest of the world. From the Indians the Arabs learned new mathematical forms and new philosophies which they also imparted to Europe and the rest of the world.

Arab alchemists sought in vain for the philosopher's stone which was to have the power of changing metallic elements one into another and which was intended to enable them to make artificial gold. In vain did they seek for the *elixir vite*

which was to rejuvenate the old and prolong life indefinitely. But these same alchemists were to introduce new methods of experimental science which have since given man power over the world and over his own destiny.

It was through Africa that the new knowledge of China, India, and Arabia reached Europe, and it was Africa which supplied the men who protected Moslem Europe or Spain from attack, and thus made it possible for the new learning to take root and develop.

THE RISE OF AFRICAN EMPIRES

THE second Arab invasion of Africa had nothing of religious missionizing zeal behind it. It was a purely bread-and-butter affair. It came 400 years after the first invasion.

Two Arab tribes, known as the Beni-Hilal and the Beni-Soleim, were deported from their original home in central Arabia and planted in upper Egypt. These tribes numbered about 200,000 to 300,000, and they proved themselves a nuisance to the Moslem rulers of Egypt. In order to get rid of them, the Egyptian rulers assured the Arabic tribesmen that if only they would cross the upper Nile into Tripolitania, they would find a rich country stretching as far as Morocco, and they would have all the booty they wanted, in addition to wide open spaces on which to graze their animals.

Accordingly in 1045 the two Arab tribes left the right bank of the Nile and invaded Tripolitania and Tunisia from the south. The African forces in those two countries came together and opposed this second Arab invasion, but at the Battle of Haideran they were decisively beaten and the Arabs settled in southern Tunisia and western Tripolitania. In the course of this invasion the third holy city of the Moslems, the city of Kairowan, was destroyed, and it never regained its former importance.

Later we find the Africans in Tunisia and Tripolitania succeeding in driving some of the Arabs westward into Morocco. But fresh Arab forces arrived from Egypt and Arabia to help give the Arabs a permanent footing in Africa.

The first Arab invasion of Africa was undertaken by a few thousand warriors, statesmen, and religious teachers who, through the sword, but more particularly through their newly found faith, gained North Africa for the Moslem world. The second Arab invasion of Africa was undertaken by uncouth, nomadic Arab tribes who lacked culture and were incapable of recognizing culture and beauty when they saw them. They destroyed, but never rebuilt. To them a city

life was out of the question, and it is very doubtful whether their presence in Africa brought any appreciable material or spiritual benefits to the African.

It must be added that these nomadic Arabs were to travel far and wide in Africa, and were in many cases to intermarry with the African peoples. Descendants of these Arabs, both of pure and of mixed blood, are to be found today around Lake Chad, in Darfur Wadai, in the western Sahara north of the Senegal and Niger rivers, and in several other parts of West Africa—the Fulani Emirates of northern Nigeria being the most outstanding examples.

At the time that the two troublesome Arab tribes were pouring out of Egypt into Tripolitania and Tunisia, great things were happening in other parts of Africa—great things which were to engulf even the invading Arab hordes. The Ghana Empire was at the peak of its glory and power; a new Empire—that of the Almoravids—was fast developing, and it was literally to swallow up the Ghana Empire and the invading Arab forces.

We are indebted to such writers as Masudi, Ibn Haukal, El Bekri, El Idrisi, Yaqt, El Omari, Ibn Battuta, and Ibn Khaldoun for most of what we know about the Almoravids and about the Ghana Empire. These writers, who possessed Arab or Moslem names and who wrote in Arabic, were not all Arabs. Some of them were Africans.

Both Masudi and Ibn Haukal were Arabs, natives of Baghdad. Masudi spent twenty years and Ibn Haukal twenty-five years travelling. Masudi travelled extensively in Africa, Madagascar, and China. He died in 956. Ibn Haukal visited West Africa and saw the Niger and the city of Ghana, the capital of the Ghana Empire.

Abu Obeid El Bekri who was born in Spain in 1028 has written about Ghana and other African territories, although he did not see Africa or Arabia. His descriptions of Ghana agree in every detail with eyewitness accounts and his writings are regarded as among the finest and most accurate of historical documents. Some of these writings are in the British Museum and others in the National Library of Paris.

But perhaps the two most interesting writers on the Ghana Empire and the other African Empires are Ibn Battuta, an African from the North African tribe of Luata who was born

at Tangiers in 1304, and Ibn Khaldoun, an Arab who was born in Spain in 1332, but who later came to live in Africa.

Ibn Battuta received his formal advanced education in theology, and at the age of twenty-one set out on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Afterward he visited Syria, Palestine, and the Lebanon, returning to Mecca, where he spent three years in study and devotion. He then went on a journey along the east coast of Africa, visiting all the Mohammedan trading posts and, later on, India, but not by way of the Indian Ocean. He was out to see the world, and he therefore followed a very circuitous route through Asia Minor, visiting Constantinople. From there he went over the steppes of Central Asia to Khurasan. On this journey he gathered around him a host of adherents, scholars, pupils, and admirers, and as his caravan eventually made its way into the centre of the city of Delhi it presented an imposing spectacle.

At Delhi, Ibn Battuta was appointed Malikite Qadi by the Emperor—a post which he held for seven years. He then went on a special mission to the great Mongol Emperor of China, but he had made enemies in India, and as soon as he had left for China they began intriguing against him. Ibn Battuta therefore found it wise not to return to Delhi. He resumed his travels, visited Ceylon and Assam, made a second journey to China and reached Peking, a city then forbidden to foreigners.

He now decided to return home to Africa. His homeward journey took him to Sumatra, Malabar, and Syria, and he finally reached Tangiers in 1349. He had been away for precisely twenty-four years.

After a short stay at home he visited Spain. It was after his return from Spain that he decided to visit the Sudan, Central and West Africa. Ibn Battuta did not see the Ghana Empire, but he did see the Mali Empire which had taken its place. What he has to tell us about West Africa is of very great importance because it represents the views of a learned and experienced traveller, the views of one who had seen Arabia, Syria, Spain, Ceylon, Palestine, Turkey, Tibet, India, China, and many other lands, and who had lived and taught in those lands.

Now let us turn from Ibn Battuta (who died in Fez, North

Africa, in 1369) and the other Moslem writers and consider the Ghana Empire. This empire derived its name from a city which was once the capital of a kingdom, but which later became the capital of an empire.

The Ghana kingdom appears to have been founded about A.D. 300. It grew and expanded until it extended from the Niger westward to the Atlantic seaboard, and north to the Sahara. In its day it was the leading State of what is now the French Sudan.

The kingdom of Ghana had definitely become an empire a century before the rise of the Almoravids, and the empire itself is said to have reached the zenith of its power and glory in the half-century before the rise of the Almoravids to power.

Ghana's commercial relations with the outside world were very important. It lay at the southern end of the western caravan route that ran from Sijilmasa in modern Morocco on through Taghaza in the Sahara desert, famous throughout recorded history for its salt-mines. The principal imports of the Ghana Empire were cloths, brocades, copper, and salt, while the chief item exported was Ghana's valuable gold dust.

Most of the gold was not mined in Ghana, but was obtained mainly from the Wangaras, who then occupied an area measuring some 300 miles long and fifty miles wide in the region of the Senegal River.¹ Through this gold traffic Ghana was able to build for herself very important international trade connections, and the geographer Ibn Haukal (c. 975) records seeing in Awdaghost—fifteen days' journey west of Ghana—a cheque for 42,000 dinars made out to a merchant in Sijilmasa.

¹ Galbraith Welch, who holds the view that Wangara gold was in fact Gold Coast gold, writes as follows: "Wangara was, in effect, 'the gold coast' long before Europeans dared sail down Africa's shores and give the name to the modern Gold Coast, where they were literally made giddy by its blaze of gold." He admits the general confusion which exists regarding the exact area in West Africa occupied by the Wangaras at the time. He adds that today no one can point to any definite area and say that this is Wangara country, but the official Gold Coast Censor's figures for 1948 record 19,916 Wangaras (Wongaras) as living in parts of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, but they are not regarded as being indigenous to the country. There are tribes in the Gold Coast who are numerically inferior to the Wangaras but who are known to be indigenous to the country. No one is sure as to where the present Wangaras in the Gold Coast came from. (See Galbraith Welch, *North African Prelude* (1949), p. 254.

The royal treasure of Ghana included a gold nugget so huge that it became famous throughout the known world. Earlier writers gave its weight as thirty pounds, but when some 300 years after the city of Ghana was sacked by the Almoravids in 1076 Ibn Kahldoun came to record the sale of the nugget to some Egyptian merchants, it was said to weigh as much as a ton.

The city of Ghana (or Koumbi, as the inhabitants called the capital of their Empire) consisted of two townships, each situated on a hill and spreading down a valley into a vast plain. The two townships were six miles apart. One was the Moslem town, or our modern equivalent, the Zongo; the other was the pagan town. The pagan town was generally known to the Moslems as "El Ghaba" (the wood), because it was surrounded by thickets which were held sacred to the spiritual affairs of the State and which further housed the royal tombs. Priests lived among the thickets, and it is recorded that "El Ghaba" contained a prison from which it was believed no prisoner ever returned. It must have been a prison for those sentenced to death.

The whole description of these sacred thickets recalls Nananom Mpow,¹ which once existed near Mankessim in the Gold Coast; but it also suggests the sacred groves and royal burial-places of today.

The Moslem township had twelve mosques and possessed many scholars, professors, theologians, and priests. Arabic letters formed the means for recording language not only in the Moslem township, but throughout the Empire. The pagan township had one mosque which was situated near the Court of Justice and intended for the use of Moslems who had legal business to attend to. Both pagans and Moslems held office in the State, and El Bekri informs us that the majority of the ministers were men who had accepted Islam. He also adds that the Court interpreter and the State treasurer were Moslems.

The two townships making up the city of Ghana were both very well built, and although some houses were of clay, many more were of stone. The population was very large and Ibn Khaldoun informs us that it was "one of the greatest and most populous cities in the world." The

¹ Ancestral grove.

people wore clothes made of wool, cotton, silk, and velvet. A lucrative trade in textile fabrics, dates, copper, jewels, armour, and weapons of gold and silver was carried out in the Empire.

From the writings of El Idrisi we get a wonderful impression of the pomp and elegance which characterized the rulers of Ghana. He tells us the royal palace was "adorned with sculptures, paintings and glass windows." The Fettassi¹ records one aspect of the luxury which existed in the Court of Kanissa'ai, King of Ghana at the end of the seventh century, with the following description of the royal stables. None of the one thousand horses "slept except upon a carpet, nor was he tied except by a silken rope round his neck and to his foot. Each of them had a copper pot into which he urinated. No drop of urine should fall except into the receptacle, were it night or day. One would never see beneath these horses the slightest droppings. Each horse had three persons attached to his service and seated near him. One took charge of his food the second of his drink, and the third took charge of urine and droppings."

We are further informed that every night the King, enthroned on a seat of red gold surrounded by numerous flaming torches, watched ten thousand of his subjects being served with supper from the royal palace.

This was the picture of the Ghana Empire before it was conquered by the Almoravids in 1076.

It must not be imagined that the end of the Ghana Empire was a sudden affair. Its wealth had long attracted the attention and envy of both Africans and Arabs who occupied the area of the Sahara desert and the regions further north. In 1020 North African forces with Arab assistance attacked the Empire, but were driven back. In 1042 the Almoravids made attacks on some of the outlying districts, but they avoided a direct clash with the main forces of the Ghana Empire. In 1060 Ghana placed about 200,000 warriors, including some 40,000 archers, in the field in a determined attempt

¹ The Fettassi is the name sometimes given to the *Tarikh-el-Fettach*, one of the two old histories of the Sudan published in Timbuktu, the other book being the *Tarikh-es-Sudan*. The former was written by Mahmoud Kati, and the latter was attributed to Prof Ahmed Baba, but recent authorities claim that this is wrong and assert that the real author was Es-Sa'di of Timbuktu, who was born forty years after Ahmed Baba.

to save the Empire; and for a time preserved her freedom in spite of the terrible carnage on all sides. Sixteen years later, in 1076, the blow that destroyed the Ghana Empire fell with shattering force. Almoravid forces under Abu Bekr captured and sacked the city, and this brought about the dismemberment of the Ghana Empire.

The victory of Abu Bekr and his Almoravid forces in 1076 was a high-water mark in West African history. It resulted in the southward march of several tribes, including the Akan group—the Ashantis, Fantis, Akims, Akwapims, Akwamus, and Gyamans. The Akans today live roughly 1,000 miles south-west of their original home. They appear to have begun their long march southward as one political unit, bound together by common ties of language and custom; but by the time they arrived on the borders of the Gold Coast divisions had developed—divisions which have survived to this day.

The Ashantis settled in the middle of the Gold Coast; the Akims and Akwapims settled in the south-eastern regions of the country, and the Fantis in the middle coastal regions. There is reason to believe that the Fantis would have split up into three units or more had they not reached the coast in time. When they did make their appearance in the coastal regions of the Gold Coast they were under three separate leaders: Oson, Oburumankuma, and Odapagyan. However, the three leaders combined to found their administrative and capital city, Mankessim, the Great City, which today is nothing more than an insignificant village consisting of about two hundred buildings most of which are in a dilapidated condition.

Mankessim, however, was not the first Akan town to be founded in the Gold Coast. Techiman in Ashanti (or Brong) was the first town, and was built by the combined efforts of the Akan group of tribes. Anyone who has visited Techiman and seen the flatness of the countryside, and noted that it is the last stop from the north just before one enters the forest belt, can appreciate why the ancestors of the Akan settled there for a time before entering the forest with its unknown dangers and mysteries.

The Akans had been used to savannah lands in their former home, but now they had to live in a forest belt. Formerly,

they had used the plough for cultivating the land; but in their new forest surroundings the axe and the cutlass appeared more useful, and the hoe seemed to be a more satisfactory agricultural instrument for removing the stumps of trees. The plough could no longer be employed. It might be supposed that once the farms had been laid out, the plough could have been conveniently brought into use. This possibility, however, did not become a reality because the Akans were now living not only in a forest belt, but in an area infested by the tsetse fly. Cattle and horses could not survive there, and even today it is not unusual to find Akans who have never seen a horse or a cow. The effect of the tsetse fly was to make it impossible for the Akans to practise agriculture at the high level to which they had been accustomed in the Ghana Empire.

The Akans left the northern savannah regions of the Ghana Empire in 1076; but other groups and tribes remained behind to defend the north against further attacks from the Almoravids, Arabs, and other North African dwellers.

At this stage it may be well for us to examine some of the claims which have been made about the links between the Gold Coast and Ghana. There is little doubt that the Akan people migrated from somewhere in the Ghana Empire: the customs and traditions of the people give convincing proof of this. But difficulties arise when attempts are made to put the Akans in the city of Ghana, the capital of the Empire.

All accounts show that the customs in Ghana approximate to Akan customs of today. "Mother-right" prevailed in the city, and people were succeeded by their sisters' children. There was also the traditional unwillingness to accept Islam, as noticeable among the Akans of today as in Ghana some 900 years ago. We must note, however, that we are told specifically that the inhabitants of the city of Ghana were Mandingoes, a group of tribes which has preserved its identity to this day. But it has never been suggested that the Akans are Mandingoes.

We know that Ghana was sacked and pillaged in 1076 and many of the inhabitants slain; but the city was not depopulated and was to last for 200 years longer. The presumption, then, is that the Akans occupied an area of the

Ghana Empire other than the capital itself. My own theory is that the Akans occupied Kanem, an area around Lake Chad which formed one of the outposts of the Ghana Empire. Kanem in the eleventh century had customs and institutions identical with those of the Akan people.

I maintain that the Almoravid attacks on the Ghana Empire led to a directive being sent out to all the provinces of the Empire calling for man-power, and that Kanem accordingly sent out a large contingent. The Akans, who were sometimes accompanied by their womenfolk when they went to war, must have had women with them when they left Kanem. Later they were to find the capital captured, the Empire conquered, and their line of retreat cut. They were therefore forced to move at first westward until they met the then unconquerable Wangara people in the region of the Senegal River. The Akans altered course and took a south-easterly direction, scouting the Mossi kingdom and moving to the south to enter the Gold Coast near Techiman.

If the Akans really came from Kanem, then it is to be assumed that old men, children, and some women were left behind and that these could not link up with the main Akan group. Those left behind may have been pushed out of Kanem by the Almoravids or may have decided to flee in the face of the Almoravid forces. If such an Akan group did actually exist, we must look for its descendants in the Belgian Congo or in East Africa, the only possible regions which could have afforded it some refuge. Both Professor Gilberto Freyre of Brazil and Professor Leo Frobenius of Germany inform us that Fanti is spoken on the eastern frontier of the Congo, and they stress the differences between the Congo and this circumjacent area in the matter of clothing, type of habitation, musical instruments, the common ownership of land, fetishism, and agricultural economy.

The theory that the Akans came originally from Kanem, an outpost of the Ghana Empire, must be taken with caution, since more research is needed before final conclusions can be reached. We are perhaps on surer grounds when we say that the Akans left the Ghana Empire when the Almoravids under Abu Bekr sacked and pillaged the capital in 1076 and succeeded in dismembering the Empire.

Who were the Almoravids, the people responsible for the

fall of the Ghana Empire in 1076? In order to answer this properly, we must go back to a little more than fifty years earlier, when Ghana was indeed at the zenith of its power and glory. In 1020 some of the African tribes around the Senegal River, and the areas immediately to the north, came together with the sole object of checking the growing power of the Ghana Empire. They appointed as their leader a chief from the Lemtuna tribe whose name was Tarsina. Tarsina embraced the Islamic faith and changed his name to Abdulla Abu Mohammed; and, combining his purely material objectives with a newly-found religious passion, he set about raiding non-Moslem settlements, and even raided a Jewish tribe that had been driven out of Ghana 200 years earlier, but had later found refuge among the Wangaras.

Tarsina—Abdulla Abu Mohammed—died, and his son-in-law, Yahia ibn Ibrahim, succeeded him. Yahia, being a faithful Moslem, quickly made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and on the return journey decided to visit Kairowan, the third holy city of the Moslems. At Kairowan, Yahia met Abu Amran, a native of Fez and a learned doctor of Islamic theology.

As a result of a conversation with Abu Amran, Yahia decided to take back with him to his tribe someone capable of teaching the Koran to his people. Abdullah ibn Yasin (or plain Ibn Yasin) of Sijilmasa was the man chosen, and he accompanied Yahia to the Senegal.

The task of teaching strict Moslem doctrines to the people of the Senegal was not easy. The people were prepared to be known as Moslems, but they were not prepared to forgo any of their former habits. Eventually, Ibn Yasin decided that it was no use trying to teach them an orthodox religion. He accordingly retired to a small island in the Senegal River, accompanied by Yahia and his brother Abu Bekr.

On the island Ibn Yasin established a *ribat*, or monastery. Almoravid¹ is a Spanish corruption of Al-Murabitin, which

¹ Galbraith Welch, writing on the origin of the word *Almoravides*, states: "Almoravides is a Spanish distortion of the words El-Morabetin, meaning 'People of the Ribat.' We further distort the name by putting a double definite article to it, the al-Moravides. The word 'marabout,' a holy man, so widely used in Africa, derives also from 'ribat.'"—*North African Prelude*, p. 283.

is the plural of Marabut, and Marabut is derived from *ribat*, or monastery. The people in Senegal became curious about those living in the monastery; and many, driven partly by curiosity and partly by a genuine desire to try Ibn Yasin's brand of Mohammedanism, came to live in the monastery.

Soon the small monastery on the Senegal had 1,000 inmates. Having failed to win large numbers of the inhabitants of the Senegal and the areas bordering on the Sahara desert by preaching, Ibn Yasin resolved to achieve his object by force. In 1042, with the zeal of a fierce reformer, he left his monastic retreat and led his followers in a holy war against the stiff-necked tribesmen. These monks, the former inhabitants of the monastery, won victory after victory, and soon their army was 30,000 strong.

Ibn Yasin was leader of the whole party, and Yahia was the general commanding in the field. Soon the Almoravids¹ became masters of the tribes of the western Sahara. Yahia, the young commander-in-chief of the Almoravid forces, died in 1056; his brother, Abu Bekr, immediately stepped into his shoes. Three years later, Ibn Yasin, the religious instructor and propagator of the Islamic faith by the sword, died while fighting in southern Morocco, and Abu Bekr became the absolute leader of all the Almoravids.

Abu Bekr was soon called upon to deal with troubles in the Sahara, and as he was then engaged in the conquest of Morocco he handed over command of the army to his cousin, Yusuf ibn Tashifin. Abu Bekr went south and quickly restored order among those of his followers whom he had left behind in the Senegal and in the western desert. He realized that the period of idleness had made this section of the army restive and quarrelsome; he therefore decided to give them something to do by attacking the Soninke, who were subjects of Bassi, the aged Emperor of Ghana. Bassi had always remained on good terms with the Moslems, but had himself refused to give up the ancestral worship, a fact which had not pleased the Almoravids, who were out to conquer the world for an austere Islamic faith.

Abu Bekr's attack on Ghana at this stage was merely

¹ The word "Almoravids" is sometimes spelt Almoravides, thus making the singular Almoravide.

exploratory, and he avoided a major show-down. Meanwhile, Yusuf, whom he had left behind in southern Morocco, conquered not only Morocco, but also Algeria, and founded the city of Marrakesh. When later Abu Bekr returned suddenly from the south, he found that Yusuf had no desire to give up command of the army. Abu Bekr therefore formally handed over command to Yusuf in 1062 and retired to the south to concentrate on the conquest of the Ghana Empire. By this time the aged Bassi was dead and, according to a custom designed to ensure the descent of the throne indubitably to princes of the blood, he had been succeeded by his sister's son, Menin, or Tunka Menin. Menin, like Bassi before him, refused to accept the Islamic faith.

In 1076, Abu Bekr, in command of Almoravid forces, succeeded in capturing and looting Ghana. Menin was not removed from the throne, but was made to pay homage to the Almoravids. Abu Bekr himself was killed eleven years later, and immediately after his death the Soninkes set about rebuilding the fortunes of Ghana.

About the time of Abu Bekr's death in 1087, Yusuf had succeeded in becoming not only the master of North Africa, but also the master of Spain; and it is recorded that one of Yusuf's negro guards almost succeeded in killing King Alfonso VI of Castile, who was severely wounded and barely escaped death, at the Battle of Zallaqa, near Badajoz, on October 23, 1086. Within ten years from the fall of Ghana the Almoravids had established an empire extending from the Senegal in West Africa to the Ebro in Spain, an empire which came to be known in history as the Empire of the Two Shores. The Almoravid or Senegalese Empire lasted for a century, and was followed by another African empire, the Almohade, which was founded by another African religious leader or Mahdi; his name was Ibn Tumert. The Almohade Empire has been described by some writers as the greatest of the African empires; nevertheless it lasted for only a century.

The Almohade Empire was also an Empire of Two Shores, extending, like that of the Almoravids, from the Senegal River in West Africa to the Ebro in Spain. The Almohade Empire has also been described as the finest flower of Moslem civilization. The link between Africa and

Spain under the Almohades is today expressed in the three famous mosque towers built to the order of the Almohade sultans: the tower of Hassan at Rabat, the Giralda at Seville, and the Koutoubiya at Marrakesh.

Almohade power, as already indicated, lasted for only a century. At the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa the Almohade forces were decisively beaten by the Christian Spanish princes, who were determined to end the rule of Africa in Europe. In 1248 Seville was recaptured by the European princes; but Africa held on grimly to Granada for another 200 years.

Moslem rule in Spain lasted from 711 to 1248 and lingered on until 1492, when Granada fell, and when Columbus discovered America. It is interesting to observe here that there were some Africans still ruling in Spain when Elmina Castle in the Gold Coast was being built.

Within the 800 years from 711 to 1492 the African Tarik conquered Spain and the Arab dominated both North Africa and Spain. Then came the conquests of the Almoravids and Almohades from Africa. African peoples intermarried with the Spanish people and converted many of them to the Islamic faith. Arabs and Africans alike contributed vastly to the wealth of the Iberian Peninsula and built up for it a trade with Africa and the Orient on a scale hitherto unknown. According to one historian, "they founded a civilization far in advance of their Christian contemporaries." Stanley Lane-Poole, in his *The Moors in Spain*, writes:

The misguided Spaniards knew not what they were doing. . . . The "infidels" were ordered to abandon their native and picturesque costume, to assume the hats and breeches of the Christians, to give up bathing and adopt the dirt of their conquerors, to renounce their language, their customs and ceremonies, even their very names. . . . It is stated that no less than three million of Moors were banished between the fall of Granada and the first decade of the seventeenth century. . . . But the Spaniards did not understand that they had killed their golden geese. For centuries Spain had been the centre of civilization, the seat of arts and sciences, of learning and every form of refined enlightenment. No other country in Europe had so far approached the cultivated dominion of the Moors. The brief brilliancy of Ferdinand and Isabella and the Empire of Charles V could found no such enduring pre-eminence. The Moors were banished, and for a while Christian Spain shone like the moon, with a borrowed

light; then came the eclipse, and in that darkness Spain has grovelled ever since. The true memorial of the Moors is seen in the desolate tracts of utter barrenness, where once the Moslem grew luxuriant vines, olives and yellow ears of corn; in a stupid ignorant population where once art and learning flourished, in the general stagnation and degradation of a people which has hopelessly fallen in the scale of nations and has deserved its humiliation.

Professor Gilberto Freyre, himself of Iberian origin, has given us a comprehensive picture of the cross-currents of social, political, economic, and cultural ties that bound the Africans and Arabs to the Portuguese and Spaniards. He writes:

This penetration was facilitated not alone by the dominant position of the African race, but also by its tendency to polygamy. Abdul-Aziz-ibn-Muza not only wed the widow of Roderico, but took many Christian virgins for his concubines. On the other hand, Ramiro II of Leon, fascinated by the beauty of a Saracen maid of noble lineage—undoubtedly one of those who later became “enchanted Moorish damsels”—slew his legitimate wife and married the exotic creature by whom he had a numerous progeny. The two cases are typical: on the one hand, a violent penetration of the conquered people by the polygamous invader, through their womenfolk; and on the other, the attraction exerted by the Saracen women, especially when of noble birth, upon men of the defeated race.

The noble families of Portugal, as in Spain, that absorbed the blood of the Arab or the Moor were innumerable. Some of the knights, who in the wars of reconquest, most distinguished themselves by the Moor-killing ardour of their Christianity, had such blood, the blood of the infidel, in their veins. On the other hand, there must have been much Spanish or Portuguese orthodox Christian blood in the Mohammedans who emigrated to Africa. It is known that the African reflux carried with it even Franciscan friars, polygamous ones, with an overfondness for women. There was many a Mem or Mendo, many a Pelagio, many a Soeiro, many an Egas, many a Gonçalo—many who, one would have said, to judge from their Christian fervour, were Hispano-Goths without the slightest trace of Islamism in their ancestry, but who in reality were Portuguese with a Moorish or Arabian grandfather or grandmother. Of the Count of Coimbra, Dom Sessando, the chronicles tell us that he was a mixed-blood, of Christian and Moor, and that he was even vizier among the Saracens. And we know that another mixed-blood, Dom Fifes Serrasim, became a member of the Christian nobility by marrying a Mendes de Bragança.

No means of identifying the Hispanos and Moors, Christians and infidels, conquered and conqueror, nobles and plebeians in Portuguese society is more uncertain than individual and family names. Races, cultures, and social classes were so jumbled in the peninsula that the weight attached to the feet of some through slavery or the spoils of war never succeeded in preventing them from fluctuating anew.

Alexandre Herculano observes that, following the intense miscibility that accompanied the invasion, names of mixed lineage became common: Pelagio Iban Alafe, Egas Abdallah Argeriquiz, etc. This gives a good idea of the degree of social compromise between the conquered and their conquerors.¹

¹ Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and the Slaves*, pp. 215-16.

THE MALI AND THE SONGHAI EMPIRES

THE history of the Ghana Empire and of the Almoravids tends to support Leo Africanus when he writes that the people of the Western (now French) Sudan excel all other Negroes in wit, civility, and industry. Leo Africanus based his statement not only on the Ghana and the Almoravid Empires, but also on the subsequent Mali and Songhai Empires. According to Bovill:

The virile peoples of the Western Sudan have always been distinguished for commercial enterprise, martial ardour, and aptitude for the art of government. From the happy combination of these qualities there sprang a number of political States to which the grandiose style of empire is often loosely assigned. None, however, can challenge the fairness of its application to the great Mandingo kingdom which is known as the empire of Mali or Mande, and is sometimes called the Mellestine.¹

It is stated by some writers, including Messrs Gibb and Labouret,² that the name Mali is the Fulani pronunciation of Mande or Manding, and so is strictly the name of the ruling tribe and not, as is sometimes believed, the name of a town.

In historical accounts we find the name Mali being applied to a town, the capital of the Mali Empire, just as Ghana was the capital of the Ghana Empire. We know for certain, however, that the first capital of the Mali Empire was Djeriba, and later on the capital was transferred to Niani.

What was the Mali Empire? How did it come into being? How did it end? To answer these questions let us go back to 1050, when the Almoravids—the Senegalese—under Yasin and Abu Bekr were attacking the outlying districts of the Ghana Empire. It was in that same year that we first hear of one Baramendana, the ruler of the Mali kingdom,

¹ E. W. Bovill, *Caravans of the Old Sahara*, p. 67.

² H. A. R. Gibb, *Ibn Battuta* (1929), p. 379, n. 19. H. Labouret, in *Ency. Islam*, III, p. 203.

embracing the Mohammedan faith. Baramendana subsequently made a pilgrimage to Mecca, a practice which was faithfully followed by his successors.

In 1076, twenty-six years after Baramendana's conversion to the Mohammedan faith, we find the Ghana Empire being overthrown by the Almoravids under Abu Bekr. After Abu Bekr's death in 1087 several kingdoms within the original Ghana Empire strove for and won their independence, and in due course the original Ghana kingdom, the nucleus of the Ghana Empire, also won its independence.

In 1203 one of the original vassal States of the Ghana Empire, the Susu kingdom,¹ found itself strong enough to go to war with the original Ghana kingdom. In that same year, Sumanguru, the Susu king, captured Ghana, and many Moslems left the city for distant Walata because Sumanguru was known to be a pagan.

Throughout this phase of African history the Mali kingdom continued to prosper. And when Sumanguru took Ghana in 1203 he discovered, to his surprise, that little Mali was becoming a powerful kingdom. He decided to strike, and delivered a succession of blows first at the military power of the kingdom and then at the ruling house of Mali.

Sumanguru put to death eleven brothers, all heirs to the Mali throne, but he spared the twelfth, a cripple child named Sundiata. As the years passed, Sundiata grew in strength and gradually recovered from his infirmity. When finally he attained manhood and ascended the throne of Mali in 1230, he was able to lay the foundations for Mali's imperial greatness and to win for himself the title *Mari Jata*, a name by which he is remembered even to this day by the Mandingoes of Sierra Leone and the surrounding territory, for Sundiata, or *Mari Jata*, is correctly regarded by the Mandingoes as their national hero.

But Sundiata did not mount the Mali throne as a popular hero. In fact his subjects hated and feared him. He could not count on the loyalty of his subjects, and his position as king was a rather precarious one; therefore his first task was

¹ Mention must be made of the Sosso Empire, which preceded the Mali Empire by a few decades. Sosso (Soso or Susu) people swept over the Western Sudan toward the end of the twelfth century, but the empire they created did not last and was soon swallowed up by Mali power. *Susu* people can today be found in French Guinea and in Sierra Leone.

to enlist the support of some of the best hunters and the most brutal toughs in the kingdom for his bodyguard.

Sundiata struck his first blow at the neighbouring kingdom of Sangaran, over which one of his uncles ruled. The uncle was quick to come to his knees, and soon became one of Sundiata's field generals with a better organized army. Sundiata then turned westward and conquered Labe, in the Futa Jallon area; he then turned eastward, crossed the Niger, and subdued all who opposed him. After several years of active campaigning, he returned to Djeriba, his capital, in 1234 in triumphal procession.

In 1235, Sumanguru, the Susu king, decided to challenge Sundiata, and the two armies met at the Battle of Kirina. Sumanguru was defeated and killed and the Susu kingdom became part of Sundiata's fast-growing Empire. Five years later, in 1240, Sundiata—Mari Jata—struck at the old city of Ghana and blotted it from the face of the earth.¹ Thus vanished the city that had known prosperity and adversity for a thousand years, the city that had once been the capital of a great empire. But the name Ghana persisted, for the ruler of the area around the old city continued to use that name to describe his district, and even Sundiata himself was compelled to allow this chief to call himself king of Ghana as a last tribute to the memory of Ghana. No other ruler or chief in Sundiata's Mali Empire was allowed to call himself king.

¹ There is some confusion as to the exact cause of the disappearance of the city of Ghana from the map of Africa. There is general agreement on the point that Sundiata destroyed Ghana in 1240, but there are perhaps grounds for the view that the city was not completely destroyed then. Maurice Delafosse, in his book *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, published in 1912, states that Ghana was completely destroyed in 1240, but in 1924 he revised his opinion in an article which he contributed to the *Bulletin du comité d'études historiques et scientifiques de L'Afrique Occidentale Française* (July-September 1924) and here attributed the final disappearance of Ghana to "the progressive drying up of the region, of which we now possess proofs." Ibn Khaldoun claims to have met in 1393 a Ghana citizen travelling in Egypt. Again, Raymond Lull, who suffered martyrdom in North Africa in 1315, records that the Pope sent a special investigator to Ghana sometime after Lull's first visit to North Africa. The present view that the city of Ghana just dried up appears not to be supported by the very limited finds made recently at Koumbi Salem. The Ghana citizen whom Ibn Khaldoun met in 1393 may have been a subject of the King of Ghana, because there was a King of Ghana after 1240. It is not so easy to explain Raymond Lull's account. According to Raymond Lull, the special investigator sent by the Pope to Ghana reported that the city had "princes who were idolators and who worshipped the sun, stars, birds and beasts, they being tall Negroes who obey no law." Could this really have been a description of Ghana city in the light of all the available records?

It was Sundiata who moved the Mali capital from Djeriba to Niani on the Upper Niger, some 300 miles north-east of modern Sierra Leone. The city of Niani no longer exists, but a village by the same name now occupies the former site of this once-famous capital. When Sundiata started developing his new capital of Niani, he devoted himself solely to the economic and social development of his Empire and never again took the field in person; but his generals extended his Empire from the Atlantic to Kano, Katsina, and Zaria in the east, into the thick forests of the south, and north well into the desert. Sundiata's generals reached the Gambia River and incorporated present-day Gambia within the Mali Empire.

Even before the Mali conquest of the Gambia the gold-fields of Wangara had been added to the Mali Empire. Sundiata tried to convert the Wangaras to the Moslem faith, but this led to the Wangara people refusing to work the gold-mines. In the end Sundiata was compelled to allow them to worship as they liked. He died in 1255, after a brilliant reign of twenty-five years. Professor Groves writes of him as follows:

It was Sundiata, the conqueror of Ghana, who laid the foundation of Mali's imperial greatness in the thirteenth century. He not only pursued a vigorous policy of military conquest that raised his little kingdom to a powerful State, but developed a wise administration of his territories, and is said, for example, to have encouraged agriculture, and the more extensive cultivation of cotton.¹

Sundiata's successor was his peace-loving son, Mansa Ule. ("Mansa" is often translated "Sultan.") Mansa Ule paid the usual visit to Mecca, the Mali practice which Baramendana established in 1050. His visit to Mecca, coming as it did little more than two centuries after Baramendana, when Mali was no longer a small kingdom but a fast-expanding empire, carried with it an additional respect for the African. Mansa Ule loved peace, but his generals, who had seen active service under Sundiata, were not content to remain at home doing nothing; they accordingly went out and conquered more lands, and added Bamkuk, Konkodugu, and Gangaran to the Mali Empire.

During the thirty years after Sundiata's death the Mali

¹ C. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, pp. 95-6.

Empire had four rulers, none of whom came anywhere near Sundiata in either military or civic ability. In 1285 the position became so bad that Sakura, a freed slave of the royal house, seized the throne and proclaimed himself emperor. Sakura was an ambitious and able man and undertook several successful military expeditions against his neighbours. In the west he conquered the Tucolors, or Tekrur, and in the east he conquered the Songhai of Gao, who were then becoming a power in the middle Niger.

Under the ex-slave Sakura, the Mali Empire became commercially prosperous and merchants from all over Africa and the Middle East came to trade. In 1300 Sakura decided, when returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca, to avoid the customary route through Cairo and to return home by way of Axum and the eastern Sudan (now Anglo-Egyptian Sudan). We do not know Sakura's motives for avoiding the customary route, but we do know that when he left the boat and set foot again on African soil he was assassinated by the Danakil on the coast of Tadjurah, on the Somaliland seaboard.

Sakura had been a strong and powerful ruler, and during his fifteen years on the throne of Mali he had done something to recapture part of the spirit of Sundiata. As in the case of most able rulers, Sakura's reign was followed by that of rulers who left very little impression on the course of history. In the short space of seven years three undistinguished men—Gau, Mamadu, and Abu Bekr II—succeeded in turn to the Mali throne.

In 1307 there mounted the imperial throne of Mali one whose name became almost a legend in Europe, Asia, and Africa—Mansa Musa. Some historians claim that Mansa Musa's father was Kankan Musa. But this theory appears to be unwarranted, and we are inclined to accept the views of those historians who hold that Mansa Musa was sometimes called Kankan Musa and sometimes Gongo Musa by French writers.

Some historians claim Mansa Musa as the grandson of Sundiata. The truth is almost certainly that Mansa Musa was the son of Abu Bekr II, who was the son of a sister of Sundiata's; so that in fact Mansa Musa was the grand-nephew of Sundiata.

It is commonly believed that, with the possible exception of Sundiata, Mansa Musa was the most illustrious of the Mali (Mandingo) kings and emperors. He was the great showman, and it was indeed his showmanship which gained him renown in Europe and advertised his empire to the rest of the world.

It was in 1324, some seventeen years after Mansa Musa had ascended the imperial throne of Mali, that the world awoke to the splendour and grandeur of Mali. There across the African desert, and making its way to Mecca, was a caravan of a size which had never before been seen, a caravan consisting of 60,000 men. They were Mansa Musa's men, and Mansa Musa was with them. He was not going to war: he was merely going to worship in Mecca.

The huge caravan included a personal retinue of 12,000 slaves, all dressed in brocade and Persian silk. Mansa Musa himself rode on horseback, and directly preceding him were 500 slaves, each carrying a staff of gold weighing about six pounds (500 mitkal). Then came Mansa Musa's baggage-train of eighty camels, each carrying 300 pounds (three kantar) weight of gold dust. This imposing caravan made its way from Niani on the Upper Niger to Walata, then to Tuat, and then on to Cairo.

Mansa Musa's piety and open-handed generosity, the fine clothes and good behaviour of his followers, all quickly made a favourable impression. One might have thought that a pilgrimage to Mecca undertaken with so much pomp and ceremony would have ulterior political motives, but no such motives have ever been adduced, and historians record that it was with difficulty that Mansa Musa was persuaded even to pay a formal visit to the Sultan of Egypt. As one writer has put it, the Sultan of Egypt was so honoured by this visit that when the time came for Mansa Musa to continue his journey the Sultan made elaborate arrangements to ensure the utmost comfort for the Negro potentate.

For years after Mansa Musa's visit, ordinary people in the streets of Cairo, Mecca, and Baghdad talked about this wonderful pilgrimage—a pilgrimage which led to the devaluation of gold in the Middle East for several years.

On his return journey, Mansa Musa was accompanied by the celebrated Granada poet and architect, Es Saheli, whom

he had met in Mecca, a fact which testifies to the close links which even then existed between Africa and Spain.

When Mansa Musa was crossing the desert, news reached him that Gao, the Songhai capital, had been captured by one of his generals, Sagmandia. The Songhai kingdom of Gao measured 1,000 miles across, so that the conquest meant an enormous extension of the Mali Empire. Mansa Musa was so overjoyed at this new addition to his Empire that he decided to delay his return to Niani and to visit Gao instead. At Gao the King of Songhai came to make his personal submission, and his two sons, Ali Kolen and Sulayman Nar, were given up as hostages. Mansa Musa then went on to Timbuktu, the second most important Songhai town.

In both Gao and Timbuktu, Es Saheli was commissioned to build mosques. The mosque at Gao, built of burnt brick, was still being admired as late as the seventeenth century.

Mansa Musa developed Timbuktu as a commercial city having caravan connections with Egypt, Anjila, Ghadamer, Fez, Sus, Sijilmasa, Tuat, Dra'a, and Fezzan. Side by side with trade and commerce came the encouragement of culture and learning. The scholars were mainly learned theologians, well versed in Koranic theology and law, who made the mosque of Sankore in Timbuktu their centre of instruction and who laid the foundations of the University of Sankore. This university was to bring learning not only to Africa but also to the whole of the Middle East; its most eminent scholar is believed to have been Professor Ahmed Baba, a great historian, often quoted by the author of the *Tarikh-es-Sudan*, which was published by the university and which is believed to have been edited in 1640.

Whether we think of the University of Sankore, or of the commerce and trade of Timbuktu, or of improved methods of architectural work in Gao and Timbuktu, and indeed in the whole of the Mali Empire, it is to Mansa Musa that we must turn our minds; the man who was master of the Mali Empire from 1307 until his death in 1332.

An English historian pays Mansa Musa this tribute:

He left behind him an empire which in the history of purely African States was as remarkable for its size as for its wealth, and

which provided a striking example of the capacity of the Negro for political organization.¹

Let us also pay tribute to Mansa Musa, the man who came nearest to building a united West Africa. Such were the affairs of West Africa at that time that, whether you lived in the Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast, the Gold Coast, Togoland, Dahomey, or Nigeria, you could not help but feel the power and strength of the Mali Empire, the empire which sought to fuse all West Africa into one whole.

No one wishes to give up his freedom readily to another, even though the final goal might well be in the general interest of the community and in the general interest of humanity. And such were the links between West Africans and such were the pressing impulses to break open the unifying force of the Mali Empire, that exactly a year after Mansa Musa's death we find the warlike Mossi of Yatenga on the Upper Volta raiding the Mali Empire, which was now being governed by Mansa Musa's weak son, Maghan. The Mossi of Yatenga raided as far north as Timbuktu, routed the Mandingo garrison, and burnt down the city.

The weak Maghan thus prepared the way for the eventual overthrow of the Mali Empire. But this was no sudden affair.

¹ E. W. Bovill, *Caravans of the Old Sahara*, p. 74.

THE SONGHAI EMPIRE

MAGHAN, ruler of the Mali Empire, gave his next exhibition of weakness by granting undue freedom to the two Songhai princes, Ali Kolen and Sulayman Nar, who were being held as hostages at his Court. The two brothers eventually made good their escape to Gao, where Ali Kolen was proclaimed king in 1335 with the title "Sonni," meaning "Liberator." Ali Kolen soon succeeded in making the old Songhai capital of Gao independent of the Mali Empire.

There were signs everywhere that the Empire was about to break up when Maghan was succeeded as Emperor by his uncle Sulayman, brother of Mansa Musa. Sulayman immediately set about mending the broken fortunes of Mali, but he was unable to bring Gao back into the Empire. He did, however, succeed in keeping the other Songhai towns and cities under Mali domination and he was also able to consolidate the northern sections of the Empire and to restore Mali prestige. In 1351 he made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and in the following year the Mali Empire was visited by the great Seville and Tunisian historian, Ibn Battuta.

Ibn Battuta visited the imperial Court of Mali in 1352, and he appears to have been impressed with much that he saw. He said of the inhabitants of the Mali Empire:

The Negroes possess some admirable qualities. They are seldom unjust, and have a greater abhorrence of injustice than any other people. Their sultan shows no mercy to anyone who is guilty of the least act of it. There is complete security in their country. Neither traveller nor inhabitant in it has anything to fear from robbers or men of violence. They do not confiscate the property of any white man who dies in their country, even if it be uncounted wealth. On the contrary they give it into the charge of some trustworthy person among the whites, until the rightful heir takes possession of it. They are careful to observe the hours of prayer, and assiduous in attending them in congregations, and in bringing up their children to them.

Ibn Battuta spent eight months in Niani, capital of the

Mali Empire, and he took his final leave of the city at the end of February 1353. Six years later, in 1359, the Emperor Sulayman died.

Immediately after his death, civil war broke out in Mali, for Kamba, who succeeded his father Sulayman, was at once challenged by Maghan's son. Kamba was defeated and killed by his rival, who subsequently ruled as Mari Jata II. Mari Jata II made a point of cultivating the friendship of the Sultan of Morocco and maintaining an amicable relationship with Egypt. He was noted for his extravagance and is reported by Ibn Khaldoun to have sold the huge and world-famous gold nugget of Ghana to some Egyptian merchants. He died of sleeping sickness in 1374.

The successors of Mari Jata II governed the Mali Empire as best they could, but Gao remained independent, and its rulers, the successors of Ali Kolen, spread their influence to surrounding countries, although they did not actually conquer new territories. The Songhai city of Timbuktu remained under Mali domination until 1433, when the Tuareg dwellers of the Sahara desert, under Akil ag Malwal, the chief of the Maghcharen and leader of the Tuaregs who had earlier captured Timbuktu, found the city life unbearable and longed for the wide open spaces of the desert. Akil accordingly appointed to the office of Timbuktu Koi (governor) one Mohammed Naddi, who had formerly held that office under the Mandingoes of Mali.

Mohammed Naddi was to collect all taxes, and to retain a third. The remaining two-thirds was to be paid out to Akil ag Malwal. Mohammed Naddi died and was succeeded as Timbuktu Koi by his son Omar. Omar had expected the old arrangements between his father and Akil to continue, but to Omar's surprise and disgust, Akil took to descending on the city to collect the taxes whenever they were due, and his followers added the practice of carrying out house-searching parties and violating the Timbuktu women.

Omar decided to seek help against Akil and he accordingly sent a secret message to Sonni Ali, the Songhai ruler of Gao. Sonni Ali collected a formidable army, and made his way toward Timbuktu. As his army approached the city, it was sighted by both Akil and Omar. The sight of such a huge army quite unnerved Omar, who clearly forgot

that he had invited Sonni Ali; he joined the ranks of the flying Akil and both made good their escape to Walata, accompanied by most of the professors and lecturers of Sankore University.

In January 1468 Sonni Ali entered Timbuktu and put many of the citizens to the sword as retribution for their friendship with the Tuaregs who were the hereditary enemies of the Songhai. The Songhai towns and villages, including Timbuktu, had from very early times been the constant prey of the nomadic Tuaregs.

Sonni Ali, who had only mounted the Songhai throne of Gao in 1464, was glad to incorporate Timbuktu into his kingdom. He next turned his attention to Djenne, an old-established commercial city which appears to have been founded in A.D. 800, but which had been rebuilt on the old site in 1250 by the Soninke Sono. Djenne is of particular interest, since the chiefs of the city have come from the same family from 1250 to this day.

Djenne, pronounced by the inhabitants Dhi-enne, is still one of the marvels of Africa. It was surrounded by a gigantic natural moat and by a network of waterways which, besides making it easily accessible, gave it security against attackers. It is commonly admitted that in Timbuktu commerce and education were constantly interrupted by desert politics, whereas Djenne's natural defences secured her against enemy attack and made it possible for the city to imbibe, preserve, and diffuse the cultural heritage of the West African Empires.

The people of Djenne claim that their city was able to resist ninety-nine sieges in the course of its history, and that the only person who succeeded in capturing Djenne was Sonni Ali, Songhai ruler of Gao and conqueror of Timbuktu. His victory over Djenne involved a siege which lasted seven years, seven months, and seven days. The odd thing about this siege was that Sonni Ali reached the limit of his endurance just as the inhabitants also felt that they must give in. The attackers were just making ready to lift the siege when Djenne surrendered. Sonni Ali received the vanquished as equals and accorded an honourable reception to the young king of Djenne.

Sonni Ali returned to Gao, his capital, in 1476, after an

absence of eight years, and found that his growing power and wealth were beginning to provoke the Mossi of Yatenga. It will be recalled that in 1333 the growing power of the Mali Empire had led the Mossi of Yatenga to strike at Timbuktu. Now they prepared for a more daring venture, and in 1470 the Mossi, under their great warrior king Nassere, marched north-westward into the desert and attacked distant Walata. For a month the Mossi laid siege to the city, which eventually capitulated. They seized much booty, including women and children, and made their way toward their home on the Volta; they were, however, pursued by Omar, the former Timbuktu governor, who was able to recover most of the captives.

Not long after this daring exploit by the Mossi of Yatenga, Sonni Ali of Gao sought to add Walata to what had now become the Songhai Empire. Sonni Ali proposed to dig a canal from Lake Fagbine to Walata so that it could easily be reached by forces from Gao. The digging of the canal was begun, but in 1483 the work was suspended indefinitely because the Mossi of Yatenga, under Nassere, were attacking parts of the Songhai Empire. Sonni Ali defeated the Mossi just south of Lake Debo and pursued the remnants of their forces to Yatenga on the Volta.

Sonni Ali, the founder of the Songhai Empire, was drowned in 1492, while crossing a river during a raid on the Zaghvani and the Fulani of Gurma. He had been on the Songhai throne for twenty-eight years. In that time he had transformed a small and insignificant kingdom into a formidable empire, and at the time of his death his people had unequalled power and prestige in the Western (French) Sudan. "The hegemony of the Sudan exercised by Mali for two and a half centuries (c. 1238-1488) passed in due course to Songhay."¹

Sonni Ali has been described as someone who paid lip-service to the Mohammedan religion and who had a contempt for theologians and men of letters. He is generally regarded as having been too cruel and too ambitious, but it is also agreed that his worst crimes were generally followed by deep remorse. Whatever his faults as a person, there is no doubt that he was a great ruler and conqueror.

¹ G. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, p. 97.



He was succeeded for a short time by his son, Bakari Da'a. Bakari Da'a met a dangerous rival in the person of Mohammed Ture, who had been one of Sonni Ali's principal lieutenants. Mohammed Ture had considerable influence, and a large section of the army was behind him. Bakari Da'a was at first able to defeat Mohammed Ture's forces, but at the Battle of Angoo, near Gao, Bakari Da'a was hopelessly defeated and had to run for his life. With the defeat of Bakari Da'a in 1493, there ended the Za Dynasty of Songhai which had ruled for eighteen centuries. As the new ruler of Songhai, Mohammed Ture chose to call himself Askia Mohammed I.

Tradition has it that when the daughters of Sonni Ali heard Mohammed Ture proclaim himself king in Gao, they cried out, *A si kyi a*, meaning, "He shall not be." Mohammed Ture there and then ordered that this should be the royal title of himself and his successors.

Askia Mohammed I, often known as Askia the Great, proved to be one of the greatest rulers that Africa has ever seen. For our knowledge of his life and work we are indebted principally to the writings of Leo Africanus, who has been described as a man with many engaging qualities, of which frankness was not the least. Leo Africanus writes of himself:

For mine owne part, when I heare the Africans evill spoken of, I will affirme my selfe to be one of Granada: and when I perceiue the nation of Granada to be discommended, then will I professe myselfe, to be an African.¹

Leo Africanus was a Moor who was born in 1494 in Granada, Spain. His parents named him Al Hassan ibn Mohammed, which name he still had when his family moved to North Africa. His family was influential, well-off, and well educated.

At a very early age Leo Africanus left home to shift for himself, and such was his educational standing even then, that at the age of fourteen he was made to act as Qadi in a town. He was later to serve as soldier, merchant, ambassador, and in other capacities. By the age of twenty-five he

¹ Leo Africanus, *The History and Description of Africa*, translated by John Pory, edited by Dr R. Brown, Hakluyt Society.

had visited Turkey, West Africa, and several parts of the Middle East, including Persia. He crossed the Mediterranean several times, and on one of these voyages he was captured by some Christian pirates off Jerba, the Island of the Lotus Eaters.

The pirates, finding Leo Africanus very well educated, took him to Rome and presented him to Pope Medici Leo X. He was granted his freedom, professed conversion from the Islamic to the Christian faith, and was baptized. The Pope, his godfather, gave him his own name, and he became Giovanni Leone. He was given a pension and spent many years in Rome reading, writing, and enjoying the society of intellectuals. His world-famous book, *The History and Description of Africa*, was written in Italian and published in Rome; it soon appeared in French, Latin, and English. For centuries, Leo Africanus's writings served to correct some of the false pictures painted by such writers as the author of *Some Years Travels into Divers Parts of Asia and Afrique* (London 1634), who writes of the West Coast tribes: "Let one character serve them all; they look like chimney sweepers; are of no profession except rapine and villainy makes one."

Leo Africanus, who visited Djenne, Mali, Timbuktu, and Gao, informs us that Djenne was called by the Moors Gheneoa, by the native inhabitants Genni, and by the Portuguese and the other people of Europe, Ghinea. Leo adds that a gold currency was in use in the city.

At Timbuktu, Leo Africanus was impressed with the palace and the mosque which had been built two centuries earlier for Mansa Musa. He records finding in Timbuktu a "great store of doctors, judges, priests, and other learned men, that are bountifully maintained at the king's expense." He also records seeing "divers manuscripts and books which were being sold for more money than any other merchandise."¹

To return to Askia Mohammed I, the great African ruler about whom Leo Africanus wrote so much, it has already been pointed out that he was formerly, as Mohammed Ture, one of the principal lieutenants of Sonni Ali. Lady Lugard regards Sonni Ali as the last of the great pagans of the African

¹ op. cit.

continent, and focuses attention on how Sonni Ali and his lieutenant, who became the Moslem Askia, met at a dramatic moment in the history of the western Sudan. She says, significantly:

Standing as they do side by side on the field of history, Sonni Ali and his great minister must be taken as representing in the Sudan the genius of paganism and the genius of Islam clasping hands in a salute before their respective roads cross and part! ¹

It is perhaps unfair to regard Sonni Ali as a pagan, for he claimed to be a Mohammedan, even though he had no use for theologians who were friendly to those whom he regarded as the enemies of his people. Askia Mohammed I, on the other hand, went out of his way to impress others with his devotion to Islam. Some historians assert that Askia Mohammed's devotion to Allah was a diplomatic move to win the support of the Moslem world since he was a usurper to the Songhai throne of Gao. Be that as it may, Felix Dubois is right when he says of Askia that pious Moslem biographers regarded him as "a brilliant light shining after a great darkness; a saviour who drew the servants of God from idolatry and the country from ruin. The Defender of the Faithful, who scattered joy, gifts and alms around him." ²

There is no doubt that during Askia's long reign of thirty-five years the Mohammedan religion gained a strong foothold throughout West Africa, including the Sudan. In 1498, the year after his return from a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he was appointed the Caliph of Songhai and given the title Askia Mohammed el Hadj, Askia sent a message to Nassere, the Mossi King of Yatenga, calling upon him and his people to embrace Islam. According to the *Tarikh-es-Sudan*:

The Emir (meaning Askia Mohammed I) sent an ambassador to the King of Mossi demanding his conversion to Islam. The monarch replied, saying he must take counsel with his ancestors who were in the other world." ³

¹ Lady Flora L. S. Lugard, *A Tropical Dependency*, p. 173. See also C. P. Groves, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

² Felix Dubois, *Timbuctoo the Mysterious*, p. 109.

³ See Felix Dubois, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-12; and C. P. Groves, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

Askia regarded the reply as unsatisfactory, insulting, and evasive, and he accordingly marched on the Mossi, killed many of them, and destroyed their crops. The Mossi people, however, retained their independence and were not absorbed into the Songhai Empire.

Between 1498 and 1520 Askia Mohammed I conquered areas extending from Mali country eastward to Kano and Katsina and northward into the desert. It has been said of him that although he

had given to his kingdom a territorial extent greater than at any time in its history, his greatest service to his people was to teach them organized government by which alone could security and prosperity be achieved. These two conditions of life were found wherever he ruled.¹

Lady Lugard has described Askia Mohammed I as a great and distinguished general who was indeed "more remarkable for the qualities which usually characterize great civilians. He appears to have been a man of liberal principles and large views, naturally humane, and disposed to temper justice with mercy, more than usually cultivated, active, wise and firm."²

Askia the Great esteemed scholars and surrounded himself with them. He recalled the scholars and learned men of Timbuktu from distant Walata, where they had taken refuge, and he succeeded in transforming Walata, Gao, Timbuktu, and Djenne into university cities. Under his rule the University of Sankore became one of the world's greatest seats of learning.

It was not only in his attitude to the learned professions that Askia showed his greatness. If anyone ever understood the art of governing a vast empire on the basis of full civil liberties and justice for minorities it was he. He created a large regular army for the protection of the Empire. For administrative purposes, he divided his Empire into regional governments and instituted a Household with duties at Court. There were governors for Dendi (Gunguia), the district between Lake Debo and that part of the Sahel to the west of the Niger, for Gurma, Hombori, and the Aribinda.

¹ E. W. Bovill, *Caravans of the Old Sahara*, p. 99.

² Lady Lugard, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

He had a Master of the Palace, a Commander of the Flotilla, officers responsible for tax-collecting, and a Minister for Forestry and Fisheries.

Askia the Great knew the true meaning of religious toleration, for though he was himself a Mohammedan, he never displayed the religious fanaticism which had hitherto been associated with Islam. As a full-blooded African, he appreciated the fine qualities in indigenous African religions, and he created the post of High Priest in Charge of the Ancestor and Spirit Cult.

He encouraged the development of the natural resources of the country. He sank new wells and created water-courses in order to bring water to desert regions, thus succeeding in extending the agricultural area far to the north of the Niger. This positive action on the part of a highly enlightened ruler checked the encroachment of the desert on the regions further south.

Askia the Great was in constant communication with the Moroccan reformer, El Merhili, and it is held that Askia never lacked the universality of outlook which is the hallmark of true greatness and which has always been associated with high spiritual and cultural values.

West Africa was indeed at the zenith of its material, spiritual, and cultural glory. Well has Askia the Great been described as perhaps the greatest monarch that ever ruled in the Western Sudan. His brilliant and illustrious reign came to an end in 1528. For thirty-five years he had ruled the Songhai Empire, and now he was to lay down his office, not to die, but because he had grown too old to control his disloyal sons Musa, Daud, and Ismail.

These sons of his rose up in open revolt and killed their uncle Yahia, who had gone to implore them to be loyal to their father. They marched on Gao, the capital of the Songhai Empire, and Askia was forced to abdicate in favour of Musa. Thus ended the reign of one of the greatest African rulers, if not the greatest, that Africa ever had. Unfortunately for Askia, he had many more years to live, years of misery, degradation, humiliation, and despair. For a time he was banished to a small mosquito-infested island on the Niger, but he was eventually brought home to Gao by his son Ismail, and he died there in 1542, exactly a year after

his return from banishment. With the death of Askia the Great we enter upon the last phases of the Songhai Empire, the last of the West African Empires.

WEST AFRICAN EMPIRES

The Ghana Kingdom and the Ghana Empire	c. A.D. 300-1076
The Mali Empire	1238-1488
The Songhai Empire	1488-1591

IMPORTANT RULERS OF THE MALI EMPIRE

Sundiata, Mari Jata (who was ruler of the Mali Kingdom in 1230 and in 1238 became the founder of the Mali Empire)	1238-1255
Sakura	1285-1300
Mansa Musa	1307-1332
Maghan and Sulayman	1332-1359
Mari Jata II	1359-1374
Musa II	1374-1390

IMPORTANT RULERS OF THE SONGHAI EMPIRE

Sonni Ali (who mounted the throne of the Songhai Kingdom in 1464 and in 1488 became the founder of the Songhai Empire)	1488-1492
Bakari Da'a	1492-1493
Askia Mohammed I, Askia the Great	1493-1528
Musa	1528-1531
Askia Ismail and Askia Ishak I	1531-1549
Askia Daud	1549-1582
Askia Ishak II (during the latter part of whose reign Moroccan forces invaded the Songhai Empire)	1582-1591

THE END OF THE WEST AFRICAN
EMPIRES

ISMAIL did not long survive his father, Askia the Great, for he died a year later, in 1543. Both Ismail and his successor, Askia Ishak I, proved themselves to be extremely able and warlike rulers, and they both brought glory to the Songhai Empire. Askia Ishak I was able to capture Niani, the Mali capital, but he made no attempt to occupy it permanently.

It was during Askia Ishak's reign that the Sultan of Morocco began to take a sinister interest in West African affairs. The valuable salt-mines of Taghaza formed part of the Songhai Empire, and as salt was a very important commodity to all the inhabitants of the western Sudan, the mines at Taghaza were considered a precious asset. The Sultan of Morocco, Mulay el Aarejd, realizing what a great hold he could have on the West African trade if only he could gain possession of the salt-mines at Taghaza, invited Askia Ishak I in 1546 to cede the mines to Morocco.

Askia Ishak I felt insulted by this invitation to cede part of his imperial domains, and he immediately sent a force of 2,000 Tuaregs from the desert to raid the country of Dra'a, which lay to the south of Marrakesh in Morocco. Ishak died in 1549, a well-honoured ruler and one who had maintained the prestige of Songhai.

Daud succeeded Ishak in 1549 and became Askia Daud. He maintained the martial spirit of his ancestors, and within a very short time he had gone to war with the Mossi, and with the Fulani of Massina, and had picked a quarrel with Kebbi and Katsina in northern Nigeria. Askia Daud was so sure of the courage and fighting ability of his subjects that he sent a raiding party of twenty-four horsemen to attack the city of Katsina. These resolute men hurled themselves at 400 Katsina horsemen who had come out to meet them.

Needless to say, Daud's men were overpowered. Fifteen of them were killed in the struggle, and the remaining nine, being wounded, were quickly captured; but the ruler of Katsina sent them back to Askia Daud with the message: "Men of such incomparable valour do not deserve to die."

Askia Daud maintained his martial ardour and he was soon sacking Busa and invading the Mali kingdom, routing the Mandingo army in 1555. It looked now as if the Songhai Empire was destined to last for a very long time; but far away, on the northernmost outpost of the Empire, new developments were taking place. The people of Morocco had taken their revenge for Askia Ishak's raid on Dra'a country by killing the Songhai governor of Taghaza as well as a number of Tuaregs who were engaged in carrying salt to the south. The survivors of this Moroccan attack applied to Askia Daud for permission to abandon the salt-mines of Taghaza and to work another mine which they knew existed to the south. In 1557 a new salt-mine was opened up between Taghaza and Taodeni, and it was named Taghaza el Ghizlan, or Taghaza of the Gazelles.

This brought peace at last and there was no further trouble from Morocco for twenty-one years. But, "in August 1578 Europe received from Morocco news so grave that it profoundly shocked the whole of Christendom."¹ How could something affecting Europe ultimately affect the destiny of West Africa?

Early in 1578, Sultan Mohammed XI, sometimes called the Black Sultan because of his colour, appealed to Dom Sebastian, King of Portugal, to help him recover the throne which his uncle, Abdul Malek, had usurped.

The young King of Portugal regarded this invitation as a fine opportunity to settle an old score which his people had with the Moors. Sultan Mohammed XI had promised Dom Sebastian a permanent foothold on the Moroccan coast; and it was this promise which made Europe more than usually interested in the campaign. Dom Sebastian landed at Tangiers with 17,000 men, Europeans recruited from several countries. There were Portuguese, Germans, Italians, and several hundred papal troops under the command of an Englishman named Stukeley.

¹ E. W. Bovill, *Caravans of the Old Sahara*, p. 151.

Abdul Malek, uncle of Mohammed XI, was mortally ill when he heard that the Christians had invaded Morocco; but he immediately placed himself at the head of his army and fell on the invaders at El Ksar el Kebir.

Both Sultan Mohammed XI and King Dom Sebastian of Portugal were killed in the battle, and Abdul Malek died in his litter in the hour of victory. Mohammed XI was flayed and his body stuffed and paraded throughout the principal cities of Morocco.

Who was to ascend the throne of Morocco? The choice fell on a younger brother of Abdul Malek, a man barely thirty, the man who was one day to seal the fate of the West African Empires. Mulay Ahmed El Mansur unexpectedly found himself Sultan of Morocco, Sultan of a Morocco which had struck terror into the heart of Europe. Europe came to do him honour, and even Portugal, still bleeding from wounds recently inflicted, sent him a sumptuous bed of State made of cloth of gold, a dagger set with rubies, and precious works of art from China and the Indies. The King of France and the Sultan of Turkey appointed ambassadors to the Moroccan Court; Spain sent expensive gifts, including emeralds worth 100,000 ducats, or £45,000. What of England? England had not even waited for King Dom Sebastian's head to fall in 1578 before seeking the friendship of Morocco. For in 1577 Queen Elizabeth of England had secretly attempted to negotiate a treaty with Morocco; and the young Sultan of Morocco, El Mansur, had received a supply of English timber for ship-building.

El Mansur now wanted to give his soldiers something to do, but not even Queen Elizabeth could tempt him to risk a clash with Spain. Where could El Mansur employ his soldiers? The obvious answer was the Songhai Empire. El Mansur summoned his Council of War and put the project before them. There was complete silence. The Sultan pressed for an answer. Then pandemonium broke out. The Council protested that such a project had never been undertaken in the whole course of history—it was insanely reckless, the very desert would swallow up the soldiers, it was sheer suicide.

Sultan El Mansur rose and with all the oratory at his command skilfully pointed out that such great empires as

the Almoravid and the Almohade had extended from the Senegal in West Africa to the Ebro in Spain and that the desert had been no obstacle. And as if to laugh the noble Moroccan warriors to scorn he jibed jestingly, "And do not your defenceless merchants traverse the desert every day? Where is your martial courage ye victors of el Kebir?"

The Sultan at last got his way. Preparations for the West African campaign went ahead with all the energy and resourcefulness that Morocco could muster, but it took several years for the army to be fully equipped for the hazardous march across the Sahara.

On June 23, 1590, we find the Sultan El Mansur of Morocco writing to Queen Elizabeth of England regretting his inability to deal promptly with certain communications received from the English Queen since he was very busy putting the finishing touches to his West African campaign. Europeans who were relieved at the idea of Morocco diverting her military might from Europe and trying it against West Africa enlisted freely in the Moroccan army. There was, of course, a bait—the possibility of getting some gold. Of the first contingent of 4,000 men of the fighting line, only 1,500 were Moroccans: the rest were Europeans. The artillerymen were Europeans, mostly Englishmen. The cannon-balls and other munitions had largely been supplied by Queen Elizabeth of England. So ready were Europeans to enlist in this Moroccan army that Spanish became its official language. Even the command of the army went to a Spanish eunuch named Judar Pasha.

On October 16, 1590, the expeditionary force under Judar Pasha, consisting of 600 pioneers, 1,000 camel-men, 8,000 camels, 1,000 pack-horses, 2,000 infantry, 500 horsemen, and 1,500 lancers, began marching south. Judar Pasha, surrounded by a bodyguard of seventy European soldiers, made his way out of Marrakesh across the high Atlas Mountains and down to the rich valley of the Dra'a. The supplies were got ready; barley, wheat, and dates were secured in large quantities; bullock skins were filled with water and loaded on to the camels, and the long, hazardous, unpredictable journey across the desert began. We are told that about one-third of the army perished in the desert, but the rest got safely across.

News of the invasion reached Askia Ishak II, ruler of the Songhai Empire. He immediately assembled his forces and made for a place in the west called Kala, since he expected the attack to come from that direction. It had not dawned on him that an attack could come from the north. His scouts soon put him wise as to the real nature of the invasion, and he quickly repaired to Gao, his capital, and called a Council of War.

The Songhai Council of War failed to appreciate the full gravity of the situation. Askia Ishak's instructions were either trifled with or regarded as the instructions of one who was panic-stricken. His orders for filling in the wells on the northern route fell into the hands of Judar Pasha. On February 28, 1591, Judar Pasha halted his army on the left bank of the River Niger at an obscure village called Karabara, where Judar Pasha gave a banquet. After a short pause the invading army moved toward Gao. Fifty miles from Gao, a quickly raised Songhai army of 18,000 cavalrymen and 9,700 infantrymen, led by Askia Ishak II, prepared to give battle. The Songhai army had no guns. Even though firearms had been introduced into Bornu some time earlier, the Songhai soldiers had no knowledge of their use. Judar Pasha's forces, however, were well supplied with firearms, including cannons.

The two armies approached each other. Judar Pasha made an effort to get Askia Ishak II to surrender without a battle, but this only served to raise the spirit of Ishak, who regarded the gesture as a sign of weakness. The issue was soon joined. The first fighting column of the Songhai army made its charge. It consisted of cattle, and they were intended to spread confusion in the ranks of Judar Pasha's forces. Judar merely ordered his men to open their ranks and allow the cattle to pass through, which was done without anybody being hurt. Then the two opposing armies really met. Most of the Songhai forces were undisciplined, but there were a few highly disciplined soldiers among them, and these sought to inspire confidence in the rest by kneeling down and lashing their shins to their thighs so that they were unable to rise, and from that position they fired their arrows until they were shot dead by Judar Pasha's guns.

The invading troops attacked the Songhai Empire at a

time when the Guinea Coast was facing the full rigours of the slave-trade era. Peace and prosperity had prevailed in the heart of the African continent before Judar Pasha attacked; then followed anarchy, plundering, and depredation. Djenne, Gao, and Timbuktu were sacked, pillaged, and burnt to the ground. To quell the people and break their spirit, the Moroccans filled in the wells and destroyed the cultivated fields. Once again the Sahara invaded the whole of the north of the western Sudan.

Thereafter, the Sudanese, whom we have seen so full of energy, loses all initiative under the despotic military rod and the constant threats to his life, his family and his possessions. . . . Vast agglomerations of people dwindle into insignificant villages. Timbuktu which had a population of over 200,000 dwindled into a village of 15,000 people. . . . Even moral standards were relaxed in the midst of this universal distress. For the Niger States the Arab colonization denoted the beginning of the end.¹

This summary, accurate as it is, fails to impart the essential details which are necessary for a full appraisal of the facts. Though there could be no doubt as to the final issue of the conflict, it was nevertheless protracted. Had it been sharp and decisive the total wastage of life and property would have been much less. After his first and successful encounter with the Songhai forces, Judar Pasha made his way to Gao unopposed, but found that Askia Ishak II had already warned the inhabitants to vacate the city or at least to remove everything of value to a safer place. Only the very poor and the foreign students remained.

Askia Ishak II made his way to Gurma, and there began reorganizing his army. Meanwhile, Judar Pasha's forces were being smitten by tropical diseases, and for a time he seriously considered coming to terms with Ishak; in fact he sent to the Sultan El Mansur for the necessary authority to conclude a peace treaty. In a single fortnight no fewer than 400 of Judar Pasha's soldiers died of disease and Judar himself was taken ill.

El Mansur, however, was not prepared to undermine his prestige in Morocco, and indeed in the whole world, by

¹ Quoted by Raymond Michelet in *Negro: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Cunard, and in the Pan-Naf publication, *African Empires and Civilizations*, by Raymond Michelet.

admitting his inability to hold down the Songhai Empire. The Sultan therefore looked round for a leader of greater enterprise and vigour than Judar Pasha, one who would wrest from the Songhai people their stores of gold. The choice fell on Mahmud ben Zergun, who, like Judar Pasha, was also a eunuch. A new force consisting of Arabs was quickly raised and rushed down to the south under the command of Mahmud.

Mahmud ben Zergun, known as Mahmud Pasha, arrived in Timbuktu, whence Judar Pasha had retired, and there took over command of the Moroccan army from Judar Pasha. The conflict was intensified. Askia Ishak II made ready to oppose Mahmud Pasha, but when they met the Songhai army again had to retreat in haste, making its way southward, into western Dendi. The ungrateful Songhai army turned on their Emperor, Askia Ishak II, who narrowly escaped being assassinated. He tried to reach Kebbi near Lake Chad, but circumstances compelled him to place himself at the mercy of the Gurma, who had long hated Songhai rule, and he and his companions were all murdered. The ingratitude of the Songhai people to Askia Ishak II will go down in history as one of the worst acts of perfidy ever perpetrated by Africans. Ishak's Chamberlain, Mohammed Gao, was elected Emperor; but the choice so angered the leading men of Songhai that they at once went over to the side of the enemy. This move so unnerved the new Askia that he immediately offered to swear allegiance to the Sultan of Morocco. Mahmud Pasha therefore invited Askia Mohammed Gao to prove his sincerity by sending food for the Moroccan soldiers, who were then feeling the effects of a severe famine which had engulfed the whole of the western Sudan. Askia Mohammed Gao promptly brought food from Hausa country for the use of the Moroccans. He was then asked to come over to the Moroccan camp and to swear allegiance. But no sooner had the Askia arrived than he and his companions were treacherously seized and sent by boat as prisoners to Judar Pasha at Gao. A messenger was sent to the Sultan at Morocco to find out what should be done to the Askia, but long before the messenger returned, the Askia and his companions had been murdered and a puppet had been installed as Askia. From then on there were two

Askias: one a puppet, the Askia of the north; the other, the accepted ruler of the Songhai people, the Askia of the south.

There now arose among the Songhai people a national leader whose energy, zeal, and personality fired their imagination and engendered a fresh determination to push the hated invaders out of the country. This brilliant national leader was none other than Nuh, a younger brother of the murdered Askia Mohammed Gao. Nuh was elected Askia by the Songhai people, and as Askia Nuh he diverted the field of actual fighting to the area where the parklands of the savannah belt rapidly thicken into the dense forest of the south. Here Askia Nuh carried out a vigorous guerrilla campaign and showed, as has been demonstrated in our day in Malaya and in French Indo-China, that it is possible for an inadequately equipped army to stand up in jungle country to the best-equipped and best-trained soldiers of the world, provided they avoid open conflict.

Lord Lugard, writing of similar guerrilla tactics employed at a later date in precisely similar, if not identical, country, attributes their success to two causes:

First to their reputation for a knowledge of witchcraft and of deadly poisons which renders their poisoned arrow very dreaded. Second to their fighting tactics. So far from dreading to separate their forces their custom, I am told, when they attack by day is to make a feint of attack simultaneously on front and rear, reserving the bulk of their strength for a strong attack on the centre of a long caravan. This mode of attack by ambush would generally succeed in dividing their enemies' forces and inducing panic. They, however, love most to effect a night surprise.¹

Askia Nuh employed similar tactics and inflicted a series of losses on the Moroccans. Malaria, dysentery, and the tsetse fly also killed off men and horses, and the Moroccans were unable to advance further south.

The losses suffered by the Moroccan soldiers caused their leaders to adopt harsh measures against the city dwellers of the Songhai Empire, particularly against the scholars of Timbuktu. All the scholars, lecturers, professors, jurists, and theologians were driven in chains to Morocco. All their books were also transported to Morocco. Among

¹ Lord Lugard, *Geographical Journal*, vi., p. 219, 1895. See also Bovill, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

those deported was Professor Ahmed Baba, the distinguished historian of Sankore University so frequently quoted in the *Tarikh-es-Sudan* and other works. Professor Ahmed Baba¹ was not released from his Moroccan prison until 1607, and in that same year he returned to Timbuktu to die.

The conflict in the field, however, continued over the years. Sultan El Mansur had died of plague in August 1603, but his successors and their generals carried on the struggle against West Africa. Askia Nuh had been finally defeated in 1595. Judar Pasha had murdered succeeding Moroccan commanders and had himself become sole ruler of the Moroccan army, only to be finally recalled in March 1599 to assist the Sultan at home. Yet the pacification of West Africa was by no means complete. In 1612 the Songhai forces again met the Moroccan forces somewhere between Dori and Hombori. The armies turned aside to avoid an engagement, and it was rumoured that the Songhai commander had been bribed. The Askia thereupon had the Songhai commander searched, and gold was found concealed in his clothes. He was promptly executed. The struggle continued.

Morocco poured men and war materials into West Africa, and squeezed out every particle of gold she could lay hands on. The Moroccan soldiers became haughty, insolent, and unruly; and in due course they took to electing their own commanders. Commanders succeeded each other in rapid succession, and in 1660 Mohammed ech Chetuki, commonly known as Buya, became Pasha—the twenty-seventh Pasha since Judar Pasha. Buya declared himself independent of the Sultan of Morocco, and from then on the Friday prayers were said in the name of the ruling Pasha. A confused state of affairs continued, and in the next ninety years there were no fewer than 128 different Pashas.

There was chaos where once there had been order. States broke up. There were intrigues everywhere; treachery and corruption became the order of the day. Ordered society gradually crumpled. Famine often took a heavy toll of men and animals. In 1716, for example, a famine lasting

¹ We get a picture of the importance attached to learning in the Songhai Empire from a statement made by Professor Ahmed Baba while he was a prisoner in Morocco. He is reported to have said, "of all my friends in the Sudan it was I who owned the smallest library, but I possessed 1,600 volumes."

five years was reported to have engulfed the western Sudan. The invaders and their descendants were absorbed into the huge mass of the Negro population. The conquest had spent itself. It had destroyed but never created, and in place of the old West African Empires there was found an atomized group of peoples ready to jump at each other's throats and to sell each other in the slave markets.

In 1737 the last remnants of what could be called the Moroccan army marched out of Timbuktu in the face of a determined attack by the Tadmekket under their leader Oghmor. Oghmor went in pursuit of the Moroccans and destroyed their army. The survivors returned to Timbuktu, where they paid tribute to Oghmor, and in return were permitted to appoint their own Pashas; and this they continued to do until 1780, after which date they could only elect a sort of mayor. By the beginning of the nineteenth century it had become impossible to distinguish the Moroccans from the original Negro population. Once more Africa had swallowed up an invader, but at a terrible cost to herself.

PRELUDE TO WEST AFRICAN
DISCOVERIES

HITHERTO we have concerned ourselves with the history of the very interior of what is often described by misguided historians as the "Dark Continent." We have not so far dealt with the coasts of West Africa and Guinea.

The earliest accounts we have of the African coast in general can be traced to Egyptians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, and Arabs. As far back as 600 B.C., as recorded in an earlier chapter, Necho II, Pharaoh of Egypt, commissioned some Phœnicians to sail round the continent of Africa to find out whether it was circumnavigable.

We know that the Phœnician sailors set sail from Suez, at the end of the Red Sea, and that three years later they entered the Mediterranean through the Straits of Gibraltar and then on to Egypt. It was a wonderful achievement when one considers the kind of boats which were used in the exploratory mission, and there is no doubt that the Phœnician sailors touched all along the West African coastline.

The next African sea voyage related to our present subject was in connection with Carthage and the Carthaginian Admiral Hanno. About 600 B.C. the Carthaginians established colonies and trading depots along the north-western section of the African coast, and their policy was to create more colonies to the south. It was essential that these colonies and trading stations should maintain contact with Carthage and that Carthage should be ever ready to help the colonists and assist them in their development.

Between 520 and 470 B.C. a Carthaginian fleet under Admiral Hanno sailed along the north-western coast of Africa and ventured to move further south. The fleet consisted of sixty ships and 30,000 colonists and sailors. The colonists moved further and further south until they reached Rio de Oro, where Hanno founded a Carthaginian settle-

ment. This settlement was named Kerne, and it represented the southernmost Carthaginian trading colony. The Moors still call the place Herne. In its early days Kerne was the important Carthaginian centre for the trade with West Africa. Admiral Hanno did not turn back at Rio de Oro, but sailed on beyond the estuary of the Gambia River, beyond Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast, until he reached the Cameroons, after which he set sail for Carthage.¹

After Hanno's West African venture, there is a record of a Greek by name Euthyminus who visited the coast of West Africa between 400 and 300 B.C. Euthyminus is said to have discovered the Senegal River, which he named "Chremetes." About a hundred years later, Polybius, another Greek explorer and historian, visited the same coast. Polybius described several West African rivers, among them the Gambia, which he said was full of crocodiles. He called the Gambia River "Bambotus," and most probably he based the name on the fact that the Mandingo word for crocodile is "bambo."

The next recorded African sea voyage was again by a Greek, this time Eudoseus of Cyzicus, who between 300 and 200 B.C. sailed from Arabia down the east coast of Africa, round the Cape of Good Hope, up the Angola and Belgian Congo coast, then the coast of West Africa, up to the Straits of Gibraltar, and on into the Mediterranean. We do not hear of any other West African sea voyages until more than 1,500 years later.

The first Europeans in comparatively modern times to trade with the coast of West Africa were Frenchmen from Rouen and Dieppe, towns in the province of Normandy.

French historians claim that French merchants traded with the Gambia and Senegal Coasts, and with the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast, between 1364 and 1413. One of the principal French navigators of the West African coast during this period was Jean de Rouen, who sailed in the *Notre Dame de Bon Voyage* and dropped anchor in what is now Kru Bay.

The seafaring exploits of Frenchmen like Jean de Rouen led to the formation in Normandy of a trading company

¹ Some authorities hold the view that Hanno could not have gone beyond Sierra Leone.

whose main object was trade with West Africa. The company consisted of merchants from Dieppe and Rouen, and it sent out four vessels to explore and colonize the coast of West Africa. Subsequently a French settlement was established on Gambia Island in the Sierra Leone River, and was known as Petit-Dieppe. Further south the French established a settlement at Sesters in Liberia, which they named Petit-Paris, and another at the present Elmina on the Gold Coast, which they called La Mine d'Or.

Many British historians are not prepared to accept the French account. The official historian of the Colonial Office does not even refer to the French claim to have been the first Europeans in comparatively modern times to explore the coast of West Africa. The historian of the Gold Coast Government dismisses the French claim in these words:

The European pioneers on the Gold Coast were the Portuguese, unless the flimsy evidence of a French landing a century earlier is accepted. The Portuguese first reached the coast in 1471, and in 1482 began to form settlements where they remained for the next 160 years.¹

The official historians of the Gold Coast Government and the Colonial Office have no real justification for dismissing the French claim so lightly. It is an accepted historical fact that shortly after 1364 the French town of Dieppe in Normandy began an ivory-carving industry. The ivory must have been bought from an ivory-producing country, and the indications are that it came from West Africa.

Local history in Elmina supports the French claim that they preceded the Portuguese. In Elmina Castle today there is a cannon which differs markedly from the rest and from which the inscriptions have been deliberately obliterated. There is also a small patch of masonry which appears to have belonged to an earlier structure of non-Portuguese origin.

One may argue that if the French had made such an amazing discovery, why then did they neglect such a rich find, more particularly La Mine d'Or? The answer is simple. France became involved in civil war and in war with England. The Hundred Years War sapped her vitality and strength, and when the long-drawn-out struggle was over, French sea-power was practically destroyed.

¹ Annual Report on the Gold Coast, 1947, pp. 109-10.

The first definite and sustained commercial connections between Europe and West Africa were established by the Portuguese. The motives that actuated the Portuguese maritime expeditions and explorations are easy to understand. Since Mansa Musa dazzled the world with West African gold, gold from Africa had become a fascination. Then there was the ivory, or the "elephant's teeth," as the Europeans then called ivory. Both gold and ivory were attractive and commercially important items.

There were also the products of the Far East, of India, China, Japan, and the Spice Islands, which hitherto had reached Europe by two separate eastern routes: one by way of India, the Red Sea, and Egypt; the other by sea from India to the Persian Gulf, thence overland, through Mesopotamia, and on to Constantinople. But during the fifteenth century the Ottoman Turks, a race of Mohammedans more warlike than their predecessors, conquered Syria, Egypt, and Constantinople, thus effectively blocking both eastern routes. Europe had to maintain contact with the Far East somehow, and it was thought that the way lay in a circumnavigation of Africa or in a route right across the Atlantic.

The Portuguese also had religious motives for establishing West African connections, but these are not so clear. However, it must be borne in mind that in A.D. 711 the African General Tarik made it possible for Moslems to rule the Iberian Peninsula of Spain and Portugal. North Africa was then completely under Moslem domination. And the Moslem Moors were not driven out of Seville until 1248, or from Granada until 1492. It must not, however, be imagined that Catholic Europe stood still and made no attempts to restore the broken fortunes of Christendom during that long period.

Throughout the Middle Ages, Africa was virtually closed to the missionary activities of Christians. Christians could, if they wished, serve the Sultans of Tunisia and Morocco; they could trade in the Moslem countries extending from Egypt to the Atlantic; they could have their own quarters in the Moslem towns and cities; but to propagate the Christian religion was almost impossible. Yet attempts were made. For example, it appears that, under the Almoravids, who came into power in the eleventh century,

survivors of early African Christian communities that had not joined in the wholesale desertion of the Christian Church were allowed to worship as Christians. In Mauritania (modern Morocco and Algeria) Christian communities existed in the principal cities of Dra'a and Bugia; and in 1075, the year before the Almoravids under Abu Bekr captured Ghana, the Moslem King of Mauritania permitted the Christians of Bugia to appoint a bishop, who was dispatched to Pope Gregory VII for consecration. The bishop was duly consecrated by the Pope, who wrote to the Moslem King of Mauritania in the most cordial terms.

There were also Christian merchants, mainly Italians, stationed in some fifteen North African ports, who received the special attention of the Papal See, since it was felt that they might serve as the spearhead of an evangelical movement to convert Moslems to Christianity.

However, during the paramouncy of the Almohades there began a wholesale persecution of Christians in North Africa. The persecutions do not appear to have affected Christian soldiers who, recruited in Europe with the consent of the Pope, had with them their own chaplains, or even bishops, and served as bodyguards to Moslem rulers in Africa. The persecutions, however, affected the Mozarabics, from Spain, Africa, and Arabia, who spoke Arabic as their mother tongue. The Almohade persecution of Christians started during the reign of Abd-ul Mu'min, for purely commercial reasons, yet we find this Almohade ruler in 1160 renewing the existing trade agreement with Genoa.

But not even the Almohades could daunt the desire of Europe to win Africa for the Cross, and in 1219 St Francis of Assisi himself visited Egypt during the Fourth Crusade when the Christian army was engaged in the siege of Damietta. It is said that on this occasion St Francis crossed over to the Moslem army and preached before the Sultan. Sabatier's account in his *Life of St Francis* of the courteous reception given to Francis and his companions at a time of military tension reflects great credit on the Moslem North African Sultan.

In that same year St Francis preached before the Sultan in Egypt, and five Franciscan friars went to preach in Morocco. The friars hurled so many invectives at the Moslems that

Sabatier commented, "The thirst for martyrdom becomes the madness of suicide." The five friars—Pietro, Otho, Adjutus, Accurso, and Bernard—were all martyred in 1220.

It was clear that Europe was out to gain control of North Africa either by the sword, as was the case with the capture of Damietta in 1219, or by means of the Bible, as with St Francis of Assisi and other evangelists.

More friars continued to pour into North Africa where the Dominican Order had been firmly established by 1234, only twelve years after the death of its founder. But perhaps the most commanding figure among the North African missionaries was Raymond Lull. His first mission to Africa began in 1292, when he was sixty years of age. At Tunisia his sermons led to his imprisonment, trial, and deportation. In 1307 he appeared again in North Africa, being seventy-five when he landed at Bugia. In spite of his previous experience, Raymond Lull began his first sermon with the words "The law of the Christians is holy and true, and the sect of the Moors is false and wrong, and this I am prepared to prove." The populace was ready to dismember him, but the authorities placed him under protective arrest and after six months he was again deported. The old man stayed away from Africa for seven years and then, in 1314, at the age of eighty-two, he decided to undertake a third missionary journey to Africa, no doubt to court the red rose of martyrdom. He visited both Bugia and Tunisia and is said to have gained many converts. He met his end at Bugia, where he was stoned to death.

We do not know whether the intense missionary zeal of Europeans during this period was due to a desire to penetrate further south and to link up with a mythical Christian king named Prester or Presbyter John who was supposed to rule a kingdom to the south of the Sahara. But it was believed that this Prester John was none other than the Apostle John. The idea was fantastic, yet the desire to locate Prester John was to persist for centuries. Why should anyone suppose that Prester John was the Apostle John, and that he could live for centuries? The answer is to be found in the New Testament, St John xxi, 22, where one reads the words: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

In 1165 the Emperor of Constantinople claimed to have received a letter professedly written by the aged St John himself. Two and a half centuries later, in 1415, when the Portuguese captured Ceuta in North Africa, the idea of locating the kingdom of Prester John was still present in the mind of Europe.

The capture of Ceuta in 1415 was the first Portuguese acquisition of African territory. Prince Henry the Navigator won distinction in that battle, and his praises were sung nearly as loudly as those of his cousin Henry V of England, who in that same year won the Battle of Agincourt.

Three years after the Battle of Ceuta, Prince Henry the Navigator settled at Sagres, in the extreme south-west of Portugal, overlooking the Atlantic. Here he studied and sent forth men on missions of exploration; and he was to see his nearby Portuguese port of Lagos become world famous as the centre from which men were to go out to lay open the mysteries of Africa and the Orient. The Ceuta campaign against the Moors had enabled Prince Henry the Navigator to acquire a lot of information about Africa. The voyages he planned and executed were to check up on information received from the Moors.



THE PORTUGUESE IN WEST AFRICA

WHILE the Ceuta campaign and the contact made with Moorish explorers gave Prince Henry the Navigator the impetus to embark on African discoveries and explorations, he also thought it politically expedient to have an African Christian power as his ally and as a neutralizing force against Moorish power, for his imagination had been stirred by persistent reports about the kingdom of Prester John, a kingdom which was at one time believed to be Abyssinia.

However, those who accompanied Henry's captains were more interested in trade than in securing Christian allies in Africa. Henry himself had no cause to hate gold; and he happened to be a believer in cheap slave-labour. When Pope Martin V received the first slave gifts brought from Africa by Henry's captains, Henry was assured of Papal support for the slave trade.

The records show that Henry's captains, Antonio Gonsalves and Nuno Tristan, called at Rio d'Ouro (Rio de Oro) in 1441 and brought back with them to Portugal some gold dust and ten Africans whom Prince Henry handed over as slave gifts to the Pope, who there and then conferred on Portugal the right of possession and sovereignty over all lands to be discovered to the East of Cape Blanco.

Prince Henry the Navigator, having now received the support of the Church, carried horses on his ships to enable his sailors to hunt down their human prey on the Saharan coast. Great was the rejoicing in Lisbon as each succeeding batch of African slaves arrived. Holy men of the day professed to see in the slaves men and women in the highest sense free, since, once fettered in heathenism, they now enjoyed the liberty of Christianity.

The Portuguese found a new name for the indigenous African religion—they called it "fetish." It was not until nearly 500 years later that Professor Frobenius was to explode this slander about indigenous African religion, and to point

out that throughout his extensive travels in Africa he could find no religion which could be described as "fetish." But the name still sticks.

It was in 1471 that Joao de Santarem and Pedro d'Escabar discovered the trade of Oro de la Mina or the Gold of the Mine—Elmina. Fernao Gomes, whose African discoveries won renown in the same year, made a fortune out of the Elmina gold trade. To the slave trade was now added the trade in gold, and later, Gold Coast gold was to give its name to the British coin "the guinea," now out of circulation. The Guinea Coast, however, still remains.

The gold-mines around Elmina had been yielding profits to the Portuguese, but the whole method of trading was hazardous and chancy, particularly as the activities of unlicensed traders made life somewhat uncomfortable for the Portuguese. John II, King of Portugal, called his State Council and suggested the possibility of building a fort near the Elmina gold-mines. His councillors thought the idea preposterous, but John overruled them and made plans for an expedition to be sent out to Elmina.

Diogo d'Azambuja (Diego da Azambuja), a distinguished Knight of the Royal Household, was chosen to command the expeditionary force. He was to build a fort at a suitable site near the Elmina gold-mines. He sailed from Portugal on December 12, 1481, and carried with him a great quantity of timber, hewn stone, lime, tiles, bricks, tools, nails, munitions, provisions, 100 craftsmen, including masons, and 500 soldiers. He disembarked near Elmina on January 19, 1482, and on the following day decided to meet the local chief.

At the time, Elmina consisted of two townships—a section to the east of the River Benya which was under the authority of the ruler of Fetu State, and a section to the west of the river which was under the Comanis or the Komendas.

On January 20, 1482, Diogo d'Azambuja seated himself on an imperial chair on Elmina beach, ordered the royal standard of Portugal to be hoisted, and sent an invitation to the Chief of Elmina. Chief Kwame Ansa duly arrived with his retinue, and Diogo d'Azambuja recounted the previous kindnesses shown by Kwame Ansa to Portuguese traders and requested permission to build a fort at Elmina.

Diogo d'Azambuja took pains to impress on Chief Kwame Ansa the might, power, and dignity of Portugal, and the high position which he, d'Azambuja, held there.

Kwame's answer represents the first recorded speech delivered by a Gold Coast chief in reply to a representation made by an emissary from Europe, and it should help us to assess the mental condition of the unlettered Gold Coast African of nearly 500 years ago. Chief Kwame Ansa's words on January 20, 1482, were:

I am not insensible to the high honour which your great master the Chief of Portugal has this day conferred upon me. His friendship I have always endeavoured to merit by the strictness of my dealings with the Portuguese, and by my constant exertions to procure an immediate lading for the vessels. But never until this day did I observe such a difference in the appearance of his subjects: they have hitherto been only meanly attired, were easily contented with the commodities they received; and so far from wishing to continue in this country, were never happy until they could complete their lading, and return. Now I remark a strange difference. A great number richly dressed are anxious to be allowed to build houses, and to continue among us. Men of such eminence, conducted by a commander who from his own account seems to have descended from the God who made day and night, can never bring themselves to endure the hardships of this climate; nor would they here be able to procure any of the luxuries that abound in their own country. The passions that are common to us all men will therefore inevitably bring on disputes; and it is far preferable that both our nations should continue on the same footing they have hitherto done, allowing your ships to come and go as usual; the desire of seeing each other occasionally will preserve peace between us. The Sea and Land being always neighbours are continually at variance, and contending who shall give way; the Sea with great violence attempting to subdue the Land, and the Land with equal obstinacy resolving to oppose the Sea."¹

One historian has remarked that this skilful evasion of the principal, if not the sole, object of the Portuguese mission considerably disconcerted the Portuguese, and it required all the intellect of Diogo d'Azambuja, backed by presents, promises, and veiled threats, to induce Chief Kwame Ansa to give way. The Portuguese, however, knew that only the threats had induced Kwame Ansa to give way, and that if

¹ W. W. Claridge, *A History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti*; cf. Hakluyt Society, *Europeans in West Africa, 1450-1560*, pp. 74-5.

they could not make use of the present goodwill to build temporary defences, Kwame Ansa would soon seek help from his neighbours. The fortifications went up swiftly, Diogo d'Azambuja giving orders for the tower to be built first, and Kwame Ansa was forestalled.

Elmina Castle was duly completed, and was named Sao Jorge da Mina—St George of the Mines. It was a royal castle, the direct responsibility of the King of Portugal himself. Diogo d'Azambuja was its first Captain, or Governor, and held that post for two and a half years, leaving Elmina for good in 1484. He is credited by a cynic with leaving a gallows and a pillory at the castle.

On March 15, 1486, a royal decree granted the privileges of a city to Elmina. The Portuguese aimed first at detribalizing the people of Elmina and making them independent of Fetu and Comani, or Komenda. This was done by dividing the city into three wards and appointing three governors from among the people. These officers were called "brassos," and were assisted by other officers.

The Portuguese authorities encouraged intermarriage with the people of Elmina, but contact with other groups in the Gold Coast was frowned upon. The policy of intermarriage must have been decided on very early, because in 1520 a product of such unions living in Elmina City was honourably mentioned in a letter written by the King of Portugal. The noble mulatto was one Diogo Lopes Auxy.

The King of Portugal took a personal interest in the affairs of Elmina, and in 1523, John III wrote the following letter to Affonso de Albuquerque, Governor of Elmina Castle:

We the king send you, Dom Affonso, greetings. We have been informed that you are treating the knights of our village of Mina there harshly, in such a manner that the village is depopulated and men are going away from there to other parts; and for these reasons, which have been pointed out to us, besides others which are said to exist, we regard it as a matter very prejudicial to our interest and primarily to the welfare of that city and its trade. Since they are Christians and have received the water of baptism, they must be defended, protected and instructed, and not banished; and this also, since they are our vassals, and live there in obedience to us and to you and to our captains of that city, serving in our name in everything ordered them for our service, and with their people and their allmadias [canoes] conveying to

the cabecas [headman or chief] the wood for all our ships and, furthermore, since many of them buy on a large scale in that factory, and all generally make purchases of old linen, which is bought by them and sold in their allmadias. Moreover, we are told that there are rich men among them and that slaves may be had from them, and all of them are at our command, or may be, should they be treated well and protected with that moderation in punishment and also in instruction, which is meet and proper for our service and their security; these men tell us that for all their services, they neither have, nor expect, from us any other reward than that we should protect them and command them to be maintained in justice. For this reason, it seems to us that you should not take it for granted that our interest would be promoted by your expelling them abroad; and if it is done to punish them, it seems harsh, because from expelling them two dangers may result, deaths and robberies. In the case of any others, should they deserve punishment, they are to pay a fine to that Church [the Church of Santiago at Elmina dedicated to Prince Henry], or something similarly adequate; we recommend and command you, therefore, to treat them better and to dispense with banishments to the best of your ability; you shall rather protect them, and direct them to take the way most fitting for our service, taking care that they do not depart from it. Because this is in the interest of the factory there, and they are not to go about, reporting what they ought not about you and it, otherwise, besides losing them and the service which we receive from them, the merchants will not come with similar new things, since they come when the land is without them. Written in Tamara [Thomar], on 13th October 1523.¹

From the King's letter it is pretty clear that Christianity was well established in Elmina by 1523 and, furthermore, that the inhabitants of Elmina were either allies or vassals of Portugal. This close link between the people of Elmina and the Portuguese annoyed the Fetus and the Comanis, who did not take kindly to the Portuguese. In 1570 the Fetus and Comanis (Komendas) joined forces to attack Elmina, but the Portuguese and the people of Elmina were able to hold their own.

For years before the combined Fetu and Comani attack on Elmina the Portuguese had attempted to convert the Fetus, the Comanis, and the Aupya (Yabi?) to Christianity. On August 18, 1503, for example, Diogo d'Alverenga, Governor of Elmina Castle, reported to King Manuel of Portugal

¹ Hakluyt Society, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-4.

that on July 25, 1503, Sasaxy, King of Fetu, who had recently become a Christian, was carried in a procession which was preceded by the Cross and by the Vicar of the Church of Santiago. On January 2, 1513, we find the King of Fetu requesting the Governor of Elmina Castle for permission for his son to be sent to Portugal to be educated. This King of Fetu asked the Portuguese to build him a church, next a house, and finally requested from the King of Portugal a present of two trunks covered with leather.

It would appear that both the Fetu and Comanis were opportunist in their attitude toward the Portuguese, and that this is why they did not attack Elmina until 1570, when they finally discovered that the Portuguese were no longer prepared to bribe them with presents.

The efforts of the Portuguese to use Christianity for imperial or commercial ends were by no means confined to the Gold Coast. They had been maintaining this practice all along the Guinea Coast, from the Senegambia to the Camerouns. In the Senegambia, for example, we are told of the Chief of the Wolof, Behemoui, who sought an alliance with the Portuguese, but who was informed that conversion to the Christian faith was an indispensable condition. Feeling he could not comply with the condition during a civil war, and so alienate his supporters, he delayed. He was defeated, escaped to safety, and reached Lisbon, where a great welcome awaited him. After being instructed in the Christian religion, he and his twenty-five companions received baptism in 1489. He was knighted by the King of Portugal on the following day. On his return to West Africa, Dominicans accompanied Chief Behemoui in order to work for the conversion of his people, but he is said to have expelled them later. One account speaks of a fiery-tempered Portuguese commander stabbing to death this Chief of the Wolof on a charge of high treason against the Portuguese State. Such an act was bound to seal the fate of any mission.

In Sierra Leone, and again in Benin in Nigeria, repeated attempts were made to carry out the conversion of West Africans to Christianity along the lines carefully planned by Pope Pius II in 1462. The work begun by Alphonso of Bolano, the first to be appointed by the Pope as Missionary

Prefect for Guinea, was extended, and in 1491 we read of several chiefs of Sierra Leone accepting baptism; we also read of the King of Benin in Nigeria being baptized into the Church. Similar conversions of royal personages took place in the Congo basin during the same year.

Why did Christianity, which seemed to have struck deep roots in West Africa, including the Gold Coast, during the Portuguese occupation, finally die out without leaving any appreciable mark? In the Gold Coast the only serious relic of this phase of missionary activity is Nana Ntona¹ of Elmina, or, to give it its correct title, St Anthony. At the grove of Nana Ntona today you will find the crucifix, the baptismal bowl, and all the symbols of the Catholic Church of Elmina under the Portuguese.

¹ The word "Saint" has no direct equivalent in the Akan language and was therefore translated as Nana, a term applied to all those living and dead who are supposed to have the welfare of families and States at heart and who father their families and States. "Ntona" is a corruption of the name "Anthony." The grove of Nana Ntona is what most writers refer to as a fetish grove.

THE PORTUGUESE IN THE CONGO

THE 1880 edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* states that, in a paper read before the Bombay Branch of the Asiatic Society in 1863, Dr Birdwood commented on the surprising anticipation of recent discoveries in Africa contained in Daniel Defoe's novel, *Travels of Captain Singleton*. Again, a writer in *Macmillan's Magazine*, in the year 1878, commenting on Defoe's novel, expresses his surprise that the discoveries of Stanley and others seem to have been anticipated so far back as 1791.

No one who has read *History of the Kingdom of Congo* by Filippo Pigafetta (published in Rome in 1591 and translated into English in 1597 by Abraham Hartwell, rector of Toddington) need be surprised in the least, for Defoe carries his hero, Captain Singleton, through the scenes, and surrounds him with the events, which Duarte Lopez described in the pages of that book.¹

It was in April 1578, the same year in which Dom Sebastian, King of Portugal, set sail on his abortive and tragic mission to subdue Morocco, that Duarte Lopez, a native of Benevento, sailed for the port of Loanda in the kingdom of Congo. And while it was only in the following August that Europe received from Morocco the news of the death of Dom Sebastian which profoundly shocked the whole of Christendom, it was not until 1591 that Europe received a first-hand account of Duarte Lopez's² peaceful mission to the Congo. His narrative has come down to us through the pages of Filippo Pigafetta.

Lopez tells us that the circumference of the kingdom of

¹ See Introduction to *History of the Kingdom of Congo*, by Duarte Lopez, recorded by Filippo Pigafetta. The 1881 translation by Thomas Fowell Buxton, p. ii.

² Duarte Lopez is generally believed to be the cousin of Dr Lopez, physician to Queen Elizabeth. Dr Lopez was executed for an alleged attempt to poison the Queen. In spite of the fact that Hartwell, writing in 1597, claims Dr Lopez as a cousin of Duarte Lopez, there is no direct evidence to substantiate the claim.

Congo at the time measured 1,685 miles; but the King, still remembering his past glory, styled himself Dom Alvarez, King of Congo, and of Abundo, and of Matama, and of Quizama, and of Angola, and of Angri, and of Cacongo, and of the seven kingdoms of Congere Amoloza, and of the Pangelungos, and the Lord of the River Zaire (Congo), and of the Anzigiros, and of Anziquara, and of Loanga, etc. He also tells us that the kingdom of Angola was at one time a vassal State of the Congo.

At the time of Lopez's twelve years' stay in the country, the kingdom of Congo was divided into six provinces, called Bamba, Sundi, Sogno, Pemba, Pango, and Batta. The province of Bamba was the largest and richest and was governed by Dom Sebastian Manibamba. This prince had many lords under him, the principal ones being Dom Antonio Mani Bamba (who was lieutenant and brother of Dom Sebastian), Mani Lemba, Mani Dandi, Mani Bengo, and Mani Loanda (Governor of the Island of Loanda). The word "Mani" meant "Lord." The province of Bamba was the military stronghold of the kingdom of Congo, and was capable of putting 400,000 well-disciplined men in the field.

The royal city of the kingdom of Congo was actually situated in the province of Pemba, which was under the Mani Pemba, but the King treated the capital, San Salvador (Banza), and the surrounding territory for a radius of twenty miles as his private estate. The first Christian king of the Congo, King Dom Joao, gave the Portuguese their own separate estate within the twenty miles radius and permitted them to erect a wall around their settlement. The King's palace was also walled round, as were other royal houses.

Between the Portuguese settlement and the royal palace stood the principal church, with its square in front, the gates of the houses of the nobles and of the Portuguese being built so as to face the church. The whole country beyond the two boundaries of the walls was covered with houses and palaces, each noble having his houses and lands enclosed like a town. The Portuguese occupied an area of nearly a square mile, and other buildings, such as the royal houses, covered a similar area.

The city, and indeed the whole country, was well supplied

with grain of varying kinds, and at times grain was imported by the overland route from Egypt. Citrus fruits, rice, coconuts, cola, bananas, water-melons, cucumbers, cauliflower, palms of different varieties, including date palms, pineapples, and many other agricultural products, abounded in the country. From one variety of the palm tree, oil, wine, vinegar, fruit, and bread were extracted. Oil was made from the pulp of the fruit. The oil was pressed out in the same way as Europeans got oil from the olive. Bread was made from the kernel of the fruit, which was like an almond, but harder. Wine was found in a hollow which formed a sort of a trough at the top of the tree, and from it the people distilled a liquor which looked like milk. This liquor was sweet at first, but when left to stand for a few days it became acid, and could then be used with salad. When drunk fresh, the wine possessed medicinal qualities, and in consequence the people of the country did not suffer from gravel or stone disease. It could cause intoxication when drunk too freely, but otherwise it was very nutritious.

The cola was masticated in the mouth, and it assuaged thirst, strengthened the stomach, and, what was more, it was useful in curing liver diseases.

From wild palms, the people produced mats for covering the floors of houses, baskets, and other articles of everyday use. Ornamental palisades from the wood of the ogbegbe tree were built round the houses, many of which were also built from trunks and branches of the ogbegbe tree and thatched over. The houses were divided into convenient rooms, which were lined with decorated mats of delicate craftsmanship.

Lopez records that the country was full of coloured marbles, jaspers, and precious metals, but that architects, masons, and carpenters were lacking, and that for the building of churches and other important buildings artisans had to be imported from abroad.

Christianity was introduced into the Congo before 1491. The Mani Sogno was the first nobleman to embrace the Christian faith, and it was in 1491 that he caused a church to be built in his province and was himself baptized. Emmanuel, the King of the Congo, embraced Christianity soon afterward, and took the name of Dom Joao; but his

action caused some dissatisfaction among his subjects, and civil war broke out soon after his death. Dom Affonso, his Christian son and successor, had to fight his way to the throne, but in the end Christianity was established in the Congo after what was supposed to be a miracle of the Holy Cross. The Church of the Holy Cross was built to commemorate the miracle.

After these events the King of Portugal sent Dom Rodrigo as ambassador to the Court of the King of the Congo. Dom Pedro succeeded Dom Affonso on the throne, and it was during Dom Pedro's reign that the first bishop for the Congo was appointed by Rome. The bishop received a tremendous ovation. The road from the sea-port to San Salvador, a distance of 150 miles, was swept and covered with mats so that the bishop should not set foot on bare ground. Men and women lined the route, some even climbing trees in order to get a glimpse of the "Holy Man."

In 1513, Henry, son of King Dom Affonso, was sent to Lisbon and to Rome to study theology, and in 1515 Pope Leo X appointed him Bishop of Utica and Vicar-apostolic to the Congo; but he appears to have died before returning.¹

Dom Pedro died and as he left no son, his brother Dom Francisco succeeded him. Dom Francisco's reign was a short one, and he was succeeded by his kinsman, Dom Diego. Dom Diego was a man of noble mind, witty, intelligent, prudent in counsel, and a sincere Christian. He was also a great warrior, and within a few years had conquered many neighbouring territories.

He was magnificent both in his own clothing and in the arrangements of his palace. He was fond of valuable cloths of gold, tapestry, silk, and lordly furniture.

During his reign a third bishop was appointed to the Congo, this time a Portuguese. The presence of the Portuguese bishop seems to have given rise to much dissatisfaction among the people, and some Portuguese priests, who appeared to side with the people against the bishop, were shipped back to Portugal as prisoners, and others were sent as prisoners to the island of St Thomas.

At the death of Dom Diego there were only three men of royal blood in the country. The decrease in the size of the

¹ C. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in Africa*, p. 129.

royal family was one of the immediate effects of the Christian doctrine of monogamy. One of these princes was the son of Dom Diego, and as he had the support of the people, the Portuguese contrived to do away with him. Of the two remaining princes, the people favoured one and the Portuguese the other. This time the people plotted to assassinate the Portuguese candidate just at a time when the Portuguese were hatching another plot to kill the people's candidate. The two princes were murdered almost simultaneously, and the Congo kingdom was left without anyone of royal blood.

Dom Henrique, who appears to have been a maternal half-brother to Dom Diego, succeeded to the throne. But his reign was a short one, and he was succeeded by his twenty-five-years-old stepson. The young man became King Dom Alvarez. It was during the reign of Dom Alvarez that the Jaggas, who occupied an area between Lake Rudolf and Lake Albert, attacked the Congo kingdom and occupied San Salvador itself.

Lopez tells us that the Jaggas were people who lived as Arabs and the ancient nomads, and that they were cruel, murderous, and of great stature, very courageous and valiant in battle. The Jaggas' occupation of the Congo caused much distress and loss of life, and fathers were compelled to sell their sons, and brothers their brothers, in order to obtain food. Many died of hunger; others were carried away by the Portuguese merchants as slaves. It was in the midst of this universal distress that the King of the Congo sent an ambassador to Dom Sebastian, King of Portugal, to seek the latter's assistance. Dom Sebastian immediately sent food and help through Captain Francisco de Gova.

De Gova brought firearms, and the Jaggas were soon driven out of the country. However, Dom Sebastian's help appeared to have an ulterior motive, for he soon sent two skilled workmen with specific instructions to search for the gold, silver, and other precious mines in the Congo. Francisco Barbuto, a Portuguese friend, and Confessor to the King of the Congo, however, advised the king not to permit the mines to be searched for, assuring him that once they were discovered he would cease to be the ruler of an independent kingdom.

The King of the Congo received the Portuguese artificers sent by Dom Sebastian, and craftily directed them to areas where he knew they would find no mines. The King's desire to seek the return of those of his subjects who had been sold into slavery and also to spread the Christian faith led him to send his kinsman, Dom Sebastian Alvarez, first to the island of St Thomas and then to Portugal. Three years later Dom Antonio de Gilova was appointed Bishop of St Thomas and the Congo, but he stayed in the Congo for only eight months, and the King was again obliged to make repeated applications to Lisbon and Rome for a bishop and more priests to be sent out. Duarte Lopez was himself one of those sent on such missions. These events bring us to 1591.

Duarte Lopez, who had also visited the West Indies, tells us that the colour of the people of the Congo differed from that of the people in the West Indies. He tells us that in the West Indies the people were mostly mulattoes, but that in the Congo they were black.

According to Lopez, Pigafetta, Dapper, and Ogilby, the people toward the eastern borders of the Congo and the adjacent regions had a surprising art in the making of various sorts of cloths, such as velvet, cut and uncut, cloth of tissue, satins, taffeta, damasks, sarcenets, and the like. The yarn was made from the leaves of palm trees which were always kept low to the ground and every year were cut and watered so that they might grow small and tender by the following spring. The leaves were cleansed and purged in a special manner, and from them threads of extreme fineness and evenness were drawn. From the longest threads the people wove their largest pieces. The stuff was woven in several ways, some with a pile like velvet on both sides, others, called damasks, with leaves and figures. Their brocades, both high and low, were far more valuable than the Italian. They were generally reserved for royalty, particularly for the king himself.

Trial marriages were common in the country, and Merolla gives an account of a priest who was called to confess a sick woman, whose daughter lived with a man on trial. The priest refused to give the sick woman absolution unless she compelled her daughter to marry. The sick woman

answered, "Father, I will never give my daughter occasion to curse me after I am dead for obliging her to marry where she does not fancy." The priest replied, "What, do you then stand more in anguish of a temporal than an eternal curse?" One would have expected that trial marriages would give rise to laxity in sex morality, but to quote Merolla himself: "So long as the Europeans have traded here, there has not been found one bastard."

The King of the Congo continued to rule his people with customary grandeur and magnificence well into the seventeenth century. His apparel was very rich, being for the most part cloth of gold or silver, with a long velvet mantle. He usually wore a white cap on his head. So did his "fidalgos" or favoured nobility; and indeed it was a mark of social importance, for if Alvarez I was displeased with any nobleman, he merely caused his cap to be taken off. The white cap was a badge of distinction, like the Star or Garter in Europe.

In 1642, when the Dutch ambassadors from Loanda waited on Dom Alvarez II, King of the Congo, immediately after the capture of Loanda by Portuguese forces, the King received the emissaries at night. The Dutch ambassadors passed through a gallery 200 paces long, lined on both sides by men holding huge wax candles in their hands.

His Majesty sat in a small chapel, hung with rush mats, from the top of which hung a branch with wax candles. He was dressed in cloth of Gold Coat and Drawers and had about his neck three gold chains: His right thumb was adorned with a very large granite or Ruby Ring, and his left hand with two great emeralds. On the left sleeve of his coat a gold cross was fastened, richly enclosed in a piece of well-polished crystal. He wore on his head a fine white cap, and on his legs a pair of russet boots. At his right side stood an officer, who sometimes gently fanned the air with an handkerchief; and at his left side another holding a Tin Bow, and a Tin Sceptre, covered with fine striped cloth. His seat was a red velvet Spanish Chair over which, upon a Border, was embroidered in letters, Dom Alvarez Rex Kongo. Right before him lay spread a great Turkey carpet, and over his head hung a canopy of white satin, wrought with gold, and trimmed with a deep fringe. Lastly, a little on his right hand kneeled Dom Bernado de Menzos, his Interpreter and Secretary.¹

¹ Astley's *Voyages and Travels*, p. 257. See also John Ogilby's *Account of Africa*, p. 538.

Dapper tells us that when the King went to church, the Portuguese, both temporal and spiritual, as well as the *grandees*, had to wait upon him, and again from church to palace. In Lopez's day Portuguese and the noblemen accompanied the King on all long journeys.

In 1647, five years after the Dutch ambassadors had waited on the King of the Congo, King Dom Alvarez II entreated the Pope to send out more missionaries. Missionary activity increased in the Sogno Province of the Congo, and in 1663 missionaries from Sogno planted the Roman Catholic religion in Angola.

Some time before 1636 the Count of the Province of Sogno had refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of his kinsman, the King of the Congo, and merely regarded him as an ally. In 1636 Dom Alvarez II, with a large force, including eighty Portuguese soldiers from Loanda, invaded Sogno, but his forces were routed. Alvarez made a second attempt to subdue Sogno, but again he was unsuccessful. In 1641 Dom Daniel da Silva became Count of Sogno, and he, like his predecessor, also refused to acknowledge Dom Alvarez as his superior. Dom Alvarez's son, Prince Dom Alphonso, was sent against Sogno, but in April 1645 he too was defeated and taken prisoner. Prince Dom Alphonso escaped with his life only because he was the cousin of the Count of Sogno.

The King of the Congo was furious at this set-back and mobilized a large force, including some 400 mulattoes under the command of the Duke of Bamba (Mani Bamba). Again the King's forces were defeated. The King then planned for an all-out attack on Sogno, and in order to ensure that the Dutch did not interfere in the struggle, he sent presents to Grave Maurice, Dutch Governor in Brazil. Grave Maurice instructed the Dutch in the Congo, Angola, and in the neighbouring countries not to interfere in the struggle between the two princes. Dom Alvarez II sent a similar request by special ambassadors to the Prince of Orange.

The Count of Sogno continued to hold his own, and in 1680, out of sheer desperation, the King of the Congo, anxious to be crowned in the customary manner, offered to cede Sogno and two gold-mines to the Portuguese if they would assist him to defeat the Count of Sogno. The King

went so far as to enlist the support of the much-hated Jaggas.

The Portuguese fire-arms unnerved the Sogno forces, and the day went to the King of the Congo. The Dowager Countess of Sogno and some of her noblemen agreed to accept the joint demands of the King of the Congo and the Portuguese, provided the Portuguese desisted from hostilities. The Portuguese commander, however, refused to be diverted from his purpose: that of taking possession of the whole of Sogno and working the two gold-mines promised by the King of Congo. At this stage in the negotiations a relative of the ruling Count of Sogno offered himself as a new Count and promised the people their independence if they would follow him.

The new Count asked his followers to tie palm leaves to their temples to distinguish them from those of his countrymen fighting with the Portuguese. He advised his followers not to be afraid of the noise and flashes and all those European trifles which their enemies, the whites, were accustomed to employ. He told his people that anyone who turned back in battle would be executed immediately. As a last resort, he ordered them to destroy all their domestic animals with the words, "We are all resolved to die a glorious death, rather than live a miserable life." The battle was quickly joined. The Jaggas, Portuguese, and the forces of the King of the Congo were soon in flight. All the Portuguese were slain except six, who were given a choice between slavery and death. The six men answered, "Never did whites yet submit to be slaves to blacks, neither will we," but the words had hardly left their mouths when their heads tumbled to the ground. A Portuguese slave was given a leg and arm of one of the Portuguese soldiers with the words, "Go, carry the news of your defeat, together with this present, to the Governor of Loanda, your master."

With the artillery and baggage captured from the Portuguese, and with some cannons secured from the Dutch when they were being chased out of Loanda by the Portuguese, the Count of Sogno built and equipped a fortress at the mouth of the River Zaire (Congo).

Within a few years of the Sogno victory, San Salvador, the capital of the Congo, had become a den of thieves and rob-

bers, and when Merolla visited the Congo in 1688, the King, then Dom Sebastian Gritho, had been compelled to remove his official residence and capital to Lemba.

From the writings of Jerom Merolla de Sorrento, a Capuchin missionary in the Congo, and from Merolla's own arrogant behaviour in the Congo, we can clearly see that by the end of the seventeenth century European priests were attempting to command Congolese counts and dukes, executing or enslaving Congolese ancestral priests and indigenous doctors, and were even pretending to have the power to control the elements and to confound the Congolese Christians, who had become tools and pawns in the hands of unscrupulous European priests, soldiers, and merchants alike. Soon, mere parish priests from Europe could remove Congolese kings from their thrones and could direct the thoughts and actions of their flock.

Executions, treachery, robbery, and violence became the order of the day, with the Christian priests assisting in the violence by having their rival indigenous African priests and doctors executed. In due course the worldly actions of the Christian clergy were to lead to the disappearance of the eleven churches of San Salvador, including the cathedral. The Dutch were to render the final stages of destruction even more absolute by systematically removing all traces of Portuguese influence in the Congo. Even marble slabs were cracked in two in order to make the obliteration of Portuguese influence absolute.

THE PORTUGUESE IN CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

DUARTE LOPEZ spent twelve years in the Congo, and his description of the country is one which should interest all who are anxious to reconstruct African history. But he was by no means the first Portuguese African explorer to make his findings known to Europe.

Joao Fernandes (1445) may be regarded as the first of a long line of European explorers. Then we have the expeditions carried out by Pero d'Evora and Goncallo Eannes to Timbuktu, Tucoral, and to Temala, King of the Foullahs. Next come the discoveries made by Rodrigo Rebello, Pero Reinel, and Joao Collaco. In 1534 the historian Barros sent Pero Fernandes on an exploratory mission to the interior of Senegambia. Voyages were made by Diogo Borges, Goncalo d'Antao, Lucas (an Abyssinian), Vincente Annes, Joao Lourenco, Joao Bispo, and Captain Andre Alvero d'Almada to the East Coast of Africa, Nubia, the kingdom of the Congo, the country of the Mandingoes and the Foullahs, and across Senegambia, to the interior of Africa. Rebello de Aragao visited the kingdom of Angola; and Francisco Barreto and Vasco Fernandes explored Chicova and Manica (1570-73).

These journeys rank among the most daring and most thorough exploratory missions in world history. In addition to the explorers mentioned above, we must not forget the writings of Miguel de Castanhaso, who accompanied Dom Christovao da Gama on a famous expedition to Abyssinia, and finally reference must be made to Dom Joao Bermuda, who spent some time in Abyssinia (1565) and in the Lake Tsana region.

M. Luciano Cordeiro, the author of *L'Hydrographie Africaine*, writes:

In 1578, a Portuguese went to Africa, who, by his cultivated intellect, his boldness in refuting the geographical prejudices of

his day, and the zeal he carried into his study of the interior of the great continent, was not so much an adventurer as a real explorer, animated with a desire to know and to unveil the mysterious heart of Africa. That Portuguese was Duarte Lopez.

Duarte Lopez's description of the Congo, as we have already seen, is as full as it is astonishing. According to him, the kingdom of the Congo in his day covered the whole of the Belgian Congo, Angola, and part of the Cameroons. A Congolese bishop had already been appointed by Rome, and the cathedral at San Salvador, which was a replica of St Peter's in Rome, had been built.

Lopez does not confine his account to the Congo, but also describes the Empire of Monomotapa. As noted in an earlier chapter, the Portuguese had established contact with the people of the Gold Coast as early as 1471 and had worked out plans for the building of a castle at Elmina. This castle was begun in 1482, but before its completion Portuguese explorers were making their way further south, and by 1491 they had established friendly relationships with the inhabitants of the Congo. Later on, the Portuguese were to round the Cape of Good Hope and to reach the East Coast of Africa.

When the Portuguese first arrived on the East Coast of Africa, they heard repeated tales about the wealth of the gold-mines at Sofala; and in 1506, Diogo de Alcacova, writing from East Africa, stated:

In the whole kingdom of Vealanga, gold is extracted, and in this way, they dig out the earth and make a kind of tunnel, through which they go under the earth a long stone's throw, and keep on taking out from the veins with ground mixed with gold, and, when collected, they put it in a pot, and take it out and put it to cool, and when cold, the earth remains and the gold is all fine gold.

This description is interesting in view of the modern assertion that the African never knew the art of mining, and that but for the presence of Europeans, the extracting of the mineral wealth of the great continent could not have been undertaken.

The Portuguese had expected to do a lucrative trade in gold; but by 1513 Pedro Vaz Soares, the Portuguese factor in Sofala, was complaining that the Africans were marketing very little gold to the Portuguese and that the Moors, who

were already in the trade, were prejudicing the minds of the Africans against the Christians.

✕ The Moors had intermarried with the African population, and commanded the full confidence of the people among whom they traded. The Portuguese therefore decided to follow their example, and intermarried with the African population and penetrated right into the interior of the country. When Father Dom Goncalo da Silveira visited the Court of the Emperor of Monomotapa at Masapa in 1561, he found that Portuguese traders had long preceded him and that these traders found favour at Court.

The Portuguese accounts of East Africa in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are of great interest, since they are fully authentic. Men like Damiac de Goes and Joao de Barros wrote either with personal knowledge of the regions they described or at least with the aid of authentic official documents.

Damiac de Goes described the Empire of Monomotapa as abounding in ivory and gold. He added that the people built solid houses and palaces of large stones without the use of mortar. A house of stone built without the aid of mortar was known locally as "symbaae." De Goes described the affection and loyalty which the people bore for their Emperor and the way that news of the everyday movements of the Emperor was relayed to the inhabitants of the country.

De Barros, in his *Da Asia*, gave the following description of the Emperor of Monomotapa's palace:

The inside consists of a great variety of sumptuous apartments, tapestry, the manufacture of the country. The floors, ceiling [*sic*], beams and rafters are all either gilt or plated with gold and curiously wrought, as are all the chairs of State, tables, benches, etc. The candlesticks and branches are made of ivory inlaid with gold, and hang from the ceiling by chains of the same metal or silver gilt. The plates, dishes and bowls belonging to the Emperor's table are made of a sort of porcelain, curiously wrought on the edges with sprigs of gold resembling those of coral. In short, so rich and magnificent is this palace, that it may be said to vie with that which distinguishes a monarch of the East.

Naturally the reader must wonder why, if East Africa could once boast of such magnificence, there is nothing today to testify to such a great past, except perhaps the Zimbabwe

ruins, which, though beyond repair, still testify to a former glory.

Yet it is not too difficult to find the reasons for the almost total destruction of East African culture. In 1560 a number of Jesuit priests were sent to look after the welfare of the Portuguese in Monomotapa and to convert the African population. Father Dom Goncalo da Silveira had not long been in the country when he wrote:

Both these nations [the Botanga and the Mocarangas] show a great facility in receiving the faith, and it seems that these errors and others, not being founded on bad disposition toward idols . . . should quickly be overcome and without much trouble by the help of God.

But Father Andre Fernandes, writing a year later, said:

When you have just convinced them and induced them to confess your teaching is truth and their practices false, they immediately go and act precisely as before, so that they are a very difficult people to deal with, and require much patience.

As stated earlier, Father Dom Goncalo da Silveira reached the Court of the Monomotapa at Masapa in 1561. He was very well received and succeeded in inducing the Emperor to be baptized. The baptism turned out to be a political blunder, for the Moors were soon able to convince the Emperor's subjects that through Christianity the Portuguese hoped to dominate the whole country. Father Dom Goncalo da Silveira was assassinated, and the Portuguese, in an effort to avenge his death, organized a great punitive expedition, but before the final plans could be put into effect the whole character of the expedition altered. It was no longer a punitive expedition, but a plan to subdue the entire country and to seize the gold which abounded there. Men, money, and material were poured into the venture, and in 1572 the Portuguese forces, commanded by Francisco Barreto, reached Sena on the Zambesi River. The Mon-gazes blocked the river and put up a stiff resistance, inflicting heavy casualties on the Portuguese, who were finally obliged to retreat to the coast.

Francisco Barreto's defeat caused much disappointment in Portugal. Barreto himself died soon after, and it was left to Vasco Fernandes Homem to organize a second expedition.

Homem decided to make straight for the rich gold-mines of Monomotapa and to avoid the waterways. He encountered opposition from the King of Quiteve, whom he defeated, and as a punitive measure he pulled down or burnt the houses of the people. The King of Tskikanga, who had made ready to give battle, decided that discretion was the better part of valour and welcomed the Portuguese forces. Homem finally reached the heart of the Empire of Monomotapa. His men, finding themselves in the country where report had it that everything was gold, had expected to find it in the streets and woods and to come away laden with it. They were disappointed when they saw the difficulty with which the people extracted the gold from the bowels of the earth and the risks which mining entailed. (These details are based on Homem's own account of the expedition.) Homem withdrew his forces to the coast and reported back to his superiors in Lisbon that the mines would be too expensive to work.

The Portuguese had at last conquered the Empire of Monomotapa, but this time they were not in a hurry to convert the Emperor to Christianity, at least not until they had converted some 20,000 of his subjects. The next step was taken in 1627, when Father Luiz de Espirito Sancto baptized a certain Mavura,¹ a close relative of the reigning Monomotapa Caprasine.

In the following year Portuguese ambassadors who had come to pay their respects at Court were murdered. Now the Portuguese were ready to push Caprasine from the throne and to put Mavura in his place. Civil war broke out, and it was not until 1652 that Mavura was firmly established on the throne. When Mavura was baptized, he took the name of Philippe, and it was with that name that after the civil war he ruled Monomotapa from 1631 to 1652.

Mavura was succeeded by a man who had not embraced the Christian faith. This was very disappointing to the Portuguese, particularly to the Dominican friars. However, in August 1652 the new Monomotapa ruler decided to accept baptism and he was baptized Domingos, his wife being baptized Luiza. The baptism of Domingos and Luiza

¹ Mavura's name is given as Manuza by Professor C. P. Groves. The same authority gives Caprasine's name as Kapranzine.

ranks high in the records of the Dominican Order. Special thanksgiving services were held in Lisbon and in Rome, and a painting of the actual baptismal ceremony is to be seen in the Dominican House in Rome.

While all this was happening, the rightful heir to the throne of Monomotapa was in the hands of the Dominicans. Caprasine's son had been taken prisoner after the civil war and entrusted to the Dominican fathers in Goa in India. But Caprasine's son and heir never saw his native land again, for he was brought up to enter the Dominican Order and he later became one of its ablest preachers.

A South African historian, G. M. Theal, appears to have been amazed by the life of Caprasine's son. This is what he had to say of the prisoner-of-war who was brought up a Dominican:

In 1670 the general of the Order sent him the diploma of Master of Theology, equivalent to Doctor of Divinity, and this man, born a barbarian, heir to the most important chieftainship in Southern Africa, died as vicar of the convent of Santa Barbara in Goa. Fiction surely has no stranger story than this? ¹

The civil war of 1628-31 left its mark on Monomotapan history, and in 1719 we find the King of Portugal writing to his viceroy as follows:

That vast Empire is in such a state of decadence at the present day that no one has dominion over it, because every one has power there, and although there is always a reigning prince, a descendant of the ancient line of Monomotapa, this right and pre-eminence he has avail him little, because Changamina and an infinite number of other petty rulers nearly always put these kings to death as soon as they take up the sceptre. ²

East Africa was soon to experience the full rigours of the slave trade, which had already destroyed West African culture; and with the slave trade came the end of the Empire. The title of Monomotapa was still in use up to about 1800, but he had by then lost every vestige of power and prestige.

A Colonial Office historian writing about Uganda says:

The countries that now make up the protectorate did not become known to Europe until the journey of Speke and Grant in search of the sources of the Nile. In 1862, coming from the

¹ G. M. Theal, *History and Ethnography of South Africa before 1795*, I, p. 478.

² G. Caton-Thompson, *The Zimbabwe Culture*.

South, they were the first Europeans to reach the capital of Mutesa, the ruler of Buganda, not far from the present Kampala and were astonished to find themselves among comparatively civilized people.¹

A study of the Portuguese discoveries in East and Central Africa tend to show that the ground covered by Speke and Grant had already been explored by the Portuguese explorers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There is really no good reason why Speke and Grant should have been astonished to find themselves among an organized and comparatively civilized people, seeing that Buganda was bound to have benefited directly from the civilizations of the kingdoms of Ethiopia, and the Congo, and from the Empire of Monomotapa; and what is more, the sons and daughters of Buganda had no doubt contributed directly or indirectly to the civilizations of all these regions. What Speke and Grant found were but the relics of a past glory.

¹ The Colonial Office List, 1948, p. 251.

SLAVERY AND THE NEGRO

It is generally believed that the history of Africa consists of wars between a few petty tyrants involving a tremendous amount of bloodshed, and between various tribes, none of which progressed beyond a state of barbarism. The preceding pages make it quite clear that nothing could be further from the truth.

Nancy Cunard, in her introduction to *African Empires and Civilizations* by Raymond Michelet, writes:

All too many are those who view the Dark Continent as a reservoir of man-power for wars, a land of raw materials for exploitation, a huge, formless, unhistoried mass whose peoples constructed nothing in particular, lived in a haphazard way, had no mind.

In spite of what writers like Nancy Cunard have done to correct the above mistaken view, the Negro is often regarded as a person who has no history worth recording.

Volney (quoted by Arthur A. Schomburg in his *African Exploration*) writes, in his *Ruins of Empire*:

The Ethiopian at Thebes named the stars of the Heavens with names we still use based on some happenings in their country. Behold the wrecks of her metropolis, of Thebes with her hundred palaces, the parent of cities and monument of the caprice of destiny. There a people now forgotten discovered, while others were yet barbarians, the elements of the arts and sciences. A race of men now rejected from society for their sable skin, frizzled hair, founded on the study of the laws of Nature, those civil and religious systems which still govern the unwise.

The art of writing was not unknown to the African. This fact is seldom recognized by Europeans and even by some Africans who have lost touch with their past glory. Negroes actually invented absolutely original systems of writing. M. Delafosse, commenting on the issue, writes:

The fact is the more noteworthy because, if a white semitic race taught us the art of writing, no alphabet of that Indo-European

race to which we are so proud to belong has ever been discovered. . . . An alphabet has been traced to the Vai in Liberia and Sierra Leone who have apparently used, for more than a century, a syllabic writing of their own invention . . . and lastly to the Nubians in the Karasho and Mahas district, who, according to the English author H. A. MacMichael make use of a special alphabet more or less derived from an Oriental writing.¹

Yet the Negro is accused of having invented nothing and of having contributed nothing toward world culture and civilization.

M. Delafosse, who was governor in French West Africa, writes:

The whites in North Africa achieved contact with the Blacks for the sole purpose of plundering, sacking and carrying off thousands into captivity, and of imposing dogmas by the force of arms, the meaning of which they did not even trouble to make clear. Later on, the penetration of other whites, despite the natural surf barrier along the coast, resulted anew in the abduction of thousands of slaves.²

Professor Emil Torday has given us an unbiased account of the effects of the slave trade on African culture and civilization. In a lecture delivered at Geneva in 1931 under the auspices of the Society for the Protection of Children of Africa, the Professor had some interesting things to say. The slavers scoured the Guinea Coast, not being contented with the devastation of one area. As they devastated an area they moved westward and then southward, spreading confusion, anarchy, and ruin wherever they went. They extended the gospel of doom past the Niger, down to the Congo Basin, past Loango and Angola, down south to the Cape of Good Hope, and by 1789 they had initiated Mozambique into their slave-raiding ideology.

They manufactured quarrels among tribesmen and set them at each other's throats, taking care, of course, to supply them with modern weapons. The propagandists and the religious hypocrites of the time claimed that however cruel was the traffic in human flesh, the African slave in the West Indies and in America was happier than in his own country. To quote Professor Torday:

¹ Quoted in *Negro: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Cunard.

² *ibid.*

This, too, is an age of propaganda. We excel our ancestors only in system and organization: they lied as fluently and as brazenly. Central Africa was a territory of peace and happy civilization.¹

Traders travelled hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles from one side of the vast continent to the other without molestation, for the stranger was always an honoured guest to the African. The tribal wars from which the European pirates claimed to deliver the people were mere sham-fights; it was a great battle when half a dozen men perished on a battlefield. Some may question the use of the word "pirates," but it must be admitted that even the mode employed by Sir John Hawkins to procure his first stock of slaves for the New World was worse than that of an accredited pirate.

Professor Torday points out that it was on a peasantry, in many respects superior to the serfs in large areas of Europe, that the slave trade fell. Tribal life was broken up or undermined and millions of de-tribalized or decentralized Africans were let loose upon each other. The unceasing destruction of crops led to cannibalism in certain areas, just as the siege of Jerusalem several centuries before had given rise to cannibalism in the heart of the Holy Land and just as in our day the conditions of Belsen and Dachau gave rise to cannibalism at the zenith of European "civilization." Tribes had to supply slaves or be sold as slaves themselves, for this indeed was the age of the gangster. Violence, brutality, and ferocity became the necessities of survival, for generosity and good neighbourliness had lost their meaning.

The stockades of grinning skulls, the selling of one's own children as slaves, the unprecedented human sacrifices, were all the sequel to this grand finale, the rape of African culture and civilization. The African could not understand what he had done to the gods to merit such horrors and cruelties, and as such his attempts to propitiate them became more and more extreme. The excesses of the slave trade must never be forgotten, for in them lie much of the horrors of the African continent. Pierre de Vaissiere,² gives us the incident of a captain who poisoned his human cargo when held up by calms or adverse winds. Another killed some of his

¹ Quoted by C. R. James in *Black Jacobins*.

² Pierre de Vaissiere, *Saint Domingue: 1627-1789*, Paris, 1909.

slaves to feed the others with the flesh of their slaughtered friends.

It is little wonder then, that slaves died not only from physical ill-treatment, but also from grief, rage, and despair. Some undertook hunger strikes; some undid their chains and hurled themselves on the crew in futile attempts at insurrection. In order to combat the grief and melancholy among the slaves it became the custom to have them on deck once a day and force them to dance, but even in these cases many a slave took the opportunity to jump overboard, uttering cries of triumph as he cleared the vessel and disappeared below the surface. There are indeed limits to the degradation the human spirit will endure.

The captives' anguish appears to have reached its peak during the middle passage, as the crossing from West Africa to America and the West Indies was called. The term "middle passage" was used because it represented the second stage in the slaver's round trip, out and home. The slaves were forced into crowded canoes and taken to the ships, where the use of whips and spears compelled them to climb reeling and trembling up the swaying rope-ladders.

Once on board, the slaves were packed between decks within spaces which did not permit a tall man to stand upright. Men and women were put in separate compartments. The women were not chained together, but the men were chained in pairs, ankle to ankle, wrist to wrist. Those who were fortunate, or unfortunate, enough to escape being chained were packed in couples side by side, like sardines, the feet of one against the head of the other. The captain of a slave-ship giving evidence before a Commission, asked if the slaves were comfortable during the middle passage, replied, "They are about as comfortable as a man might be in his coffin." It must be noted that the middle passage generally lasted fifty days.

A surgeon on board one of these slave ships described his experience in these words:

Some wet and blowing weather having occasioned the port-holes to be shut and the grating to be covered, fluxes and fevers among the Negroes resulted. While they were in this situation, my profession requiring it, I frequently went down among them, till at length their apartments became so extremely hot as to be

only sufferable for a very short time. But the excessive heat was not the only thing that rendered their situation intolerable. The deck, that is the floor of their rooms, was so covered with the blood and mucus which had proceeded from them in consequence of the flux, that it resembled a slaughterhouse. It is not in the power of the human imagination to picture a situation more dreadful and disgusting. Numbers of the slaves had fainted, they were carried on deck, where several of them died, and the rest were with difficulty restored. It nearly proved fatal to me also.¹

It is difficult to determine the number of slaves who died during the middle passage, but during one such trip from West Africa, no fewer than 2,053 died of 7,904 slaves shipped.

What happened to those slaves who survived the journey of the middle passage?

When the ship reached the harbour, the cargo came up on deck to be bought. Their purchasers examined them for defects, looked at the teeth, pinched the skin, sometimes tasted the perspiration to see if the slave's blood was pure and his health as good as his appearance. Some of the women affected a curiosity, the indulgence of which, with a horse, would have caused them to be kicked twenty yards across the deck. But the slaves had to stand it. Then in order to restore dignity which might have been lost by too intimate an examination, the purchaser spat in the face of the slave. Having become the property of his owner, he was branded on both sides of the breast with a hot iron. His duties were explained by an interpreter and a priest instructed him in the first principles of Christianity.²

Enough has been said of the slave trade and its effects on the Negro, but it may well be asked, as a matter of historical interest, how did the slave trade itself begin? It is commonly supposed that it began after the discovery of America by Columbus in 1492. But for its genesis we have to go back to the time when Prince Henry the Navigator sent his captains forward on exploratory missions along the West Coast of Africa.

Sir Harry H. Johnston writes :

In 1441-42 Antonio Gonsalvez and Nuno Tristan passed Cape Blanco on the Sahara coast, and on the return journey called at the Rio d'Ouro or River of Gold, whence they brought back some gold dust and ten slaves. These slaves having been sent by

¹ E. B. D'Auvergne, *Human Livestock*, pp. 68-9.

² C. R. James, *Black Jacobins*, p. 3.

Prince Henry to Pope Martin V, the latter conferred upon Portugal the right of possession and sovereignty over all countries that might be discovered between Cape Blanco and India.¹

For a description of the first large consignment of African slaves we are indebted to Eannes de Azurara, the official Chronicler of Portugal, for the following eyewitness account:

On the eighth day of August 1444, very early in the morning on account of the heat, the mariners began to assemble their lighters and to disembark their captives, according to their orders. Which captives were gathered together in a field, and marvellous it was to see among them some of a rosy whiteness, fair and well made; others less white, verging on grey; others again as black as moles, as various in their complexions as in their shapes . . . and what heart was so hard as not to be moved to pity by the sight of this multitude, some with bowed heads and tearful countenances, others groaning dolorously and with eyes uplifted toward heaven, as if to implore help from the Father of all mankind; while there were others who covered their faces with their hands and flung themselves down upon the ground, and some again who gave vent to their sorrow in a dirge, after the manner of their country; and although we could not understand the words, well we appreciated the depth of their distress. And now, to aggravate their woe, men came to parcel them out into five distinct lots, to do which they tore the son from his father, the wife from the husband, the brother from his brethren. No tie of blood or comradeship was respected; each was thrown into a place by chance. O irresistible fortune, thou which ridest roughshod over the affairs of this world, bring to the knowledge of these most unhappy folk those ultimate truths from which they may receive consolation! And ye that are charged with this division into lots, deplore so great a misery, and observe how these unhappy ones embrace one another so tightly that it needs no little strength to tear them apart. Such a division indeed, was not to be effected without great trouble, since parents and children, finding themselves in different groups, would run back to each other—mothers clutched up their children and ran away with them, caring not about the blows they received so long as their little ones should not be torn from them. After this toilsome fashion was the task of division accomplished, the work being rendered more difficult by the crowds which flocked from the neighbouring towns and villages, neglecting their work, to see this novel sight. And some of these spectators moved to tears, others chattering, they made a tumult which hindered those charged with the business. The Infante [Dom Henry], mounted on a powerful horse, disdained to take his own share,

¹ Sir Harry H. Johnston, *A History of the Colonization of Africa*, pp. 78-9.

some forty-six souls, but threw it back into the common stock, taking pleasure only in the thought of so many souls being redeemed from perdition. And truly, his hope was not vain, since so soon as they learned the language, with very little trouble, these people became Christians; and I who write this history saw afterward in the town of Lagos,¹ young men and women, the offspring of these, born in the country, as good and genuine Christians as if they had been descended from the generation first baptized under the dispensation of Christ.²

The slave trade had begun. Edmund B. D'Auvergne, commenting on this idea of saving enslaved Africans from perdition, writes:

Hunting people often say they hunt the fox and deer in order to save these poor animals from being exterminated by the cruel farmers. Dom Henry's motive for kidnapping black folk at the estuaries of the Senegal and Gambia may have been similarly unselfish.³

The slave trade was still in its early stages. The Negro was still a human being who had just been unfortunate enough to be seized and sold a slave. He could still excite pity in the hearts and minds of his fellow man; but soon the Negro's new status was to give rise to new ideas concerning his past, present, and future, and an American was to write in the early Colonial days:

I know . . . that our divines and learned men cannot decide whether or not they have souls. And, of course, if they have not, they are as well treated as other animals; but all the same I am sorry for them.⁴

The Church accepted the slave trade, although it may be said that Pope Pius II in the fifteenth century, Pope Paul III in the sixteenth century, Pope Urban VIII in the seventeenth century, and Pope Benedict XIV in the eighteenth century, all protested against the slave trade; but these protests were ignored by both Catholics and Protestants.

The Rev John Newton, Rector of St Mary Woolnoth, London, and author of the popular hymn, *How sweet the name of Jesus sounds*, spent his youth as the commander of a slave-ship engaged in the Gold Coast and other ports of Guinea. He writes in his memoirs:

¹ Lagos in Portugal.

² Eannes de Azurara's, *Chronicle of Guinea*.

³ E. B. D'Auvergne, *Human Livestock*, p. 21.

⁴ F. A. J. Utting, *The Story of Sierra Leone*, p. 26.

During the time I was engaged in the slave trade, I never had the least scruple as to its lawfulness. I was upon the whole satisfied with it, as the appointment Providence had marked out for me; yet it was, in many respects, far from eligible. It was, indeed, counted a genteel employment, and usually very profitable, though to me it did not prove so, the Lord seeing that a large increase of wealth would not be good for me. However, I considered myself as a kind of gaoler or turnkey, and I was sometimes shocked with an employment that was perpetually conversant with chains, bolts, and shackles. In this view I had often petitioned in my prayers, that the Lord, in his own time, would be pleased to fix me in a more humane calling.

Elsewhere, the Rev John Newton writes: "I never knew sweeter or more frequent hours of divine communion, than in my last two voyages to Guinea." The statement is all the more surprising when one remembers that beneath his cabin as commander of the slave-ship were the murderous bolts and shackles with which he expected to deprive his fellow men of their liberty and freedom.

It is interesting to record that under the will of General Christopher Codrington, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel received in trust three estates with their Negroes for the endowment of medical and theological studies. When slavery was abolished, the Society received £8,823 8s. 9d. in respect of compensation for the slaves on its estates.¹

The Church's attitude toward slavery and the slave trade was so unsympathetic that even African Christians appear to have sympathized with the trade in human flesh. This is clearly illustrated by the story of a Gold Coast African who died chaplain of Elmina Castle. He was sold to the captain of a ship when a little boy, and the captain in turn presented him to a Dutch merchant. The Dutch merchant sent the boy, then twelve years of age, to Holland to be educated, and as Jacobus Elisa Johannes Capitein, the young ex-slave entered the University of Leyden in 1737, at the age of twenty. Five years later Capitein crowned his academic career by delivering a Latin oration on the theme that slavery is not contrary to religious liberty. The Latin oration was published and went through four editions. Capitein himself was appointed chaplain to Elmina Castle in 1742. The Europeans at Elmina Castle disregarded his

¹ C. F. Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of S.P.G.* (1901), I, pp. 197, 199.

office because of his colour and because he was an ex-slave; and his own people in turn ostracized him. He had a short and troubled career, and died at the early age of thirty.

If slavery received support at the hands of an African chaplain, it did not receive support from other Africans; and when the full story of the abolition of the slave trade comes to be written, mention must be made of the Ibo slave, Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, who, immediately after buying his freedom, addressed a whole book to the British Parliament in this fashion: "To the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons of the Parliament of Great Britain." The purpose of the book was clearly set out in these words:

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Permit me, with the greatest deference and respects, to lay at your feet the following genuine narrative; the chief design of which is to excite in your august assemblies a sense of compassion for the miseries which the Slave-Trade has entailed on my unfortunate countrymen. By the horrors of that trade was I first torn away from all the tender connexions that were naturally dear to my heart; but these through the mysterious ways of Providence, I ought to regard as infinitely more than compensated by the introduction I have thence obtained to the knowledge of the Christian religion, and of a nation which, by its liberal sentiments, its humanity, the glorious freedom of its government, and its proficiency in art and sciences, has exalted the dignity of human nature.

I am sensible I ought to entreat your pardon for addressing to you a work so wholly devoid of literary merit; but, as the production of an unlettered African, who is actuated by the hope of becoming an instrument towards the relief of his suffering countrymen, I trust that such a man, pleading in such a cause, will be acquitted of boldness and presumption.

May the God of heaven inspire your hearts with peculiar benevolence on that important day when the question of Abolition is to be discussed, when thousands, in consequence of your Determination, are to look for Happiness or Misery:

I am,

My Lords and Gentlemen,
Your most obedient,
And devoted humble Servant,
Olaudah Equiano or
Gustavus Vassa

No. 10, Union Street, Mary-le-bone,
Dec. 24, 1789.¹

¹ Olaudah Equiano, *Gustavus Vassa, the African*, iii-v.

Among the many prominent subscribers to Olaudah Equiano's book were the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Bedford, the Duchess of Buccleuch, the Duke of Marlborough, the Duke of Montague, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Queensbury, the Duke and Duchess of St Albans.

The impression prevails in certain quarters that the Negro under slavery was a docile being who never struck a blow in defence of his own cause or in defence of his own freedom; but this is an utterly false impression. Edmund B. D'Auvergne, in his *Human Livestock*, writes:

The shorter cut to freedom was tried over and over again by the ill-used people. The black man was not a half-sensible beast of burden, but a man who deeply resented his condition and in whose heart smouldered a just anger against his abominable taskmaster. The fears of the earlier planters were justified by repeated servile insurrections. These revolts of the damned against the fiends were all unsuccessful, either suppressed with hideous cruelty or nipped in the bud through the treachery generally of some soft-hearted servant who did not wish her master or mistress to be "murdered." The Koromantees were almost always the prime movers in these conspiracies. In 1676, according to a contemporary account published in London, their design "was to choose them a king, an ancient Gold Coast Negro; one Coffee,¹ who should have been crowned in a chair of State exquisitely wrought. . . . Trumpets to be made of elephant's teeth and gourds were to be sounded, with a fell intention to fire the sugar canes and so run in and cut their masters'—the planters'—throats in the respective plantations whereunto they did belong. Hearing a young Koromantee tell another that he would have no hand in murdering white folk, a house-wench belonging to Justice Hall, informed her master, "thinking it a pity such good people as her master and mistress should be destroyed." The plot was frustrated and the ringleaders apprehended. Six were burnt alive. One of the victims seemed about to make a confession when his neighbour at the stake ("one Tony, a sturdy rogue, a Jew's Negro") jogged him and was heard to chide him with the words, "Thou fool, are there not enough of our countrymen killed already?—art thou minded to kill them all?" Whereupon, the weaker vessel closed his mouth and refused to open it again. When the Christian spectators cried out to Tony, "Sirrah, we shall see you fry bravely bye-and-bye," he answered undauntedly, "If you roast me today, you cannot roast me tomorrow" (pp. 107-108).

¹ "Coffee" is now spelt Kofi.

These are the type of people whom others would have us believe were docile beings who reconciled themselves to their fate and never tried to hit back. In Haiti and Santo Domingo

“the slaves finally burst their chains and shackles and established themselves as masters in the land which the whites had stolen from its original inhabitants and enriched with the blackman's sweat.”¹

The revolt against slavery took a new turn. Scotsmen and Englishmen, among whom were many Quakers, felt that slavery was unjust and inhumane. Men like John Wesley, Professor Adam Smith, and Dr Samuel Johnson denounced slavery, but the really consistent fight against slavery was begun by Granville Sharp, a subordinate clerk in the Ordnance Office, London. Granville Sharp had an elder brother, William Sharp, an eminent surgeon living in Mincing Lane, London. One morning when Granville Sharp was leaving his brother's surgery, he saw before him a Negro (Jonathan Strong) who was in dire need of medical attention. Jonathan Strong was a slave, the property of a Barbadian lawyer named David Lisle. David Lisle had beaten Jonathan Strong mercilessly and blinded him in one eye and had then cast him out of doors to die. That chance meeting between Jonathan Strong and Granville Sharp saved the former's life, for William Sharp, the surgeon, was soon called upon to attend the Negro and to do everything in his power to save him from death.

Jonathan Strong eventually recovered, and through the efforts of the two brothers he was appointed as assistant to Mr Brown, a druggist in Fenchurch Street, London. All seemed well, and for two years the Negro worked with the druggist; but one day, David Lisle, seeing Jonathan Strong in good health, claimed him as his property and had him arrested by two police officers. The story of what happened afterward is convincing proof of Granville Sharp's determination to end slavery. The English law appeared to render it impossible for Sharp to secure Strong's release from bondage, but after years of studying the law relating to slavery in England, after years of agitating and pamphleteering against slavery, Granville Sharp got the lawyers on his

¹ E. B. D'Auvergne, *Human Livestock*, p. 109.



side, and it is worth observing that even the Barbadian lawyer David Lisle, eventually withdrew his claim against Jonathan Strong.

It was Granville Sharp's efforts which led to the famous decision by Lord Chief Justice Mansfield on June 22, 1772, in the case of James Somerset, a runaway slave, the property of a Mr Stewart of Jamaica. The significant words in Lord Mansfield's decision were:

The state of slavery is of such a nature that it is incapable of being introduced on any reasons, but only by positive law. It is so odious that nothing can be suffered to support it but positive law. Whatever inconveniences, therefore, may follow from the decision, I cannot say the case is allowed or approved by the law of England; and, therefore, the black must be discharged.

These were the words which were to make every slave who set foot in England as free as any Englishman.

Lord Mansfield's decision was ultimately to lead to a large number of poverty-stricken liberated black slaves roaming the highways of England. In 1772, no fewer than 15,000 Negroes in England were freed by the famous decision. More ex-slaves found their way into England following the American War of Independence, for most of the slaves who fought for Britain during the war were granted their freedom and brought to England. The presence of so many thousands of poverty-stricken Negroes presented a social problem, and Granville Sharp, on the advice of Dr Henry Smeathman, a naturalist, hit on the idea of founding a settlement of freed Negroes in Sierra Leone. Thomas Clarkson, William Wilberforce, and Zachary Macaulay supported the idea and the British Government soon agreed to the proposal.

Seven hundred Negroes applied to be repatriated to Africa, but only 351 could be chosen. They sailed from Portsmouth on February 22, 1787, in the transports *Vernon*, *Belisarius*, and *Atlantic*, convoyed by H.M.S. *Nautilus* under the command of Captain B. Thompson. Sixty white women of doubtful character, picked from the streets of England, accompanied the settlers. The Government was engaged in deporting criminals and undesirables from England, and it was thought best to get rid of these sixty unfortunate white women by getting them drunk and then carrying them on board the ships taking the freed slaves to Sierra

Leone. Some historians hold that the women were forcibly married to the Negroes before they had regained consciousness.

The lot of the new settlers of Sierra Leone was a difficult one. The wife of the agent-general of the Sierra Leone Company, Alexander Falconbridge, seeing how rapidly the various white settlers died off, described Sierra Leone for the first time in 1791 as the "White Man's Grave." No doubt the sixty unfortunate white women could not stand up to the rough conditions either.

More freed slaves found their way to Sierra Leone in subsequent years. Thomas Peters, a freed slave from Nova Scotia and an Egba by origin, was to lay the real foundations of modern Freetown, and what law and order existed in the new settlement was due solely to this Negro leader. Utting writes of Thomas Peters, "In all justice it must be said that he was one of the founders of Sierra Leone."¹

As Peters and his band of settlers carved out a new colony in Africa, the fight against the slave trade and against slavery was continued in England, and in 1807 England was to declare the slave trade illegal, in spite of strong opposition from vested interests. The next year, 1808, saw the United States of America also declaring the slave trade illegal, and at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 most European Powers followed suit. The fight against slavery itself had to continue, however, and Thomas Fowell Buxton was to be a leading light in this last onslaught. In 1833 the abolition of slavery was secured, and the British Parliament agreed to pay £20,000,000 to compensate those who were to be compelled to give up being slave owners.

Even the Bishop of Exeter, whose heart had not been moved by Granville Sharp, Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Buxton, had now to free his 655 slaves and to accept £12,729 4s. 4d. as compensation.² The death knell of slavery all over the world had been sounded, but it was to take a few more years before slavery ceased to plague mankind.

It is difficult to determine accurately the extent of the depopulation of Africa occasioned by the slave trade. One French historian quoted by Utting says it is no exaggeration

¹ F. A. J. Utting, *The Story of Sierra Leone*, p. 96.

² Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, pp. 43, 222.

to say that 100,000,000 people were lost to Africa as a result of it. Dr W. E. B. Du Bois, the eminent Afro-American historian, also believes that Africa lost about 100,000,000 souls as a result of the slave trade. The estimate might appear to be an exaggeration, but it must be realized that slaves were shipped out of Africa even before the discovery of America. Again, we have to bear in mind that African slaves were sent not only to the markets of Europe, America, and the West Indies, but also to Persia and the East. The eminent Negro General Hannibal,¹ of the Imperial Russian Army, the great ancestor of the well-known Russian author Pushkin, reached Russia by way of Turkey, a slave kidnapped from his home in northern Nigeria.

Next it must be stressed that many died in the slave wars, and that as late as 1871 David Livingstone was to say, "It is awful, but I cannot speak of the slaving for fear of appearing guilty of exaggerating. It is not trading: it is murdering for captives to be made slaves." Whitened skeletons littered the slave routes as if to blaze a trail for others to follow. Such was the carnage. Between 1690 and 1820 Jamaica alone received no fewer than 800,000 slaves; yet in 1820 only 340,000 slaves existed in the island. Think of the numerous West Indian islands, under the dominion of so many European countries; think of the United States of America, of Canada, of Mexico, and of the South American Republics, which have large Negro populations even today; and then picture those blacks who perished in Africa before

¹ Some authorities believe General Hannibal came from Ethiopia, but Hannibal's own account of his homeland places him squarely in Northern Nigeria. He was captured by Arabs and later sold to the Russian ambassador in Constantinople (Istanbul). The ambassador in turn presented him as a gift to Peter the Great, and Hannibal thereafter became popularly known as Peter the Great's Negro. He studied military science in Russia, France, and Spain, and became a favourite in Court circles in France after he had displayed considerable military valour in Spanish battles. Peter the Great gave him as his bride one of the numerous Russian princesses, but the marriage was an unhappy one and ended in divorce. He later married a Lithuanian woman of his own choice and it is from this union that Pushkin claims his descent. After the death of Peter the Great Hannibal came up against a number of prejudices and he lost favour in social and military circles. Catherine the Great soon restored him into the favour of the Army and the Court and he died about the age of eighty, a very rich man and a general in the Imperial Russian Army. He is credited with having picked on the boy Suvorov as having the makings of a future great military genius.

the journey to the New World had really begun; think of those who perished during the middle passage; then again consider those who fell dead as a result of the slave-whips; and let us reflect on the lot of those sick, injured, and aged slaves who were cast adrift to die of hunger and starvation. Finally, let us remember that band of brave Negro men and women, particularly the Koromantee Negroes, who found the state of bondage insufferable and who died at the stake in the cause of liberty.

THE KOROMANTEE NEGRO AT HOME

SLAVERY had at last been abolished in the British Dominions overseas, and those European countries which still favoured the slave trade and slavery had now to reckon with the British Navy, which was out to end the traffic in human flesh.

The Koromantee Negro (Gold Coast African), who had never bowed down to slavery and had always struck out for liberty and freedom, was now freed from the fear of sudden transportation as a slave to America and the West Indies. Englishmen in the Gold Coast who had previously been interested in slavery and the slave trade were now busy telling Gold Coast chiefs that slavery was a bad thing and that anyone who favoured it was not a friend of Her Majesty the Queen of England. The Bond of 1844, by which many of the Gold Coast chiefs recognized British jurisdiction, contained what can only be interpreted as a denunciation of slavery and a pledge by Gold Coast chiefs never again to acquiesce in slavery, for the Bond described it as an abomination and contrary to law.

The Koromantee Negro soon rediscovered himself and began to give full expression to those principles of self-determination and democracy which the slave trade had modified, but had never quite succeeded in killing.

The Gold Coast African's readiness to assume responsibility for the affairs of his country was forever present, and this was clearly shown when Sir William Winniett died at James Town, Accra, on the morning of December 4, 1850. There was no European in the administration capable of holding the post of Governor, and Mr James Bannerman, a Gold Coast African, a prominent merchant and a member of the Legislative Council who on March 6, 1850 had been appointed Civil Commandant of Christiansborg Castle, immediately assumed the office of Governor of the Gold Coast. He held the office until October 14, 1851, when

Major Stephen John Hill arrived to take up the Governorship. Mr James Bannerman is also credited with having been appointed the first Mayor of Accra, an office which has now been permitted to lapse.

An opportunity for the Koromantee Negro to show that he had full control of his own political, social, and economic destiny came with the Poll Tax Ordinance of April 19, 1852. The Ordinance was passed in the presence of, and with the full agreement and consent of, the chiefs and leaders of the Gold Coast Colony. The people repudiated the agreement and refused to pay the tax. As a democracy, the people were the sovereign power in the State, and they well demonstrated it a hundred years ago.

Feeling against the British grew apace as attempts were made to collect the Poll Tax. In January 1854 the people of Christiansborg were in revolt. On October 1, 1854, Governor Hill wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, saying :

The same natives, whom I found in arms and menacing the Fort of Christiansborg on my return from England on January 16 last, are again in open rebellion, and I regret to state that on this occasion hostilities have actually commenced, and in vindicating the insulted honour of the British Flag I have been obliged with the assistance of H.M.S. *Scourge*, Commodore Adams, to punish the inhabitants of the three Native Towns.

On Sunday evening the 27 August, Captain Bird in his capacity of Sub-Collector of Customs seized some rum that was being smuggled into the town of Christiansborg without permit, the natives attacked the unarmed soldiers who were taking the rum to the fort, beat them severely, and followed it up by throwing stones at, and into the fort itself. The next act of aggression was stopping the soldiers bringing in provisions and taking food from them, to which they added the outrage of stoning Lieutenant Brownell and his armed party.

The insurgents also commanded all the natives in the employment of the Government to leave that service, under a severe penalty if they refused, and they threatened that any person supplying the Garrison with food should be thrown into the sea.

. . . Commodore Adams having opportunely arrived, it was deemed expedient to lose no time in checking this rebellion, as the natives from all the districts to the Volta were rapidly mustering to overpower the Fort of Christiansborg. Accordingly, on the 13th ultimo, the Flag Ship *Scourge* opened fire on the second town called Labadie, where all the treason had been hatched

through the Agency of the Fetish Priests, whilst the Fort fired on the Native Town of Christiansborg. . . . The Commodore succeeded in doing much injury to the Towns of Labadie and Tessie, and the Fort destroyed the greater part of Christiansborg, assisted late in the day by the *Scourge*, but the natives kept up so hot and accurate a fire that the men at the guns suffered severely. . . . It is impossible to tell exactly how many natives have fallen on the side of the rebels, but it is rumoured that three hundred men have been killed by the fire of the ships and Fort.

On October 28 and November 2, 1854, reinforcements arrived at Cape Coast from Sierra Leone and Gambia by H.M. Ships *Brittomart*, *Ferret* and *Prometheus*. The timely arrival of this force had the desired effect on the natives, and the chiefs sent hostages as guarantee for future good conduct.

The West Indian troops embarked for Sierra Leone on November 12, 1854.

On an evening in October 1862 open mutiny broke out in the Gold Coast Artillery Corps at Cape Coast. H.M.S. *Brisk* was ordered to anchor off Cape Coast and H.M.S. *Mullet* was ordered to Accra, where a similar outbreak was feared. The chiefs and elders of Cape Coast acted as mediators, and there was no loss of life. Eighty-one of the mutineers were carried off to Sierra Leone to be court-martialled and two of these were sentenced to death. The two who were to face the firing squad were Gunner Charles Wellesley (perhaps of Sierra Leone), and William Neizer (perhaps of the Gold Coast), but the sentence was not carried out.

Toward the end of 1864, Colonel Ord, R.E., was authorized by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to visit the West African settlements and to report on local developments. He reported that the unsatisfactory condition of the Gold Coast could be justly attributed to the absence of any definite and permanent policy in the administration and the relations of the Government and the people. He added that differences and collisions with the natives had occurred which greater forethought or judgment might perhaps in some instances have prevented.

It appears that relations between the Government and the people of the Gold Coast did not improve even after Colonel Ord's report, as the following proclamation shows:

Proclamation by his Excellency Edward Conran, Colonel,

Administrator of Her Majesty's Possessions on the Gold Coast, etc.

Whereas John Aggrery, styling himself King of Cape Coast and its dependencies, has for some time past been guilty of addressing Her Majesty's representative most insubordinately, but more especially so on the 6th instant, in rebelliously threatening his Excellency, the Officer Administering the Government, with a repetition at Cape Coast of the late unfortunate scenes of bloodshed, which took place in Jamaica; these facts which indicate the most hostile views toward the British Government have led to his immediate removal to Sierra Leone, as a prisoner. It is hereby published, declared and proclaimed that from and after the 6th day of this present month, John Aggrery is to be no longer considered and acknowledged as King of Cape Coast, and that the native courts of Cape Coast, for the adjustment of civil and criminal cases, are to be closed, Her Majesty's Courts, presided over by the Chief and other magistrates, being open daily for the administration of justice to high and low, according to the just, noble, and benevolent laws of Great Britain and Ireland.

Given under my hand and the public seal at Government House, Cape Coast, this 10th day of December, 1866.

By His Excellency's Command,
H. T. Ussher

COLONIAL SECRETARY

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

The subsequent events in the Gold Coast tended to centre around the actions of a Mr W. H. Simpson, who in August 1868 vacated his post as Collector of Customs to act as Officer Administering the Government. In a dispatch dated May 17, 1869, Earl Granville, Secretary of State for the Colonies, had this to say about Mr. Simpson's actions :

I select some passages from his [Mr Simpson's] letters. To the King of Ashanti he writes, that if his troops should attack the Crepees, he, Mr Simpson, will lend every assistance, moral and physical, to the Crepees in defence of their country and independence.

He states that the tribes about the Volta acknowledge the British title by purchase, and that the soil itself of those countries is British soil, and that, although the British Government do not adopt this view, they will not acquiesce in the occupation of that part of the banks of the river of a Foreign Power, and that the control of Great Britain over those parts has revived, and will not be suffered to abate.

He adds, that if the Ashanti will withdraw from Aquamoo, he will guarantee the Aquamoos against attack from the Crepees,

or a Chief called Domfrey, who is acting at present in favour of the Crepees, and is accused of various outrages on ambassadors.

The substance of these messages Mr Simpson communicated to the King of Akim, encouraging him to hope that he will have the co-operation and assistance of the British Government in giving the Ashantis such a lesson as will conclude at once and forever the constant unreasonable dread with which that power has been hitherto regarded.

He informs the King of Ahwoolah that his orders are peremptory to secure peace and freedom of the river, that if the Crepees are attacked they will have as allies the Protectorate and the British Government and that he will render them assistance in every way possible, in money, men, and munitions of war.

He writes to a Chief in arms called Domfrey promising assistance in case of an attack upon him, and informs a King, apparently of doubtful friendliness, that if his loyalty is made clear he shall be first King of Crepee, but if he assists the enemy just measures of retribution will be taken against him, adding that the Ashantis, if they made an attack on the Crepees, will have to fight the British Government as their allies.

Earl Granville, Secretary of State for the Colonies, in his letter to Sir Arthur Kennedy continues :

I have quoted these passages at length in order to make the effect of what Mr Simpson has done perfectly clear.

That effect is, as matters now stand, to make the British Government not a neutral, nor even an ally, but a principal in the quarrel or complication of quarrels which are arising between the Kingdom of Ashanti and the neighbouring tribes, so that the defeat or ill success of those tribes is the defeat or ill success of the British Government, and their destruction, from default of adequate assistance, will be chargeable on the British Government if it have authorized or should adopt the acts of its officers; or on that officer personally, if his proceedings are not so authorized or approved.

The statement which I have made will, I think, convince you that Her Majesty's Government have never authorized, so that they are not at liberty to confirm, the threats or promises to which Mr Simpson has resorted.

The announcements which I have selected from his letters, so far as they are addressed to allies, must be effectually recalled; and those allies must be made clearly to understand that although the British Government, so long as they conduct themselves satisfactorily, may be ready to give them some assistance in the way of arms, ammunition and money, yet the wars in which they engage themselves are their wars, and not the wars of this country; that they must rely on themselves for success of those

wars, and that the British Government is unable to make itself responsible for their defence in case they should prove unable to defend themselves.

The Secretary of State's letter throws a great deal of light on the activities of the men on the spot. It shows clearly how such men goaded the inhabitants of the colony with threats and promises to adopt a hostile attitude toward their kinsmen, the Ashantis, and how if Ashanti herself was not directly threatened and insulted by the British Government, the actions of the officers on the spot amounted to such insults and threats. Now those who had been incited and goaded on to adopt a hostile attitude toward the Ashantis were to be told that the inciting letters had been withdrawn and that they were to rely on their own resources.

The direct effect of the withdrawal of the inciting letters was to cause the Fanti Confederacy, which had been founded in 1867, to meet at Mankessim on November 18, 1871.

When the Fanti Confederacy was first formed in 1867, the following were elected to the executive: Nana Kwesi Edu, King of Mankessim; Nana Otu, King of Abura; Nana Ackinney I, King of Akumfi; R. Johnson Ghartey, Esq (later King Ghartey V of Winneba); J. H. Brew, Esq, popularly known as Prince Brew of Dunkwa and "The Owl"; Chief Okyill of Cape Coast; Chief Acquainoo of Mankessim; the Honourable George Blankson, jun, of Anomabu; J. F. Amissah, Esq, of Dominasi; Joseph deGraft-Hayford (later Rev Joseph deGraft-Hayford of Cape Coast); and William Davidson, Esq, of Kromantine. The Fanti Chiefs met at Mankessim in November 1871 and sent the following diplomatic letter to the Officer Administering the Government of the Gold Coast on November 24, 1871:

Sir, We the Kings, Chiefs and others assembled at Mankessim, beg most respectfully to forward you the enclosed copy of a Constitution framed and passed by us after mature consideration.

We have united together for the express purpose of furthering the interests of our country. In the Constitution it will be observed that we contemplate means for the social improvement of our subjects and peoples, the growth of education and industrial pursuits; and in short, every good which British philanthropy may have designed for the good of the Gold Coast, but which we think it impossible for it at present to do for the country at large.

Our sole object is to improve the condition of our peoples, not to interfere with, but to aid our benefactors on the sea Coast, and we count upon your Excellency giving us at times that assistance which may be necessary to carry out our humble efforts.

We beg to forward a copy of the Constitution, and of Resolutions 1 and 2, for the information of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

It is interesting to note that Mr Francis Chapman Grant, grandfather of Pa Grant,¹ founder and President of the United Gold Coast Convention, was elected the first and last Treasurer of the Fanti Confederacy—first and last because Mr Salmon, the Acting Administrator, regarded the movement as a dangerous conspiracy, and consigned to prison some officials of the Confederacy. Some of the officers of the Confederacy were: William Edmund Davidson, Vice-President; James Festus Amissah, Secretary; James Hutton Brew, Under-Secretary; Francis Chapman Grant, Treasurer; Jonah Myles Abadoo, Assistant Treasurer.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies, now Lord Kimberley, in a dispatch dated January 16, 1872, and addressed to the Officer Administering the Government, wrote these significant words:

As the information before me does not lead me to attach so much importance to this movement, I cannot but regret that persons claiming to hold office under the Confederation should have been arrested, although they were subsequently and apparently, after a short interval, released on bail, and if on the receipt of this Dispatch the proceedings which the Administrator contemplated in the Judicial Assessor's Court should not have taken place, you will instruct him to stay any proceeding and free the parties from bail.

The Secretary of State went on to elaborate his points clearly, but on April 20 of the same year he was compelled to write:

I approve of the general tenor of the Proclamation issued by Mr Salmon, although I must point out that the words "deeming the so-called Constitution to be subversive of those relations which have for a long time past subsisted between Great Britain and this country; and certainly leading to a discontinuance thereof," go somewhat beyond the terms of my dispatch of 16th January.

¹ George Grant, popularly known in the Gold Coast as Pa Grant.

The truth is that the Secretary of State's dispatch was misrepresented: and the Coussey Committee Report of October 26, 1949, did well to point out that the Fanti Confederacy was abolished owing to the failure to implement Lord Kimberley's dispatch. In order to appreciate the point made by the Coussey Committee it may be well to refer to one or two dispatches sent by Mr John Pope Hennessy to the Earl of Kimberley, Secretary of State for the Colonies. Mr (afterward Sir) John Pope Hennessy, a member of the Inner Temple, was a member of the House of Commons from 1859 to 1865. Between April 1867 and December 1871, Mr Hennessy was Governor of Labuan, then Consul-General of Borneo, and finally Governor of the Bahamas. On January 29, 1872, Mr Hennessy was appointed to administer the Government of Sierra Leone and the West African Settlements. Mr Hennessy's West African appointment came after Lord Kimberley had ordered the Officer Administering the Government of the Gold Coast to reverse his decision regarding the Fanti Confederacy.¹

On October 29, 1872, Mr Hennessy was compelled to send the following dispatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies:

In the Dispatch of the 11th of April, 1872, Your Lordship was pleased to approve of the course I had taken in the preceding month, in instructing Mr Ussher, the late Administrator of the Gold Coast, to suspend the operation of a Circular and Proclamation he had issued about the Fanti Confederation, until I had an opportunity of looking into the question myself.

On my arrival at Cape Coast, I found the Proclamation and Circular still in force. Mr Ussher explains in his letter of the 4th of May, that this arose from an oversight of his; but that in any case no actual proceedings had taken place under the Circular. It appeared, however, that one of the British Commandants had acted on Mr Ussher's Circular, and that two of the Kings in the protected territory had received summonses respecting the Confederation which they had refused to obey. I allowed the matter to drop; but even if it had been thought proper to enforce Mr Ussher's Circular in the Protectorate, the local Government had no sufficient force at its command for that purpose.

When it became known that I was not disposed to sanction the

¹ N.B.—Confederacy and Confederation were both used in the old days, but Confederacy was in more common usage and that is what is recognized today.

policy of the Administrator, a number of native gentlemen, connected with the Confederation, called upon me with a request that they might be allowed to submit their views to Her Majesty's Government. To this I readily agreed, and had more than one interview with them in the Castle of Elmina.

The views of the Confederacy, submitted by Mr J. H. Brew and others to the Secretary of State, give the full background of its formation and begin with the Ashanti invasion of 1863. The document is quoted at length in view of its great historical interest.

The disastrous consequences of that war are still evident, and are now matter of history; and that war had this great effect, of causing the natives to perceive for the first time that the British Government on such occasions would let the full brunt fall on them. This came out during the investigation set on foot to inquire into the conduct of Mr Richard Pine, at that time Governor of these Settlements, Mr Pine himself informing the Kings and Chiefs assembled at Cape Coast that he had received positive instructions from the Home Government not to interfere with any disturbances in the interior, nor in any quarrels with the King of Ashanti and the natives of the Protectorate, and that the Kings and Chiefs should be thus told, and also be left to settle their own differences. Mr Pine further informed them that he had received instructions to return to Europe, but that he was determined to wait until he had formed a compact between them, the Kings and Chiefs, before he would leave Cape Coast.

Unfortunately, the state of his health became very bad, and he was compelled to embark before anything could be done. This, Sir, was the very first idea instilled into the minds of the Kings and Chiefs of the Protectorate, of the necessity of a Confederacy amongst them, and our people were then taught for the first time to depend entirely on themselves.

Following this, we then have the proclamation issued by Colonel Conran, then administering the Government of these Settlements, in 1865, limiting the extent of British jurisdiction to within five miles from the sea-coast or gun-range from the forts. This proclamation, which the Right Honourable Mr Cardwell ordered to be recalled, was, in spite of such orders, permitted by Colonel Conran to stand.

We have the evidence of the Parliamentary Committee of 1865, which sat on West African affairs, in which it is shown that Her Majesty's Government is not legally possessed nor does it claim a foot of territory outside the gates of its forts, but that it exercised a species of protection and irregular authority which could not and cannot be defined strictly. For the two or three years following, the local Government restricted its authority to within

very narrow limits, never permitting summonses, writs, orders, proclamations, etc., to be sent into the interior of the Protectorate, and confining itself as closely as possible to the sea-coast towns. We now come to the year 1867, a year memorable in the annals of the Gold Coast, as that in which the Fanti Confederation sprang into existence.

In this year (1867) a Convention was entered into between the British Government and that of the Netherlands, for the exchange of territory, by which Convention certain of the tribes (Wassaws, Denkeras, Chiffuls, Commendahs, etc.), who had hitherto lived under British rule, were handed over to the Dutch. These tribes were opposed to such a transfer, and the Commendahs flew to arms in consequence thereof. The Kings and the Chiefs of Fanti, as soon as they heard of the proposed exchange, convened a meeting at Mankessim, and there entered into a solemn compact to render every assistance to their fellow countrymen should the Dutch attempt to coerce them into "accepting the Dutch fiat." The Dutch bombarded Commendah,¹ and as these tribes are the natural allies of the Fantis, they were compelled to take the field on their behalf. The Fantis took a large force to the seat of war, and, together with these other tribes, besieged and blockaded Elmina, the headquarters of the Dutch possessions on the Coast of Guinea. This was in the early part of 1868. At this time Mr Ussher had the reins of government, and by active measures succeeded in inducing the Fantis to raise the blockade and retire. The Kings and Chiefs of Fanti and their allies proceeded direct to Mankessim and there laid the foundations of the Fanti Confederation. While they were there assembled, Mr Ussher addressed a letter of date 18th July, 1868, "To the Presidents and other Chiefs of Fanti, at Mankessim," in which, after dwelling on various circumstances connected with the Elmina war, he proceeded to state: "Your conduct has been such that I can no longer have relations with you"; and, "as you voluntarily throw off your allegiance, you must not be surprised that I accept your act, and treat you, until you come to your senses, as apart from Great Britain"; further, that, "in case of a war with Ashanti, as you will have provoked it you will bear the brunt thereof, without help from Government." Mr Ussher shortly after leaves for England, and Mr Simpson becomes the Chief of the Executive. Mr Simpson follows closely in Mr Ussher's footsteps, until he realizes the fact that unless the rupture between the Government and the Fantis is healed up, the progress of the country would be materially injured. With this in view, he proceeds to meet the Kings and Chiefs at Mankessim, in 1869, and there recognizes the Fanti Confederation by giving it himself the style and designation of the "Fanti Confederacy," and at the same time recognizes and approves of the appointment of its

¹ Commendah town as distinct from the people and State of Commendah.

principal officers, and acknowledges its authority over the interior districts of the Protectorate. On Mr Simpson's return to Cape Coast, he had to seek the interference and mediation of the Confederation, for the purpose of ransoming certain Dutch naval officers and sailors who had been captured by the Commendahs, and the Treaty, Convention, or whatever one may choose to call it, as regards the ransom so to be paid to the Commendahs through the Fanti Confederation, was ratified by Mr R. J. Ghartey, as representative or president thereof, and by Mr Simpson, for the British Government, and Governor Nagtglas, on behalf of the Netherlands. Subsequently, Mr Simpson invited Mr Ghartey and late Mr G. Blankson, who was at the time Secretary of the Confederation, to Cape Coast, for the purpose of deliberating as to the form of constitution best suited to the Confederation. Some progress was made in it; but before its completion, Mr Ussher resumed the reins of office. Mr Ussher, on his resumption of the Government, gave the Confederation the same practical recognition as Mr Simpson had given it before him, and likewise invited Mr Ghartey to come to Cape Coast and assist him in drafting a Constitution for the Confederation. Both of these officials addressed Mr Ghartey as President of the Fanti Confederation, or the representative of the Kings and Chiefs composing the Confederation. So matters continued until Mr Ussher's departure for England in the earlier part of 1871, and so they remained for some months after. On Mr Ussher's departure, Mr C. S. Salmon became Acting Administrator of these Settlements and it was during his Government that the meeting at Mankessim, which resulted in the Constitution that forms part of the subject-matter of our present discussion was held.

Mr Ussher arrived here on the 3rd or 4th of March last, and again resumed the reins of office, and, a few days after his arrival, issued the proclamation that we laid before your Excellency on the 11th instant. So much for this part of our subject, which has been brought to your notice with a view of showing to your Excellency that the existing state of affairs has not been brought about through disloyalty toward Her Majesty's Government, but that the position has been forced upon us.

Mr Ussher had informed the Fanti Confederation that "in case of a war with Ashanti, as you will have provoked it, you will bear the brunt thereof without help from Government." When war with Ashanti did come it was for reasons other than provocation by the Fanti Confederation. On March 20, 1873, the Asantehene¹ sent a letter to Colonel

¹ Asantehene has always been the correct title of the ruler of the Ashanti people. He is often mentioned in historical documents as "King of Ashanti," but the word "king" does not exist in any of the Gold Coast languages. Every ruler, whether he rules over a village, town, district or State, or whether he pays homage to a superior or not, is always known as an "Ohene." The

Robert William Harley, CB, Administrator of Her Majesty's Forts and Settlements on the Gold Coast. The letter began as follows :

His Majesty, Kalkaree, sends his best respects to your honour, also to Messrs. Ossoo Ansah and G. Blankson.

His Majesty states that, he being the grandson of Ossai Tutu, he owns the Elminas to be his relatives, and consequently the fort at Elmina and its dependencies being his, he could not understand the Administrator-in-Chief's sending Attah, alias Mr H. Plange, to tell him of his having taken possession from Quake Fram, and notifying him also that in four months, he, the Administrator, would come to Ashanti to take away power from him.

Within a month of the dispatch of this letter, the Ashanti armies were on the move.

Earlier pages have recorded how a Mr Simpson, Acting Administrator of the Forts and Settlements of the Gold Coast, addressed provocative letters to the King of Ashanti and furthermore addressed inciting letters to chiefs in the coastal areas and the Protectorate so as to goad these chiefs on to adopt a hostile attitude toward the Ashantis. It is true that the then Secretary of State for the Colonies repudiated Mr Simpson's actions, but the Secretary of State's words were not conveyed to the King of Ashanti nor was there any move to render an apology to him. To these earlier provocative letters was now added the taking over of Elmina Castle from the Dutch, a step which the King of Ashanti regarded as an interference with his property and with the liberty of his subjects.

It must be admitted that the British Government suspected that the Ashantis had some rights to Elmina, for His Excellency Sir Arthur Kennedy asked the Dutch Authorities, "Does the Netherlands Government pay any tribute

"O" is dropped for identification purposes and "hene" is then added on to the town or region over which the ruler has control; thus the ruler of Oguaa (Cape Coast) is Oguaa-hene, the ruler of Abura is Abura-hene and the ruler of Asante is Asante-hene. It must be noted that the Ashantis have always called their country Asante and not Ashanti or Ashantee as appears in all old and new official and non-official documents and books. The ruler of Ashanti is still known as Asante-hene and officially that title is now in common usage in the Gold Coast. The term "Omanhene," which now describes a chief who is not subordinate to any other chief or ruler in the Gold Coast, actually dates from the beginning of the present century.

to the King of Ashanti, or has he any recognized or other claim upon the people or territory at Elmina?"

Governor Nagtglas, on behalf of the Netherlands Government, answered as follows:

"The Netherlands Government pays a yearly stipend to the King of Ashanti of 20 ounces [of gold] or fl. 960—£80."

"Why?" asked Sir Arthur Kennedy.

Governor Nagtglas answered:

In 1791 the West Indian Company, which was owner of the forts, paid that amount to the King of Ashanti, when the forts, etc. went over to the Crown, the Government was bound to maintain the payment, which has been done hitherto.

Tradition says, that in former times, 150 years ago, the West Indian Company paid the chief of Dinkirah¹ 20 ounces of gold to encourage the trade for slaves, gold dust, and ivory, that the King of Ashanti conquered the Dinkirahs, and that also the pay-note came into his hands.

So he asked the Company to pay him, as he was now in possession of the note, to which request the Company agreed, likely to save some troubles.

The King of Ashanti has no recognized claim upon the territory or people of Elmina.

Even after these replies from Governor Nagtglas, the British again had to ask for a clarification of the position, and the old answers were repeated. Whatever the actual position was, the Ashantis felt that they had a right to Elmina Castle, Elmina town, and the people of Elmina, and that the three could never be the subject of negotiations between Britain and the Netherlands.

The message which the British are said to have sent to the King of Ashanti through Britain's special envoy to Ashanti, Mr Henry Plange of Elmina, could have led to nothing but war—a war in which the Fantis were called upon to fight on the side of the British.

In Elmina itself the majority of the people were resolved not to submit to British rule, and they were determined to make common cause with the Ashantis. Nana Kobena Igyan, the Omanhene² or traditional ruler of Elmina, on

¹ Dinkirah here is Denkera.

² See footnote on page 177 for meaning and origin of this term. Hitherto, all paramount chiefs were known as kings to Europeans.

the advice of the Elmina State, swore an oath never to submit to British rule.

The Ashanti armies which had begun a march to the coast were soon reported to be making their way toward Elmina. It was clear that the people of Elmina would rise up against the British and assist the advancing Ashanti forces. In order to forestall an uprising of the Elminas, Captain Turton, the Military Commandant at Cape Coast, made his way to Elmina with an army detachment. The traditional ruler of Elmina, Nana Kobena Igyan, was invited to Elmina Castle and asked to swear allegiance to the British. This he refused to do, saying that he was not afraid of British power and that the British could hang him if they wished, since he had no desire and no power to break the oath which he had taken to oppose British rule at Elmina. He indicated that only the Elmina State could compel him to revoke the oath which he had taken. Constitutionally, Nana Kobena Igyan could not act otherwise. The British authorities on their part found the Omanhene of Elmina a dangerous person to have around when the Ashanti armies were actually advancing on Elmina, and accordingly Nana Kobena Igyan was arrested and detained. Plans for his deportation to Sierra Leone were soon completed and on June 11, 1873, he was led out of the castle to say farewell to the people of Elmina. On June 24, 1873, H.M.S. *Sea Gull* with Nana Kobena Igyan on board set sail for Sierra Leone. In taking leave of his people, Nana Kobena Igyan is reported to have said the following:

My people of Elmina—Hitherto have I endeavoured to serve my country and people in all sincerity and goodwill; true to noble tradition, faithful to sacred trust, obedient to oath and pledge which by power in me vested as King of our Ancient State, I have assiduously observed unto this day. By the cruel irony of fate circumstances have so declared that I stand today a prisoner in the hands of the English Government and am compelled to leave the land I love. Whither, I know not. The bitter experience of this epoch-making day I dare not recount nor do I find it expedient to revoke the sacred and solemn oath administered to me as King of this Ancient State without the unanimous prior consent of the State to which we are all inseparably bound. I feel it part of my obligation and duty therefore to suffer the consequences of this extraordinary departure from vital principles of

our Constitution rather than be victim to cowardice by exposing my sacred trust in an unequivocal submission. To you belongs the future administration of the State and I now take leave of you—Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye.¹

Nana Kobena Igyan's deportation to Sierra Leone was to last twenty-five years, but even before the ship taking him to Sierra Leone had left Elmina waters new forces were unfolding themselves in the Gold Coast. The Ashanti armies were moving fast and on June 13, 1873, they joined forces with some of the Elmina people who had taken the field against the British. The British in their turn bombarded a section of the town of Elmina and set it on fire. The resistance of the people of Elmina was at last broken.

The arrival of British forces under the command of General Sir Garnet Wolseley made it possible for the war against the Ashantis to be carried right into the very heart of Ashanti, in fact to Kumasi, the capital. No one can question Sir Garnet Wolseley's ability as a general, but it is unfortunate that he should have issued an inciting document which, if the Fantis had acted fully upon it, might have led to decades, if not generations, of tension between the Fantis and Ashantis, two major groups of the Akan group of tribes.

General Sir Garnet Wolseley may well have pleaded military expediency for acting as he did, but one would have thought that after the Secretary of State had authorized the withdrawal of inciting letters, such letters would have ceased in the Gold Coast, yet only a year later we find Sir Garnet Wolseley issuing the following proclamation:

To all the Kings, Headmen, Chiefs, and Tribes of the Gold Coast, Allies of Her Majesty the Queen of England, Greeting.

I desire that you should know that immediately after the attack made upon Essaman and Ampinee and the destruction of those places by the English troops under my command your enemies broke up their encampment at Manpon. Finding that they were unable to contend with us, either in the open or in the bush, they are now in full retreat, endeavouring to return to their own country by Prahsu; one of their retreating columns has been attacked and dispersed by my troops near Dunquah.

They are trying to carry with them in their flight all the goods

¹ Cf. J. S. Wartemberg, *Sao Jorge D'El Mina*, p. 64.

of which they have robbed you, all the wives and children whom they have stolen from you.

Men of the Gold Coast, will you allow this? Will you let the hours slip by, whilst your wives, your sons, your daughters are being driven off to slaughter by the flying enemy.

Will you not pursue them?

Now or never is the time to show that you are men. I, for my part, shall hold no man as a friend of Her Majesty, or as a friend of this country, who delays for one moment.

You have nothing to fear, I hold the whole road from Mansu, so that they cannot assail it. Gather upon my strong forts at Dunquah, Abrakrampa and Mansu. No one will venture to attack these points. Thence press onward to the prah, and oppose your enemies as they are endeavouring to recross the river. If you now act quickly and with vigour, the fall of your enemy and the peace of your country will be secured.

The Ashanti armies retreated, and Kumasi was entered by British forces on February 4, 1874. The Treaty of Fomena was concluded and fairly severe terms were imposed on the Ashantis. The Ashantis were required to pay a large indemnity. Subsequent moves by other European Powers to acquire colonies in West Africa led the British Governor to offer protection to the Ashantis. The Ashantis for their part wished to retain their independence and sent representations direct to England. In 1896 a British expeditionary force entered Kumasi and Mr Hendrik Vroom of Elmina, who had undertaken four missions to Kumasi on behalf of the British Government in 1895, was asked to be the chief intermediary between the King of Ashanti and the British authorities.

At this stage, there was no suggestion that Nana Prempeh, the young King of Ashanti, should be seized by British forces. Mr Hendrik Vroom was made to give Nana Prempeh every assurance of personal safety if the latter made a formal submission to the British. The Ashanti Royal Family, including the King and the Queen Mother, duly made their appearance and went through the formalities of submitting to British protection. The British Governor of the Gold Coast Colony then pressed for the immediate payment of 50,000 ounces of gold which was said to be the long overdue indemnity. The King of Ashanti indicated that it was impossible for him to pay such a large amount at so

short notice, but the British Governor had no ear for such words, and ordered the army to close in on the Ashanti Royal Family.

As the King was being taken away he cast a look at the surprised Mr Hendrik Vroom and said "Nnaba gyeme."¹ But Mr Hendrik Vroom was powerless to assist the King of Ashanti. The CMG which Mr Vroom received in recognition of his services to the British Crown in 1895 and 1896 and for his report in 1897 on "Affairs in Ashanti and its future Administration and Development of the Mining Industry" was no compensation for the anguish he experienced when he saw the British arrest the King of Ashanti.

Nana Prempeh was detained in Elmina Castle for four years before being deported to Sierra Leone and thence to the Seychelle Islands. His deportation lasted more than a quarter of a century.

Events in the Gold Coast did not stand still, and while Nana Prempeh was still at Elmina Castle, important decisions were being taken at Cape Coast only eight miles away. These arose out of a new Crown Lands Bill which Sir Brandforth Griffith, the Governor of the Gold Coast, wished to pass into law. The Bill was to place the management of the land in the hands of the Government. A deputation, consisting of T. F. E. Jones of Abura, J. W. deGraft Johnson of Cape Coast, and Kobina Fo (John Forson), called on the Governor at Accra and "succeeded in convincing him that the Bill would be viewed with suspicion and vehemently opposed. The measure was accordingly withdrawn."²

The withdrawal of the Bill was only provisional, for Sir William Maxwell, who succeeded Sir Brandforth Griffith as Governor of the Gold Coast, passed the Lands Bill of 1897 in the face of well-organized local opposition. J. W. deGraft Johnson, who was on a visit to Accra, obtained a copy of the new Bill and immediately rushed back to Cape Coast to summon a council of elder African statesmen. The summoning of this council led ultimately to the creation of the "Aborigines Right and Protection Society," with the

¹ "My mother's child [meaning kinsman] save me." The term "Nnaba" or "mother's child" was used by the Ashantis to describe their kinsmen, the Elminas.

² Dr J. W. deGraft Johnson, *Towards Nationhood in West Africa*, pp. 29-30.

thirty-seven-year-old J. W. deGraft Johnson as its first Vice-President, and with the wealthy Mr J. W. Sey as President.

In 1898 the Aborigines Society sent a deputation to London to seek an interview with the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies. The deputation consisted of Messrs J. W. Sey, T. F. E. Jones, and George Hughes. They returned to the Gold Coast on October 4, 1898, amid public jubilation; for the people of the Gold Coast had proved their case and won their point. The Aborigines Society had succeeded in preserving the land rights of the Gold Coast peasant.¹

The last quarter of the nineteenth century in the Gold Coast saw the birth of intense nationalism, and the man who carried that nationalism well into the twentieth century was the Hon Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford, who was born on September 29, 1866. Mr Casely Hayford was the son of the Rev Joseph deGraft Hayford, who, as Mr Joseph deGraft Hayford, was an original member of the Fanti Confederation of 1867 and one of those imprisoned by Mr Salmon, the Acting Governor of the Gold Coast, in late 1871.

The Rev (then Mr) Joseph deGraft Hayford and a few others of the Fanti Confederation were charged with "conspiracy to subvert the rule of Her Majesty on the Gold Coast." They were all released by order of the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Earl of Kimberley.

The men of the Confederation and their supporters were not men of straw, and His Excellency, Mr (later Sir) John Pope Hennessy, who was sent out specially to the Gold Coast to examine matters on the spot, reported to the Secretary of State on October 29, 1872 as follows:

As far as I could observe, every educated native at Cape Coast sympathized with the Confederation. Mr F. C. Grant, a native gentleman, who is certainly not the inferior of any European on the Gold Coast in character, ability, or mercantile position, is a strong supporter of the Confederation. If Mr Ussher's² judgment on their moral conduct and character were sound, it would be a painful commentary on the so-called Christianizing and

¹ See unpublished Thesis on "Co-operation in Agriculture and Banking in British West Africa," by the author, p. 32.

² Mr Ussher was the Officer Administering the Government of the Gold Coast.

civilizing effect of the Gold Coast Administration. But on the contrary, my inquiries on the spot, and an examination of the archives of the Local Government, convinced me that the educated natives have contrasted favourably as a body with the European residents. I was certainly impressed favourably by their tone and manner in their several interviews with me.¹

These educated Gold Coast Africans, among whom the Rev Joseph deGraft Hayford figured prominently, were among those who influenced the early life of Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford. The early days spent at Cape Coast proved of great benefit to the young man, and at a later date he was to pay special tribute to two men whose nationalism inspired him tremendously. He was to write of them in 1903 as follows:

Closely connected, but in another way, with the political movement from 1886 to 1898 were Messrs J. P. Brown and J. W. deGraft Johnson of Cape Coast. In every upward movement in a given community there are always one or two ardent souls to whom it is given to lead and to inspire. It was pre-eminently the work of these two gentlemen to infuse life and vigour into the clustering units of patriotic sons of the soil. Honour to whom honour is due. It is only fair that I should hand the names of Messrs Brown and Johnson down to posterity.²

Casely Hayford is not alone in paying tribute to these two men. An English missionary writing about education in the Gold Coast refers to these two Africans when he says:

This review of the progress of Elementary Education in Gold Coast Methodism can only be considered highly satisfactory. What of Secondary Education? The answer is that in Mfantshipim, Methodism has a Secondary School with the most astonishing record of scholastic successes of any school in Africa, possibly of any school in the world! A great claim, but easily provable.

Mfantshipim is a development of what was first the "High School," and then the "Collegiate School." The Rev T. R. Picot opened this in 1876, with the laudable intention of sharing the best European education with Africa. There were no premises available, and little money, so the school was held at first in the Cape Coast Mission House. The greatest difficulty was to get a teaching staff qualified to give this advanced education. It had a fluctuating career for a little more than twenty years, with more "downs" than "ups," and was eventually closed.

¹ Parliamentary Papers, 1873(49), p. 47.

² Casely Hayford, *Gold Coast Native Institutions*, p. 179.

Picot opened it, as Chairman of the District, but the men behind him were John Sarbah, J. P. Brown, and W. E. Pieterston. The school was the child of their dreams for the Gold Coast, and when it died they dreamed again. But these public-spirited men were in advance of their times, and their dream-children cost them much in money and died early deaths.

The High School was closed by order of the Synod of 1889. J. W. deGraft Johnson,¹ who had evidently inherited much of the spirit of his illustrious ancestor who was responsible for the coming of Methodism to the Gold Coast, made ceaseless efforts to get it re-opened. John Sarbah and J. P. Brown guaranteed the necessary money, and again a start was made.²

The twenty-three-year-old Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford was immediately called upon to take up the post of Principal of the Collegiate School (now Mfantsipim School) in addition to his duties as editor of *The Gold Coast Echo*.

Later on, Casely Hayford was to gain commercial experience at Axim and to leave for the United Kingdom to study law. His eldest brother, who was later to become Dr Ernest James Hayford, MD, MRCS, LRCP, Barrister-at-law, had chosen the medical profession, and another elder brother, who had taken to the Church like their father, was to become the Rev Dr Mark C. Hayford, MA, DD, FRGS, MRSanI. All three brothers made their mark on Gold Coast society, but it was Casely Hayford whose intense nationalism was to mark him out above all others.

Casely Hayford's schoolmate, friend, and colleague at the Bar, the Hon John Mensah Sarbah, CMG, is recognized as a great patriot and nationalist, but he did not live long enough to equal Casely Hayford in the length of patriotic service.

The Hon Casely Hayford made his first important mark on Gold Coast society in 1888, when he was only twenty-two. In that year Prince Brew of Dunkwa, "The Owl," the brilliant and patriotic editor of the *Western Echo*, left for the United Kingdom, and Casely Hayford was called upon to edit a new paper, *The Gold Coast Echo*. On November 5, 1888, *The Gold Coast Echo* exposed "the atrocities which were perpetrated upon the Tavievies, a small tribe in the Krepi district, in 1888, by Colonial troops." The paper

¹ Mr J. W. deGraft Johnson was a member of the Church of England.

² Arthur E. Southon, *Gold Coast Methodism 1835-1935*, pp. 126-7.

ironically described the incident as the "beauties of English civilization as reflected in the Gold Coast."

The burning patriotism of Casely Hayford was matched by the nationalism of the editors of the *Gold Coast People*, the *Gold Coast Chronicle*, and the *Gold Coast Independent*. The Rev S. B. Attoh Ahuma, editor of the *Gold Coast Methodist Times*, ventilated the political aspirations of the people in the pages of his paper until the Methodist Synod suppressed it on the grounds that politics should not be confused with religion.

Later on, Casely Hayford had this message to give to journalists in the Gold Coast:

If I had not gone to the Bar, and were editing a paper on the Gold Coast, I would strive to make it as perfect as it could be as to literary matter, get-up, and finish. I would adopt a firm, bold, and unswerving policy, courteous in tone and fearless in criticism. In other words, that is, I should set before myself a worthy objective, some material good of the fatherland, and work steadily up to it. I would not for support depend upon public contributions; for that would not be business. I would promote a small syndicate of independent men of means with patriotic fire in their hearts, and would endeavour to deserve the confidence and support of the community. I would assiduously inculcate the study among Aborigines of vernacular literature with a view to instructing them in matters political in their mother tongue. I would then, once a month, bring out a vernacular edition of my paper in which I would summarize for the bulk of the people the leading thoughts in the weekly editions of the paper. Above all things, I would study to make the people feel that they had in the columns of the journal a mouthpiece, and in the editor a ready friend, one who sympathized with them in all their troubles and who would give his very life's blood to ameliorate their condition.

As a practising barrister, as a member of his town council, and as a member of the Legislative Council, Casely Hayford did in fact give of his very life's blood for the amelioration of the lot of his people. His patriotism transcended tribal boundaries and went far beyond the Gold Coast, for he was the man who conceived the idea of a West African Congress and brought it into being. When the British took over Ashanti, deported the young King, and later demanded the sacred Golden Stool on the grounds that they were in Ashanti to end human sacrifices, barbarous customs and slave-raiding, Casely Hayford retorted:

For, mark you, the talk about human sacrifices and barbarous customs and slave-raiding is all cant. What lies behind it all is the desire for the good things of Ashanti that would come into the pockets of the British capitalist. How many thousands are mowed down by the Maxim in a single expedition? And in times of peace are not "rebel chiefs" freely hanged? The Ashanti loathes the hangman's noose, but gladly lays his neck upon the execution block. The latter he accounts honourable death, if death he has deserved; the former he regards as a disgraceful exit which his soul abhors. I do not personally approve of executions and slave-raiding, or of slavery in any shape or form. But what calls for loud protest is, that these should be a cloak for cant—an apology for the use of the Maxim gun—when all the time all the world knows that you are simply taking part in the scramble for the black man's country. It is unpalatable, I know; but it is true all the same.

The fight which Casely Hayford put up on behalf of Ashantis inside and outside the Legislative Council contributed materially toward the return of the exiled King of Ashanti.

Casely Hayford had some serious things to say about expatriates in the West African Civil Service:

In the first place, entrance into the West African official life is not by competitive examination, as is the case in the Indian Civil Service. Patronage rules the day at Downing Street in official appointments to the West African Civil Service. You may be a very capable man; indeed, the best qualified by experience and natural ability for a particular appointment. But, unless you have influence with some one who has influence with the Colonial Office, you are sure to be left out in the cold. That being so, you naturally get a class of men who, as human nature goes, would be the most obedient humble servants of the Colonial Office. That is clear.

Occasionally the service may, and does, show up a strong man, who stands up for truth, regardless of consequences; but such occasions are rare, and far between. You may sometimes observe the phenomenon of an independent man going to work on independent lines. But he does so only so long as his work has not attracted notice at headquarters. It is sure to do so before long, and then he must either break or bend. The majority bend. The few—very few—to their eternal honour, elect to break. And why?

You see, when the average civil servant has successfully made his way to West Africa, it does not matter in what department, the present appointment is regarded by him as a stepping-stone to another in some better clime. It is not his fault. It is that of

the climate. He cannot keep a family here, and so he takes the first opportunity of going away. To get away to a congenial clime with a promotion, or a CMG, is again a question of patronage. The Governor has the last say in the matter. Therefore, naturally, even strong men do bend in the end. It is only policy—a way, that is to say, to get on in life, no matter whether the better part of man approves or not.

If this is the case with the strong, what must it be with the weak members of the West African Civil Service? They are, of course, like chaff before the wind. Strangely enough, there are some Europeans who regard men of the other races as necessarily inferior to the European. Indeed, so weak-minded are they, that they cannot, even under circumstances where Nature proclaims the other man the master of the situation, divest themselves of the idea of superiority. On every possible occasion they try to inspire a sense of this so-called superiority over their coloured friends, the result being that they become the freest tools in the hands of the powers that be, in a policy which, in every way, conflicts with the written code of official sentiment.¹

Finally, to those who were inclined to think that it was the fear of British guns which had kept the Gold Coast Colony proper free from disturbances, Casely Hayford gave a prophetic warning:

For, believe me, the native of West Africa has profound respect for the qualities of justice and fair play. The careless observer may think that the fear of British guns and Maxims has hitherto kept the Gold Coast proper free from disturbances. A greater mistake could not be made.²

Casely Hayford the nationalist, Casely Hayford the legislator, had a strong opponent in the late Nana Sir Ofori Atta I. These two able men were pitted against each other by the careful strategy of officialdom, and when Casely Hayford died in 1930 the two leaders had not completely come together. But it must be recorded that some time before Nana Sir Ofori Atta I's death in 1943 he realized that the late Hon Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford was right, after all, and it is to the everlasting glory of Nana Sir Ofori Atta I that in his last two years on earth he became the champion of his people in the true Casely Hayford manner. Had fate been kinder and made it possible for the two able leaders to pull their weight together right to the very end, the Gold Coast would long ago have been a self-governing dominion.

¹ Casely Hayford, *op. cit.*, pp. 218–20.

² *ibid.*, p. 220.

EPILOGUE

WE have attempted to bring to light the vanished civilizations of the African continent. We have also attempted a picture of the slave trade and its aftermath, with particular reference to the Gold Coast. We purposely devoted much space to political developments in the Gold Coast, for that country today heads the list of African colonial territories that are fast moving toward the attainment of self-government. Since the General Elections on the 15th of June, 1954, the Gold Coast now has a fully elected Legislative Assembly and an all-African executive.

All over the African continent there have been major changes in the course of the last decade. When the European Powers met at the Berlin Conference (1884-5) to regularize the scramble for African territories, little did they think that in the space of less than seventy years peoples whom they described as living in a barbaric or semi-barbaric state would in a lifetime have made so much progress that they would be within right of standing on their own feet among the nations of the world.

The European Powers that now govern Africa have to a great measure contributed toward the recent advance of the African peoples. In certain cases grave mistakes have been made, but on balance the economic prosperity and social well-being of the African have been greatly improved.

The spread of education, even to the remotest village, has done much to widen the mental horizon of the African, and if illiteracy still prevails among the majority of the people, the door to world knowledge is now wide open, and it is not likely to be shut again. New industrial techniques have been introduced and new skills have been acquired. The resources of the vast continent are now available to the African and to the world at large, and if the Negro's share in the wealth of his continent is in some cases restricted, this is but a penalty for being slow in the race for world progress and world advancement. Where deliberate barriers are not placed in the way of the African there is every sign that he is ready to learn and to contribute toward the material well-being of himself and his fellow men.

For generations the African ceased to progress. He had lost touch with the old black civilizations and had sunk to a low level of existence. But now, in East, Central, South, North, and notably in West Africa, the dark cloud of ignorance and superstition is lifting. Africans are now beginning to find a new and higher level of existence. Through education, through commerce and industry, through religion and through new methods of political organization and political thought, Negroes are attempting to achieve in a single generation what it took others centuries to achieve. Often the mental strains and stresses have been acute. The process of assimilation and adaptation may not be complete, but the forward movement is unmistakable.

In West Africa the British Government has demonstrated its sincerity about assisting Africans to determine their own destiny. In South Africa by contrast the picture is an unhappy one. In East and Central Africa there is much uneasiness in African minds, but even in some of these regions signs of material advancement for the African are not lacking.

The recent unhappy developments in Kenya and Uganda give cause for much concern, but even here, through crisis, we find a new outlook, a desire to accord to the African a greater share in the management of his own affairs. In the twentieth century there can be no question as to the theoretical right of Africans to equality. There is no longer any doubt as to the African's will and capacity to acquire the knowledge and techniques needed for a modern civilized existence. The disagreement comes when the pace of development is being discussed, but it must be stressed that it is no longer possible to stem the growing tide of African nationalism, nor is it possible to curb the African's thirst for knowledge.

In West Africa the British Government has clearly recognized this point and has indicated its willingness to assist in the rapid changes that are fast taking place in all walks of life. There has been a keen desire to assist Africans to develop along western lines. The growth of Trade Unions, Co-operative Movements, Local Councils, University Colleges, and Technical Institutes, the extension of the franchise, the introduction of fee-free education, the acceptance of the principle of ministerial responsibility in the Central Government of British West African territories, are all pointers to

the dramatic changes that are taking place in Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, the Sudan, and to some extent in other parts of the African continent.

In economic matters there is an increasing desire on the part of the administrative authorities to grant more power to Africans. Africans are now chairmen of statutory organizations. These changes, though evolutionary in character, mark a very rapid advance in the status of the Negro.

In the religious field also there have been great changes. Negro bishops are becoming more common, and this development is true both of the Catholic and Protestant Churches. In the Gold Coast there is an African Moderator of the Presbyterian Church and an African, the Rev G. R. Acquaaah, OBE, was Chairman of the Methodist Church until his death on the 19th of March, 1954. These moves have in no way lowered spiritual standards, and there is reason to believe that the high standards set by the early European missionaries will be maintained at all times.

In the political field the new wave of African nationalism is throwing up new leaders. The Gold Coast has political leaders like Kwame Nkrumah, A. Casely Hayford, Kojo Botsio, K. A. Gbedemah of the Convention People's Party, J. B. Danquah, Nii Amaa Ollennu, K. A. Busia and William Ofori Atta of the Ghana Congress Party, and Yakubu Tali of the Northern People's Party. There are many more leaders who will be coming to the fore in the future. In Nigeria, Nnamdi Azikiwe of the NCNC, Obafemi Awolowo of the Action Group, and many others, have set new standards of leadership in Africa. The picture for Sierra Leone and the Gambia reflects the same thirst for dynamic leadership. There is no doubt that the progress so far made will be sustained if honest, sincere and intelligent leadership is always forthcoming.

In the Gold Coast, where the political changes appear to surpass those in the other West African territories, the post of Prime Minister exists, and Kwame Nkrumah is the present holder of this all-important post. His responsibilities are great, and the whole of the Negro world looks to him for inspiration. Will that inspiration be forthcoming? The history of the next few years will give the answer.

CHRONOLOGY

B.C.

- 1100 City of Utica founded by the Phœnicians.
- 822 Carthage founded by the Phœnicians.
- 753 Rome founded by the Etruscans.
- 721 Piankhi became undisputed master of Egypt.
- 715 Nubian Dynasty of Egypt founded.
- 600 Niku (Necho) II commissioned a Phœnician captain to sail round Africa.
- 520 Hanno, the Carthaginian, sailed along the west coast of Africa.
- 510 Etruscans expelled from Rome.
- 332 Alexander the Great entered Egypt.
- 306 Ptolemy the General became King of Egypt.
- 285 Ptolemy II became King of Egypt.
- 280 Romans defeated at the Battle of Heracles by Pyrrhus.
- 202 Hannibal defeated by the Romans at the Battle of Zama.
- 149 Third and last Punic War began.
- 146 Carthage destroyed by the Romans.
- 47 Julius Cæsar reinstated Cleopatra as Queen of Egypt.
- 46 Julius Cæsar encamped near the ruins of Carthage.
- 30 Rome annexed the old Greek Colonies in Cyrenaica.
- 19 Septimus Flaccus crossed the Sahara desert to reach northern Nigeria.

A.D.

- 50 Suetonius Paulinus penetrated to the upper reaches of the Niger.
- 115 Jewish rebellion in Cyrenaica.
- 146 Septimus Severus born at Leptis Magna, North Africa.
- 155 (*circa*) Tertullian born in Carthage.
- 180 Martyrdom of Felicitas and Perpetua.
- 193 Septimus Severus became Emperor of the Roman Empire.
- 211 Septimus Severus died in the English city of York.
- 312 Constantine became sole Emperor of the Roman Empire of the West.
- 325 Council of Nicæa.
- 354 St Augustine born at Tagaste, North Africa.
- 410 Alaric sacked the city of Rome.
- 429 Vandals invaded Africa.
- 430 St Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, died.
- 439 Genseric, King of the Vandals, attacked and captured Carthage.
- 451 Council of Chalcedon convened.
- 477 Genseric died in North Africa.
- 527 Justinian became ruler of the Byzantine Empire.
- 530 Gelimer, great-grandson of Genseric, became King of the Vandals.
- 533 The Byzantines under Belisarius defeated the Vandals in Africa.
- 568 Longinus became bishop of the Nobadæ.
- 571 The Prophet Mohammed born.
- 616 Persian armies under Chosroes II invaded Egypt.
- 622 Mohammed fled from Mecca, the year of the Hegira.
- 640 Arabs under Amir ibn-al-As invaded Egypt.
- 705 Queen Kahina defeated and slain in battle.
- 711 General Tarik and African Moslem forces invaded Spain.

- A.D.
- 927 The Abbot of the Monastery of St Mary Deipara visited Baghdad to secure remission of the poll-tax demanded from African monks.
- 1028 El Bekri born in Spain.
- 1045 Two Arab tribes, the Beni-Hilal and the Beni-Soleim, invaded Tripolitania and Tunisia.
- 1062 Yusuf ibn Tashifin founded Marrakesh.
- 1076 Ghana captured by the Almoravids under Abu Bekr.
- 1087 Abu Bekr died in Africa.
- 1203 Sumanguru (Susu kingdom or Soninke) took control of the rebuilt city of Ghana.
- 1235 Sundiata (founder of the Mali Empire) defeated the Soninke (Sumanguru) at Kirina.
- 1240 Sundiata destroyed the rebuilt city of Ghana.
- 1248 Moors driven out of Seville.
- 1304 Ibn Battuta born in Tangiers.
- 1307 Mansa Musa became ruler of the Mali Empire.
- 1325 The Mandingoes (Mali Empire) captured the city of Gao.
- 1332 Ibn Khaldoun born in Spain. Mansa Musa died in the same year.
- 1333 The Mossi of Yatenga attacked and sacked Timbuktu.
- 1335 Gao threw off the Mali yoke.
- 1352 Ibn Battuta visited West Africa.
- 1364 The French established trade with Elmina and other parts of West Africa.
- 1369 Ibn Battuta died in Fez.
- 1413 The French ceased to trade with Elmina and the rest of West Africa.
- 1415 The Portuguese captured Ceuta.
- 1464 Sonni Ali became ruler of the Songhai Empire.
- 1468 Sonni Ali captured and sacked Timbuktu.
- 1470 The Mossi of Yatenga under Nassere attacked and sacked Walata.
- 1471 The Portuguese reached Elmina.
- 1482 Diogo d'Azambuja began building Elmina Castle.
- 1486 Elmina declared a city by decree of the King of Portugal.
- 1492 Sonni Ali, founder of the Songhai Empire, drowned. Columbus discovered America. Moors ejected from Granada in Spain.
- 1493 The Za Dynasty of Songhai ended. Askia the Great became ruler of the Songhai Empire.
- 1494 Leo Africanus born in Granada, Spain.
- 1528 Askia the Great forced to abdicate.
- 1546 The Songhai Empire refused to cede Taghaza to the Moors.
- 1557 Salt-mine of Taghaza el Ghizlan opened up.
- 1572 Portuguese forces under Francisco Barreto invaded Monomotapa.
- 1578 Sultan Mohammed XI (the Black Sultan) of Morocco died. Dom Sebastian, King of Portugal, slain in the battle of El Ksar el Kebir.
- Mulay Ahmed El Mansur became Sultan of Morocco.
- Duarte Lopez began his twelve years' stay in the Congo.
- 1590 El Mansur's forces, commanded by Judar Pasha, left for the Sudan.
- 1591 Judar Pasha captured Gao.
- 1595 Askia Nuh defeated by Moroccan forces.
- 1599 Judar Pasha recalled by the Sultan of Morocco.

- A.D.
1642 Dutch Ambassadors from Loanda called on the King of the Congo.
1716 Five years of famine in the Sudan began.
1737 Last remnants of the Moroccan army ejected from Timbuktu by the Tadmekket.
1791 Sierra Leone first described as the "White Man's Grave."
1852 Poll Tax Ordinance passed in the Gold Coast.
1854 People of Christiansborg revolted against the British.
1862 Gold Coast Artillery Corps at Cape Coast mutinied.
1866 King Aggrery of Cape Coast deported to Sierra Leone.
Hon Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford born.
1867 Fanti Confederacy founded.
1873 Nana Kobena Igyan, Chief of Elmina, deported to Sierra Leone.
1897 Lands Bill passed in the Gold Coast.
1930 Hon Joseph Ephraim Casely Hayford died at Accra.

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