Commencing at Cape Roxo, in latitude 12 deg. 30 min. north, and runing down the coast as far as the river Mellacoree, in latitude 9 deg. north, the slave trade is more or less carried on, but (in consequence of the vigilance of cruisers) not to the same extent it was a few years ago.

Another portion of the coast, from the limits of the Sierra Leone colony to Cape Mount, (a space including the mouths of six or more rivers,) the slave trade is extensively prosecuted. Here commences the jurisdiction of the American Colonization Society, which extends to Grand Bassa. There are several slave stations between grand Bassa and Cape Palmas. From thence eastwardly to Cape Coast Castle, situated near the meridian of Greenwich, we believe there are no slave stations; but eastward of this, and in the Bights of Benin and Biafra, along the whole coast, (which includes the mouths of the great rivers Benin, Formoza, Nun, Old and New Calabar, Bonny, Camerons, Gaboo and Congo,) with few exceptions, down to Benguela, in latitude 13 deg. south, the slave trade is carried on to a very great extent.

2d. "The space or belt along the shore, within which cruisers may be usefully employed for the purpose of detecting vessels engaged in the traffic."

Men of war should always cruise as near the shore as the safety of the vessel will admit, in order to take advantage of the land and sea breezes. Twenty or thirty miles from the coast there are continual calms, where vessels are subject to vexatious delays; besides which, ships engaged in the slave trade keep close in with the land, in order to reach their places of destination.

3d. "The general course of proceeding of a slave ship, after leaving Brazil or the West Indies, on a voyage to the coast of Africa, for slaves, including her manner of approach to the shore, her previous bargain or arrangement for the purchase of slaves, the time of her usual stay on or near the coast, and the means by which she has communication with persons on land."

Vessels bound from the coast of Brazil or the West Indies to the coast of Africa, are obliged, in consequence of the trade winds, to run north as far as the latitude of thirty or thirty-five, to get into the variable winds; thence to the eastward until they reach the longitude of Cape Verd Islands; then steer to the southward to their port of destination; and, if bound as far to the eastward as the Gulf of Guinea, usually make the land near Cape Mount or Cape Palmas. Vessels from Brazil, bound to the southern part of the coast of Africa, run south as far as the latitude of 35 degrees south, and make up their easting in the southern variables.

Slave vessels are generally owned or chartered by those persons who have an interest in the slave establishments on the coast of Africa, where the slaves are collected and confined in barracoons, or slave prisons, ready for transhipment the moment the vessel arrives. They are therefore detained but a short time after arriving at their place of destination. Instances have come to our notice of vessels arriving at the slave station in the evening, landing their cargo, taking on board all their slaves, and sailing with the land breeze the following morning.

It is not unusual, however, for vessels, unconnected with any particular slave establishment, to make their purchases after arrival. If any delay is likely to occur, an agent is landed, and the vessel stands to sea and remains absent for as long a time as may be thought necessary to complete their arrangements. The slavers communicate with the shore either with their own boats, or boats and canoes belonging to the Kroomen in the employment of those on shore.

4th. "The nature of the stations, or barracoons, in which slaves are collected on shore to be sold to the traders, whether usually on rivers, creeks, or inlets, or on or near the open shore."

The slave stations are variously situated; some near the mouth, others a considerable distance up the rivers, and many directly on the sea-shore. The barracoons are thatched buildings, made sufficiently strong to secure the slaves, and enough of them to contain, in some instances, several thousands. The slaves are collected by the Negro chiefs in the vicinity, and sold to the persons in charge of the stations, where they are kept confined until an opportunity offers to ship them off. Materials of all kinds necessary to convert a common trader into a slave ship, are kept on hand, and the change can be completed in a few hours. A number of Kroomen are employed, and boats and canoes ready for immediate service.

The slave stations are generally fortified with cannon and muskets, not only to guard against a rising of the slaves, but to protect them from sudden attacks of the natives in the vicinity, and to command their respect.

5th. "The usual articles of equipment and preparation, and the manner of fitting up, by which a vessel is known to be a slaver, though not caught with slaves on board."

Vessels engaged in the slave trade are either fitted up with a slave deck, or have the materials on board, prepared, to put one up in a few hours. Their hatches, instead of being close, as is usual in merchantmen, have gratings; they are supplied with boilers sufficiently large to cook rice or farhina for the number of slaves they expect to receive; an extra number of water casks, many more than are sufficient for a common crew; also, a number of shackles to secure their slaves. Most of these articles, however, are concealed, and every thing is done to disguise the vessel.

It is not unusual for them to have several sets of papers, two or more persons representing themselves as captains or masters of the vessel, and flags of all nations; every device is resorted to, to deceive, should they encounter a cruiser.

Some are armed with only a few muskets, others have a number of heavy guns, according to the size of the vessel; and they range from sixty to four hundred tons burden, with crews from ten to upwards of one hundred men.

6th. "The utility of employing vessels of different nations to cruise together, so that one or the other might have a right to visit and search every vessel which might be met with under suspicious circumstances, either as belonging to the country of the vessel visiting or searching, or to some other country which has, by treaty, conceded such right of visitation and search."

We are of opinion that a squadron should be kept upon the coast of Africa to co-operate with the British, or other nations, interested in stopping the slave trade; and that the most efficient mode would be for vessels to cruise in couples, one of each nation.*

7th. "To what places slaves taken from slave ships on the coast, could be most conveniently taken."

If captured under the American flag, send them to Cape Mesurado, Liberia; or if convenient, to such other of the American settlements as the agent of the United States may wish.

8th. "Finally, what number of vessels, and of what size and description, it would be necessary to employ on the western coast of Africa, in order to

*The result then, will be, that they will effect but half as much as if they cruise under a treaty of mutual right of search, either made temporarily by the commanders on the coast or by their respective governments, by which each cruiser can act singly.—Ed. Jour.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

XII. Newspapers
A. Maryland Colonization Journal

2. June 1841 (n.s. I, 1)—May 1861 (n.s. X, 24)

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