should give any color to the suspicion of being actuated by mercenary motives; an apology would thus be afforded to every other nation for any attempt it might make to thwart our purpose. We know, from the Duke of Wellington's despatches, that the Powers on the continent were absolutely incredulous as to the purity of the motives which prompted us, at the congress of Aix la Chapelle, to urge, *beyond every thing else*, the extinction of the slave trade.

In a letter to Mr. Wilberforce, dated Paris, September 15th, 1814, the Duke of Wellington says: "It is not believed that we are in earnest about it, or have abolished the trade on the score of its inhumanity. It is thought to have been a commercial speculation; and that, having abolished the trade ourselves, with a view to prevent the undue increase of colonial produce in our stores, of which we could not dispose, we now want to prevent other nations from cultivating their colonies to the utmost of their power."

And again, in another letter to the right honorable J. C. Villiers, Paris, August 31, 1814:

"The efforts of Great Britain to put an end to it (the slave trade) are not attributed to good motives, but to commercial jealousy, and a desire to keep the monopoly of colonial produce in our own hands."

The grant of twenty millions may have done something to quench these narrow jealousies, but still the nations of the continent will be slow to believe that we are entirely disinterested. It should, then, be made manifest to the world, by some signal act, that the moving spring is humanity; that if England makes settlements on the African coast, it is only for the more effectual attainment of her great object; and that she is not allured by the hopes either of gain or conquest, or by the advantages, national or individual, political or commercial, which may, and I doubt not will, follow the undertaking. Such a demonstration would be given, if, with the declaration that it is resolved to abolish the slave trade, and that in this cause we are ready, if requisite, to exert all our powers, Great Britain should couple an official pledge that she will not claim for herself a single benefit which shall not be shared by every nation uniting with her in the extinction of the slave trade; and, especially,

1. That no exclusive privilege in favor of British subjects shall ever be allowed to exist.

2. That no *custom-house* shall ever be established at Fernando Po.

3. That no distinction shall be made there, *whether in peace or in war*, between our own subjects and those of any such foreign Power, as to the rights they shall possess, or the terms on which they shall enjoy them. In short, that we purchase Fernando Po, and will hold it for no other purpose than the benefit of Africa. I am well aware that these may appear startling propositions; I am, however, supported in them by high authorities; the suggestion as to the custom-houie was made to me by Mr. Porter, of the Board of Trade; and that respecting neutrality in peace or in war originated with the learned judge of the British vice admiralty courts. Supported by his authority, I may venture to say that, though a novel, it would be a noble characteristic of our colony. As it is intended for different ends, so it would be ruled by different principles from any colony which has ever been undertaken: it would have the distinction of being the neutral ground of the world, elevated above the mutual injuries of war; where, for the prosecution of a good and a vast object, the subjects and the fleets of all nations may meet in amity, and where there shall reign a perpetual truce.

Let us look to the tendency of the proposition, that no custom-house shall be established at Fernando Po, or at the post to be formed at the junction of the Niger and the Tchadda; we might then hope that the history of these stations would be a counterpart to that of Singapore, which is described as having been, in 1819, "an insignificant fishing village, and a haunt of pirates," but now stands as an eloquent eulogy on the views of its founder, Sir Stamford Raffles, proving what may be effected, and in how short a time, for our own profit and for the improvement of the uncivilized world, "by the union of native industry and British enterprise," when uncurbed by restrictions on trade.

Free labor.

I now turn to the second great principle, viz: free labor.

It may be thought by some almost superfluous that this should be urged, considering that there is an act of Parliament, which declares that "slavery shall be, and is hereby, utterly and forever abolished *in all the* colonies, possessions, and plantations of Great Britain." But if ever there were a case in which this great law should be strictly and strenuously enforced, and in which it is at the same time peculiarly liable to be neglected or evaded, it is in the case of any possessions we may obtain in Africa. It is necessary to be wise in time, and never to suffer this baneful weed to take root there. Let us remember what it has cost us to extirpate it from our old colonies. It is remarkable, that among the whole phalanx of antagonists to the abolition of West India slavery, there was never one who was not, by his own account, an ardent lover of freedom. Slavery, in the abstract, was universally acknowledged to be detestable; and they were in the habit of pathetically deploring their cruel fate, and of upbraiding the mother country, which had originally planted this curse among them; but property had entwined itself around the disastrous institution, and we had to contend with a fearful array of securities, marriage settlements, and vested interests of all kinds. Again: bondage, it was said, had seared the intellect, and withered all that was noble in the bosoms of its victims. To have begun such an unrighteous system was an error only less than that of suddenly eradicating it, and of clothing with the attributes of freemen those whose very nature had been changed and defiled by servitude.

I firmly believe that much of all this was uttered in perfect sincerity; and yet I feel the most serious apprehensions lest these wholesome convictions should evaporate before the temptations of a country, where land of the richest fertility is to be had for 1*d.* per acre, and laborers are to be purchased for £4 per head. We know, not only that the Portuguese are turning their attention to plantations in the neighborhood of Loango, but that they have been bold enough to ask us to guaranty to them their property—that is, their slaves—in these parts. This, together with certain ominous expressions which I have heard, convinces me that my apprehensions are not altogether chimerical; and I am not sure that we shall not once more hear the antique argument, that Negroes, "from the brutishness of their nature," are incapable of being induced to work by any stimulus but the lash; at all events, we shall be assured, that if we attempt to establish free labor, we shall assail the prejudices of the African chiefs in the tenderest points.

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XIV. Books

2. Report of Mr. Kennedy, of Maryland
H.R. report no.283, 27th Congress
3rd session, Washington, D.C. 1843