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Notes Accompanying a Chart of a Portion of the Niger Delta

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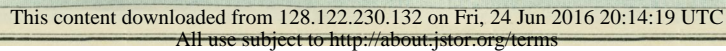
seat of fanaticism, has been opened up, by incorporation with Egypt, to strangers and to civilisation. The land is fruitful, and in the north and east has a healthy climate for foreigners, so that when the well-known energy of the Khedive shall have prepared the way for commerce, its future has favourable prospects in connection with Egypt. For us, in Europe, the influence of the Egyptian Government, and through it of European civilisation, on the States and condition of the Sudan, is the best result of the conquest of Dar Fur. This is indeed the most important step that has ever been taken towards the suppression of the slave-trade, because Dar Fur does not alone come into consideration; its neighbour countries, Wadai and Bagirmi, are the two chief strongholds for the supply and export of slaves, and both are now more convenient to the direct influence of Egypt. Only when real results have been attained in this direction can we hope to see a peaceable commerce arising with the tribes of unknown Africa, and only then will the barriers fall which shut off the heathen lands of inner Africa from those of surrounding Islam, and then only will merchants and explorers and missionaries be in a position to fill out the great white patches in the map of Africa.

XVI.—*Notes accompanying a Chart of a Portion of the Niger Delta.* By RICHARD DOUBLEDAY BOLER and ROBERT KNIGHT.

AFTER much experience in surveying the rivers and creeks, as shown by accompanying Chart, we are of opinion that these channels of the Delta of the Niger will greatly facilitate, at some not distant period, a very much more extended trade than there is at the present time, by giving easy access to steamers of light draught to the interior markets. At present business is carried on by tribes settling on the shore, who have neither the means nor the inclination to carry out measures to develop the enormous trade which the country can supply. These tribes act as brokers for the produce, and are very jealous of any interference with their markets, but, no doubt, before long the whole of the magnificent rivers, creeks, and lagoons, extending from Benin to Opobo, and forming the Delta of the Niger, will be opened and navigated by suitable steamers, developing the trade of the far interior.

The country from New Calabar to Brass we found, with rare exceptions, to consist of the usual mangrove-swamps, with their

Surveyed by R. D. Boler & R. Knight
September, 1874.



dull sameness of straggling roots, mud, and dead green masses of foliage. The population consists only of scattered fishing-villages, with their little patches of land growing maize, bananas, plaintains, coco-nuts, and peppers; and we should not estimate them at more than 1000 souls in the whole distance of 100 miles. The channel would be available for any steamers of about 5 feet draught of water.

From Bonny to New Calabar the channel is constantly changing, and the banks abound with quicksands; but for vessels of larger size, and not over 10 feet draught, there is a good passage outside Breaker Island.

The River New Calabar, from the shipping to the oil-markets, affords a fine safe channel for vessels of fully 10 feet draught. After passing Ewaffa, which is some 45 to 50 miles from the mouth of the river, the country improves very much, the mangrove ceases, and moderately high land, well wooded, speaks of great capability for any tropic growth.

At Amaffa, say about 25 miles distant from Ewaffa, we found the country very good, and about 15 to 20 feet above high-water-mark. It is evident, from the profuse growth of everything, that the soil must be virgin in its richness. The natives seem poor and indolent, and are inclined to be troublesome. We think the poverty of appearance arises from the incessant quarrelling between tribe and tribe, as they are constantly plundering and capturing each other, the captives being always sold to slavery. In physique we think they are inferior to the men at the mouths of the rivers.

XVII.—*Notes to accompany a Traverse Survey of the White Nile, from Khartum to Rigaf.* By Lieut. C. M. WATSON, R.E.

THE journey from Cairo to Khartum, and up the White Nile to Gondokoro, is now so well known and has been so frequently and fully described, that it will be sufficient to make a very few remarks on the route which was followed on the occasion that the traverse survey of the river, which accompanies this paper, was made.

Having received instructions to join Colonel Gordon, C.B., on the Upper Nile, I left Suez, in company with Lieutenant Chippendall, R.E., on the 31st August, 1874, and we reached Suakim on the 5th September.

Leaving Suakim on the 11th of the same month, we arrived at Berber upon the Nile on the 24th. The route we followed