

Chapter 5: Profiteering

A. The British Enforcers

_ *"The slave trade has been at all times popular and is now,"* commented an English businessman, John Hughes, after a visit to Cacheu-Bissau, or Portuguese Guinea, in 1828, adding, *"I believe that every native African...would indulge in the slave trade if allowed to do so."* *ST*, Chapter 28 (2. Lords select committee, 1843, 199.)

_ Captain James Tuckey, an Irish-born geographer, during a journey *"to solve the problem of the Congo"* on the river of that name in 1816, wrote baldly: *"The native merchants do not wish Europeans to penetrate into the country lest they should interfere with their business."* *ST*, Chapter 28 (8. See James Tuckey, *Narrative of an Expedition to Explore the River Zaire* (London, 1818).)

_ The import of slaves into that island was about 1,250 a year in the 1820s. But that trade seems to have been extinct on a regular basis by 1835, for economic rather than moral reasons. Still, as Lord Palmerston once pointed out, in relation to Cuba, *"a feeling which arises from other circumstances is perhaps as sure a foundation on which to build upon as one that arises from moral opinion."* *ST*, Chapter 30 (13. Palmerston's comments in 1849, Hutt committee II, 19.)

_ The British minister in Madrid in 1836, George Villiers – subsequently, as Lord Clarendon, foreign secretary under Gladstone – wrote in that year to his brother: *"All those Spaniards who are not absolutely indifferent to the abolition of the slave trade are*

positively averse to it. We think that an appeal to humanity must be conclusive. The word is not understood....Cuba is the pride and hope and joy of Spain...the place where revenue comes, and whither every bankrupt Spaniard goes in order to rob ad libitum." ST, Chapter 30 (31. Herbert Maxwell, *Life and Letters of George Fourth Earl of Clarendon* (Lond, 1913), I, 94.)

_ Crews also received much more pay in the days of the illegal trade than they had in the past: an average seaman in the legal trade in Brazil might receive a dollar a day, but a sailor on a slaver might get ten. That explains why it was so easy to find crews. Seamen too might have their own slaves: Captain Birch, of the British navy, said that, sometimes after he had captured a slave ship, seamen "*came up and asked me to let them each take the slave that belonged to himself: he had paid for it....They stamp them [that is, brand them] with their own mark."* ST, Chapter 32 (3. Hutt committee, I, 170.)

_ It was said that the factories in the Cacheu River were "*principally supplied by the British vessels,*" and there is even a possibility that some London merchants (Forster and Co., for example) were indirectly concerned in the slave trade here in the early part of the century. In 1828, "*the currency of the place, and in fact the representation of value...was according to the value of the slaves. The slave trade was the all engrossing object of the people there,*" reported an adventurous English businessman John Hughes, who was obliged to flee because of the threats to his life after the British detention of a Portuguese vessel. ST, Chapter 32 (16. Lords select committee, 1843, 523.)

_ [1843] The British established a trading post fifty miles up this "*exceedingly unhealthy*" river [Núñez?], at Kacundy, but their presence did not seem to affect slaving unless there was a man-of-war there, though they did found some coffee farms. A local monarch named Sarah (according to John Hughes, "*one of the greatest barbarians....He thinks nothing of tying a stone round a man's neck and throwing him in the river*") once threatened a British trader, Benjamin Campbell, with death, on the ground that his presence was preventing slavers from going up the river. *ST*, Chapter 32 (21. Lords select committee, 1843, 527.)

_ Until 1808, slave trading and conventional trade had continued, uneasily, side by side, in Sierra Leone and Africans could see no reason why that state of affairs should not continue indefinitely. An Englishman, Alexander Smith, an agent of the government, seemed, at least to a United States traveler, to constitute "*the first mercantile house in the economy in the illegal slave trade*"; he told a North American trader, in the presence of the governor, that "*just round that point*" was a bay which was not subject to British rule. *ST*, Chapter 32 (27. Brooks [27, 9], 61.)

_ [1840s] South of Sherbro, many slave stations had been opened on the flat, mangrove-crowded banks of the sluggish river Gallinas, as on the innumerable islands which dotted the estuary. "*To one who approaches from the sea,*" wrote the slave captain Theodore Canot, the spongy islands of the estuary "*loom up from its surface, covered with reeds and mangroves, like an immense field of fungi.*" *ST*, Chapter 32 (29. Canot [32, 12], 326.)

_ In the 1820s, the dominant slave trader was John Ouseley Kearney, a British ex-officer who carried on the slave trade openly under the Union Jack. He once told some English petty officers, *"I buy nothing but slaves. My object is to make a little money, and then I'll embark 300 or 400 slaves on board a large schooner...and go in her to the Havannah."* He had friends in Sierra Leone who kept him informed about all the details of the naval patrol. *ST*, Chapter 32 (30. Ward [29, 6], 73-75.)

_ Commander Tucker, writing in the 1840s, reported, *"A constant supply of slaves are sent by canoe through the creeks to the rivers Nun and Brass for shipment, 360 slaves having been taken by a Spaniard previous to my arrival in the river."* Tucker reported King Pepple as saying that he himself sold 3,000 slaves in the years 1839 to 1841, that he would continue to deal with Freixas, and that *"dollars and doubloons are plentiful in Bonny, which is always the case, after the arrival of a slaver in the Nun or Brass river, as most of the slaves shipped off from there are purchased at Bonny."* *ST*, Chapter 32 (47. PRO FO 84/383 HMS Viper at sea, Burslem to Tucker, Sept. 10, 1840, qu. Dike [31, 5], 83.)

_ In 1846, Governor Abreu de Madeira was relieved from Quelimane for corruption; his successor abandoned his post, and *"escaped in a slave ship, with a large cargo of slaves."* The next Portuguese governor of Mozambique, Captain Duval, seemed to the British *"one of the best persons we ever met"* and, within some years, had, on fifty miles either side of the city, brought the slave trade to an end. What usually happened, said Captain Duval, was that *"governors would receive a box soon after they took up their office: on*

opening it, there were found to be four compartments....[Inside] there was \$1,500; \$750 in one compartment, with a Crown on it and then, \$250 in each of the others. These sums were from the leading slave trader in the place, for the Governor, his deputy, the Collector of Customs and the Commander of the troops." ST, Chapter 32 (67. Admiral Dacres in Commons select committee 1850, 14.)

— As in the past, slaves were obtained in Africa by the local dealers in diverse ways and nobody agreed exactly how. Captain Matson, for example, thought that the practice of obtaining slaves by war and the destruction of villages had almost ceased; and that, on the contrary, *"one half of the slaves now supplied to the markets of Cuba and Brazil are obtained by purchases from their parents."* On the other hand, the Reverend Henry Townsend, of the Church Missionary Society, who lived for many years in Abbeokuta, a city of 50,000 people near Lagos, thought, about 1850, that war was a key to understanding the origins of slaves in that territory. For example, a quarrel might arise, and some fighting take place *"and, ultimately, one of the towns was destroyed and the people carried into slavery, as many as they could take, and those who escaped joined those who had besieged them, and made an attack upon the others. And so they went from town to town, an army of the worst class of society attacked the towns, each town in succession, until the whole country was in a state of disorder....The war first took place through revenge, and was then carried on through the slave trade giving them the means of carrying on that war, because they found then the profit of selling slaves which before they did not so well understand."* ST, Chapter 33 (8. Hutt committee, I, 623.)

_ To consider the matter in greater detail: In 1848, a United States-built slave ship of, say, 180 to 200 tons, a reasonable average, plying between Brazil and Africa and bringing back slaves, might cost £1,500. The owner would have to pay about twenty seamen one hundred Spanish dollars a trip – say, £416. Food for those men for 90 days would cost £90. The captain would be paid 400 Spanish dollars: another £83. Food (and medicine) for 450 slaves might cost three pence a day per slave if the food were "*flour*," which it usually was: another £169. Luxuries for the captain and other contingencies (water casks, wood for the slave deck, etc.) might cost another £300. Slaves would cost about an average of £4-10s in Africa – whether paid for in specie or in trade goods – £2,025 in all. The outlay, therefore, might be a little more than £4,500. Perhaps fifty slaves would die en route. But the sale of 410 slaves at £45 each would bring the merchant £18,450, or a profit for the voyage, therefore, of just under £14,000. Even if every other ship were captured by the British, there would still be a 100-percent profit. These figures were, of course, considerably higher than those in the era of legitimate trade. *ST*, Chapter 33 (37. These figures derive from Howard [33, 6] but the most interesting calculations of cost and profit in the trade in the nineteenth century are those of Eltis [32, 5], appendix E, but see also E. Philip Le Veen, *British Slave Trade Suppression Policies* (New York, 1977).)

_ Another estimate was worked out by Edward Cardwell, the future reformer of the English army (himself the son of a merchant of Liverpool), in conversation with Admiral Hotham in 1849: "*An adventure of this kind*" would yield "*upon the average profit of £45-10s upon an outlay of £14-10s.*" *ST*, Chapter 33 (38. Hutt committee, II, 57.)

_ Captain Drake said that, on one voyage – on the *Napoleon*, a Baltimore clipper of ninety tons, carrying 350 slaves in 1835 – the profits were about \$100,000 (the price of the slaves being \$16 a head, the costs totaling \$20,000, and the sales in Havana yielding \$360 a head.) *ST*, Chapter 33 (39. Drake [19, 25], 92.)

_ [1840s] Consul Crawford in Havana thought that one successful slave voyage would pay the costs of the loss of ten empty or five laden slavers. He thought that a ship whose costs were \$150,000 could expect to make nearly \$400,000 if the slaves could be sold for \$1,200 each. Another estimate, using Crawford's figures but reducing the average price of slaves in Havana to \$500, would have, all the same, produced a profit of 53 percent. *ST*, Chapter 33 (40. Crawford to Russell, Feb. 5, 1861, in FO 84/1135, 20 v. The last estimate here is that of Howard [33, 6].)

_ Still, many of the biggest merchants carrying slaves in the illegal era, either to Cuba or to Brazil, seem, unless they invested in sugar or coffee plantations, to have gone bankrupt. The British commissary judge in Havana commented in 1849: *"The profits of the trade are much overstated. All persons are apt to boast much of their gains, but the slave traders more especially, as a triumph over the cruisers, and even the Government of England, as well as to console themselves for the discredit they could not but feel attached to their trade. Thus we hear of a few fortunate individuals who...formerly amassed fortunes in it, but of the many who have lost fortunes and life in it we hear but little....the trade has not recently been a productive one. One proof of this is that the*

insurance offices lost so much on the policies of slave trade vessels that it is nearly ten years since they resolved to take none of them on any terms...." ST, Chapter 33 (41. Hutt committee, II, 13.)

_ A British merchant living in Brazil reflected, in 1846, that Brazil was comparable to the British West Indies a generation before: "Scarcely an individual exists," he wrote, "who either directly or indirectly is not personally interested in the support of the slave system, and who would not look with the utmost distrust upon any change...." ST, Chapter 34 (9. T. Nelson, Remarks on Slavery and the Slave Trade (London, 1846).)

_ Slave traders continued to seem the "nabobs of the Brazils....They form the dazzling class of the parvenus millionaires," declared a British naval surgeon. In 1846, Henry Wise wrote to James Buchanan, then secretary of state, a "northern man with southern principles": "There are only three ways of making a fortune a Brazil, either by the slave trade, or by planting, or by a coffee commission house....The slave traders then are either the men in power, or those who lend to the men in power so hold them by the purse strings. Thus the government is itself in fact a slave trading government, against its own laws...." ST, Chapter 34 (14. Rodrigues [14, 14], 186.)

_ The Spanish queen regent was, meantime, as a result thought to be the "richest individual in Europe." The intelligent British minister in Madrid in the 1830s, George Villiers, had reported, "All her money is secured in foreign funds." ST, Chapter 35 (6. Webster [31, 9], 462.)

_ Palmerston suspected that the government in Madrid had two purposes: *"first, to afford income to a number of ill-paid public officers or to appointed favourites, by means of the bribes given by slave traders upon the importation of negroes; and, secondly, [to retain] a hold on the island, because it is thought at Madrid that, as long as there is in Cuba a large number of negroes, the white population will cling to the Mother country for protection...."* ST, Chapter 35 (9. Qu. Murray [29, 4], 227.)

_ Lord John Russell would tell Howden in Madrid: *"your lordship may rest assured that, however, friendly the Councils of her Majesty may be to Spain; whatever may be the interest of this country not to see Cuba in the hands of any other power...; yet...the destruction of a trade which conveys the natives of Africa to become slaves in Cuba will furnish a large compensation for such [a] transfer."* ST, Chapter 35 (11. PRO Russell to Howden in FO 84/871, Jan. 31, 1853.)

_ The United States naval patrol was easily circumvented. The British diplomat John Crampton reported from Washington in 1853: *"The United States naval officers are zealous enough in capturing slavers, but the force is so small, particularly now that they have sent the greater part to Japan [with Matthew Perry], that little is done."* He sensibly added: *"The difficulty of getting slavers condemned by Admiralty courts when captured and brought into American ports is another encouragement to the slaves traders."* Crampton also pointed to another weakness: that difficulty of ensuring conviction was, it seemed, *"much greater in the northern states, which profess*

abolitionism, than in the south, where slavery exists." Shipbuilders of the North were interested in the prosperity of the trade, for which, the diplomat reported, they still furnished *"by far the greatest part of the vessels under whatever flag they afterwards sail."* *ST*, Chapter 35 (20. James and Patience Barnes, *Private and Confidential* (Selinsgrove, 1992), 165.)

B. The American Instigators or Receivers

_ Underwriters in Boston still insured slave ships: thus N.P. Russell wrote to Messrs. J. Perkins in 1810: *"At your particular request, I have offered to the underwriters in my office the two African risks, viz: the San Francisco de Asis and the schooner Carlota..."* *ST*, Chapter 28 (14. D, III, 101, and Briggs [25, 2], II, 517.)

_ [Late 1840s] A similar part was played by United States firms, such as Maxwell Wright and Company of New York, Jenkins and Co. of Rio, and Birkhead and Pierce of Baltimore. Such merchants were, however, more concerned to sell ships to slave dealers than manufactured cargoes. These came from numerous ports: Providence, Bristol, Salem, Beverly, Boston, Portland, even Philadelphia, all made their contribution to ships for the Brazilian traffic. Thus, by irony, that part of the United States whose public men were most in favor of abolition also lent support for the traffic. Sometimes the individuals concerned seemed confused. For example, the owner of the Bangor Gazette in Maine preached abolition in his newspaper, while he was also apparently engaged in building slave ships in pretty ports in Maine such as Bath or Damariscotta. *ST*, Chapter

32 (9. Wise to Buchanan, Mar. 6, 1846, Despatches XV, qu. L.F. Hill, in *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Brazil*, (Durham, N.C., 1932), 141.)

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_ But Bulwer knew that such a thing would be far from easy, because of that general's friends in Madrid. Palmerston summed up the position, when he returned to the Foreign Office, in another letter to Bulwer: "*It appears that the practice of re-selling emancipados which has been going on for some time past, under the sanction of the captain-general of Cuba was the public topic of conversation [in Havana]....It is also stated that upwards of 5,000 of these unfortunate persons have been re-sold at rates*

varying from 5 to 9 ounces of gold – for example, 50 emancipados were sold to the Gas Company of Havana for a period of five years to serve as lamplighters, by which means a profit of upwards of \$600,000 has been made by persons in Government house [sic]....400 emancipados have been transferred to the Marquis of las Delicias, chief judge of the mixed court, to be held by him for the benefit of the Countess of Guerega, wife of General O'Donnell...[so] You will express the confident hope that the Government of Spain will give positive and peremptory orders to General O'Donnell to obtain...liberty for these nominally emancipated negroes." ST, Chapter 35 (3. Qu. Corwin [31, 20], 82.)

_ A special agent of the United States in Cuba, Charles Davis, told [Secretary of State, William] Marcy that, if all slaves imported since 1820 were freed, there would be "*a disastrous bloody war of the races....Should the United States remain passive spectators of the consummation of the plans of the British ministry, the time is not distant when they will be obliged to rise and destroy such dangerous and pernicious neighbours.*" ST, Chapter 35 (13. Manning [35, 5], 789.)

_ [1850s?] A certain George Francis Train declared that Cuba should be seen as a deposit of aluminum from the Mississippi: "*What God had joined together let no man put asunder,*" he curiously proclaimed. ST, Chapter 35 (14. Qu. David Potter, *The Impending Crisis* (New York, 1976), 182, fn. 15.)

_ That there was then a genuine United States threat was demonstrated by the Ostend Manifesto, of October 1854, in which the United States ministers to Britain (James

Buchanan), France (John Mason), and Spain (Pierre Soulé) jointly declared that, if Spain were to persist in refusing to sell Cuba, the United States ought to take it by force. For, if Spain were to refuse the offer of \$120 million, then *"by every law, human and divine, we shall be justified in wresting it from Spain if we possess the power."* *ST*, Chapter 35 (15. Amos Ettinger, *The Mission to Spain of Pierre Soulé* (London, 1932), 390-412.)

_ [Charles] Lamar apparently entered the slave trade in 1857, buying slaves first from Cuba, then direct from Africa. One of his ships was the *E. A. Rawlins*, said to have landed slaves in 1857 in numerous places. Lamar, like so many before him, was attracted by the idea of making a profit of well over 100 percent on the voyage. He estimated that the figures might be:

Cost of expedition		\$300,000
Say we bring 1200 negores @\$650	\$780,000	
Deduct 1st cost		<u>\$300,000</u>
Leaves nett profit and steamer on hand	\$480,000	

ST, Chapter 35 (19. *North American Review*, Nov. 1886, 447 ff.)

_ Lamar was soon charged with slave trading and other offenses. But in the summer of 1860, it was easy enough for a Lamar to be acquitted by a court in Savannah. Egbert Farnham also escaped condemnation because his jury was deadlocked. The ship was

publicly sold, but it was bought back by Lamar for a quarter of its value. Most of the slaves seem to have been sold at six or seven hundred dollars a head, or even \$1,000 and some, in Alabama, were reported to have been sold at sixteen to seventeen hundred. Captain Semmes set off in no time for a run to China for *"coolies...worth from \$340 to \$350 each in Cuba and cost but \$12 and their passage."* The British Embassy was naturally informed. The minister, Lord Napier, reported, a trifle optimistically, that the event had *"had the effect of waking up the American cabinet to a sense of their disgraceful position in regard to the abuse of the American flag on the coast of Africa."* ST, Chapter 35 (30. Barnes [326, 20], 209.)

_ The *Continental Monthly* reported, imaginatively: *"The number of persons engaged in the slave trade and the amount of capital embarked in it exceed our powers of calculation. The city of New York has been, until of late, the principal port in the world for this infamous commerce; although the cities of Boston and Portland [Maine] are only second to her. ...Slave dealers...contributed largely to the wealth of our commercial metropolis; they contributed liberally to the treasuries of political organization, and their bank accounts were largely depleted to carry elections in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut."* ST, Chapter 36 (7. *Continental Monthly*, January 1862, 87.)

C. The Spanish Accessories and Collaborators

_ [1811] The municipality of Havana on July 20 sent a ninety-two page memorandum to the Cortes, blaming Bishop de Las Casas for the slaves in Cuba in the first place: but *"the*

slaves have come and are here, to our misfortune; not by our fault, but of those who first initiated and encouraged this commerce in the name of law and religion." Now the economy of Cuba depended on both slavery and the slave trade, and that fact had to be faced. There was not a property on the island which had the slaves which they needed. The document was well-written, showed surprisingly detailed knowledge of the debate on abolition in London and indicated that the *criollos* in Cuba would be formidable enemies of the British abolitionists. The precise knowledge which the author also had of the growth of "slave philanthropy" (*filantropia negrera*) was warning to the government of Spain not to take the loyalty of Cuba forever for granted. *ST*, Chapter 28 (32. "*Se trata de nuestras vidas, de toda nuestra fortuna, y de nuestros descendientes*"). In Cuba there was not a hacienda which had "*los negros que deba tener*" (AGI, Indif., gen. leg. 2827, ff. 1436-84.)

_ [1820] It was desirable to stock up the haciendas with slaves, and to provide "*African women for the conservation of the species and the plantations....Of all the provinces of the Spanish empire,*" the document went on, "*the most concerned...in this business is the island of Cuba. No other one has undertaken the African slave trade directly with its own ships and capital. Therefore, the damages caused by the sudden cessation...would be incalculable.*" *ST*, Chapter 29 (18. Saco [6, 14], III, 141.)

_ [1841] There was no bad conscience about the investment of such slave-based fortunes in Spanish concerns, any more than there had been in England and the United States a half-century before. *ST*, Chapter 30 (30. For the trial of Pedro de Zulueta, see Appendix

2.)

_ To consider the matter in greater detail: In 1848, a United States-built slave ship of, say, 180 to 200 tons, a reasonable average, plying between Brazil and Africa and bringing back slaves, might cost £1,500. The owner would have to pay about twenty seamen one hundred Spanish dollars a trip – say, £416. Food for those men for 90 days would cost £90. The captain would be paid 400 Spanish dollars: another £83. Food (and medicine) for 450 slaves might cost three pence a day per slave if the food were "flour," which it usually was: another £169. Luxuries for the captain and other contingencies (water casks, wood for the slave deck, etc.) might cost another £300. Slaves would cost about an average of £4-10s in Africa – whether paid for in specie or in trade goods – £2,025 in all. The outlay, therefore, might be a little more than £4,500. Perhaps fifty slaves would die en route. But the sale of 410 slaves at £45 each would bring the merchant £18,450, or a profit for the voyage, therefore, of just under £14,000. Even if every other ship were captured by the British, there would still be a 100-percent profit. These figures were, of course, considerably higher than those in the era of legitimate trade. *ST*, Chapter 33 (37. These figures derive from Howard [33, 6] but the most interesting calculations of cost and profit in the trade in the nineteenth century are those of Eltis [32, 5], appendix E, but see also E. Philip Le Veen, *British Slave Trade Suppression Policies* (New York, 1977).)

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Villiers, had reported, *"All her money is secured in foreign funds."* *ST*, Chapter 35 (6. Webster [31, 9], 462.)

_ [Antonio] Parejo, looked on in 1850 as the *"person now considered the most extensively engaged in slave trading,"* died in Cuba, leaving debts to the queen mother which she apparently never recovered. That financier's widow, Susana Benítez (it was after her that the big plantation had been named), all the same provided him a funeral which cost 10,000 pesos. In these years, the small Cuban port of Cabañas, in the western province of Pinar del Río, became the most important of the slave harbors, where could be seen *"the cream,"* the merchants and captains (*la flor y nata*) of the slave ships," commented Captain Impiel, in Baroja's *Los Pilotos de Altura*. *ST*, Chapter 35 (7. Pío Baroja, *Los Pilotos de Altura* (Madrid, 1995), 247.)

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destruction of a trade which conveys the natives of Africa to become slaves in Cuba will furnish a large compensation for such [a] transfer." ST, Chapter 35 (11. PRO Russell to Howden in FO 84/871, Jan. 31, 1853.)

_ [1852] This new captain-general [General Valentín Cañedo] accurately reported to his government that the planters, great and small, all defended the slave trade: *"Without exception,"* he wrote, *"they all eagerly desire it, protect it and almost sanctify it."* ST, Chapter 35 (12. Qu. Murray [29, 4], 250.)

_ On the other hand, [General José de la] Concha opposed the inspection of estates by officials looking for illegally imported slaves, and he repeals Pezuela's decrees on the matter. He also repeals Pezuela's scheme to declare the trade piracy. Instead, he placed faith in the idea of offering bribes to informers, and prize money to officials who denounced slave ships. None of these arrangements was effective. So the slave trade continued *"to be carried on...almost with impunity."* ST, Chapter 35 (16. Murray [29, 4], 244.)

_ All the same, 1863, the second year of that conflict, saw the entry into Cuba of nearly 25,000 slaves, according to Spanish archives. A leading merchant of Havana summed things up as they still seemed to him: *"For many reasons Spain would gain with the abolition of the slave trade...but the government recognizes, as does everyone here, that the economic problem is connected with the existence of slavery, since the island's wealth depends on slave labor. Hence the benign tolerance and leniency that is employed in dealing with such an infamous trade."* ST, Chapter 36 (19. Antonio Barras y Prado, *La*

Habana a mediados del siglo xix (Madrid, 1925), 52.)

D. "Everyone Else"

_ Al-Nasiri, a Moroccan historian of distinction, complained of *"the unlimited enslavement of blacks, and the importation of many droves of them every year, for sale in the town and county markets of Mahgreb, where men traffic them like beasts."* *ST*, Chapter 28 (6. Al-Nasiri, qu. Lewis [1,6].)

_ The king of Dahomey sent an ambassador to the viceroyalty of Brazil in 1810 to reassure his customers that the traffic would be maintained. *ST*, Chapter 28 (10. Crow [8, 20], 137; Verger [13, 27], 274-75.)

_ *"The négrier [slaver] is more criminal than the assassin because, slavery being only an agony cruelly prolonged, death is preferable to the loss of liberty."* (*L'Abbé Grégoire, Des peines infamantes à infliger aux négriers* (1822) Quoted under the heading of Chapter 29.)

_ Only the Mosneron-Dupins remained, and they on a small scale, of the shipping families which had been prominent in the trade before 1794. *ST*, Chapter 29 (44. Daget [28, 42], 126-27.)

_ Thirteen expeditions began in one port or another on the Sénégal, and fifty-five from

the Ile de Bourbon. *ST*, Chapter 29 (45. *Op. cit.*, *passim.*)

_ A nineteenth-century Brazilian wrote that *"the date for the cessation of the slave trade approached, and then the planters, and the whole population, saw that no preventive measures whatever were being taken or attempted; the slave traders, therefore, wanted to take advantage of the time still left to them and they filled up their ships again and again with immense cargoes of slaves."* *ST*, Chapter 30 (1. *A lavoura da Bahia...* (Bahia, 1874), *qu.* Conrad [22, 3], 68.)

_ As in the past, many captives were sold by auction. An American traveler, Thomas Ewbank, recalled an *"auction store at the corner of the [Rua dos] Ourives and [Rua do] Ouvidor,"* which he found full of *"cheeses, Yankee clocks, kitchen utensils, crockery-ware, old books, shoes, pickles etc."* These were sold every day, but once or twice a week slaves were sold. Once Ewbank saw eighty-nine persons for sale. He saw the black-whiskered auctioneer: *"A hammer in his right hand, the forefinger on his left pointing to a plantation hand standing confused at his side, he pours out a flood of words. [The slave] had on a canvas shirt, with sleeves ending at the elbows, and trousers of the same, the legs of which he is told to roll above his knees. A bidder steps up, examines his lower limbs, then his mouth, breast and other parts. He is now told to walk toward the door and back to show his gait. As he was returning, the hammer fell...."* *ST*, Chapter 30 (3. Thomas Ewbank, *Life in Brazil* (New York, 1856), 282.)

_ *O Diario de Pernambuco* in 1828 reported: *"It is public knowledge that slave-stealing*

goes on in this city almost daily, and that there are men who make a business of this. Some entice and lure the blacks...they meet in the streets, other take them into their homes and keep them there until they can be put aboard ship or otherwise be got out of the city; others make a deal with the first ones they meet and take them to some distant place to sell them." ST, Chapter 30 (5. Freyre [8, 8], 346.)

_ "The slave trade has been the ruling principle of my people. It is the source of their glory and wealth...." (King Gezo of Dahomey to Captain Winniett, United States Navy, 1840 - quoted after Chapter 32 heading)

_ The Fulbe and Mandingo traders were the most indefatigable providers of slaves in these years [1840s?]. They succeeded in restricting the Europeans to river traffic, and North American firms, such as Charles Hoffman, Robert Brookhouse and William Hunt, all of Salem, and Yates and Porterfield, of New York, were the chief beneficiaries. ST, Chapter 32 (17. Brooks [27, 9], 186.)

_ After Daendels died, [Jan] Niezer went to Amsterdam to plead his case. He won, and returned in triumph to Elmina, but his fortunes never recovered from the abolition of the trade in slaves. All the same, in 1817, about thirty Spanish or Portuguese slave ships were identified off the Gold Coast, and Niezer must have helped to load them. The next year, an English merchant, James Lucas Yeo, wrote: "I find the trade almost as active in the neighbourhoods of our forts as at any time." ST, Chapter 32 (37. Brooks [27, 9], 235.)

_ The governor of the Danish zone, to the east of the Gold Coast, Edward Carstensen, wrote in 1845: "*The slave trade found the country beyond the Volta too narrow. Gradually, among the blacks themselves, there grew up a lot of petty slave trade agents and commissioners who roamed the country in all directions in order to bring numerous heads to the market....It came about that a great number of consignments could take place right from the fort of Elmina...[while] Dutch Accra has for a long time been the residence of several British trade agents, especially immigrated Brazilian negroes who have correspondents in Popo and Vay.*" The same official wrote a year later: "*The Aquapim mountains, on the banks of the river Volta, has made it a staple place for the salt trade...but also a residence for slave trade agents.*" Even British subjects, on the Gold Coast, sometimes held liberated slaves as "*pawns*" – very little different from holding them as slaves. *ST*, Chapter 32 (38. Reynolds [32, 36].)

_ At the end of the 1840s, he [Domingos José Martins, also known as Diego Martinez] was explaining that it was "*so expensive to keep up his factory [of slaves] that he had now cleared away a considerable part of the country, and is forming a large farm [for palm oil], with the intention, as he says, of giving up the slave factory, which costs him so much and pays so little.*" He retired to Brazil, found himself ostracized, and returned to Africa, this time to Lagos, where he became concerned in the legitimate trade in palm oil. *ST*, Chapter 32 (43. See Verger [13, 27], 467-74; David Ross, "Diego Martinez in the Bight of Benin," *JAH* VI (1965), 79-90.)

_ The traffic in slaves was prospering in the 1840s. But a wreck of two ships at the

mouth of the Calabar, and the capture of two others, weakened the local enthusiasm for the traffic; in 1841, a "*trifling present*" was indeed made (five annual payments of two thousand Spanish dollars) to the kings of Calabar, and the commerce came to an end. *ST*, Chapter 32 (46. PRO CO 82/6 Fernando Po 67, Nicholls to Hay, Oct. 28, 1833, qu. Dike [31, 5], 53.)

_ The most substantial merchants, nevertheless, were Mozambiques, such as Joaquim do Rosário Monteiro, who began to build ships about 1784, and carried slaves to Brazil throughout the Napoleonic Wars; Manuel Galvão da Silva, who was for a time secretary to the governor (whom he persuaded to invest in his ships); and finally João Bonifacio Alves da Silva, probably the biggest slave merchant in Quelimane, of which city he was also governor for eighteen years. *ST*, Chapter 32 (64. José Capela, *O escravismo colonial em Moçambique* (Porto, 1993), 180.)

_ In the 1840s, the firm [Portuguese Company], however, sold their slaves mostly to Brazilians, and most would be carried to Rio de Janeiro in United States ships, to be made available to such princes of the traffic as Manuel Pinto da Fonseca or Bernardino da Sá. Portuguese bureaucrats were easily suborned by such businessmen: "*The small income of these officials renders the temptations to which they are exposed irresistible,*" wrote a British civil servant in 1850; "*banished for years to a pestiferous climate, the means for speedily escaping therefrom by enriching themselves sufficiently to give up their public situation is indeed very tempting.*" *ST*, Chapter 32 (65. Lords select committee 1850, 239.)

_ In 1846, Governor Abreu de Madeira was relieved from Quelimane for corruption; his successor abandoned his post, and *"escaped in a slave ship, with a large cargo of slaves."* The next Portuguese governor of Mozambique, Captain Duval, seemed to the British *"one of the best persons we ever met"* and, within some years, had, on fifty miles either side of the city, brought the slave trade to an end. What usually happened, said Captain Duval, was that *"governors would receive a box soon after they took up their office: on opening it, there were found to be four compartments....[Inside] there was \$1,500; \$750 in one compartment, with a Crown on it and then, \$250 in each of the others. These sums were from the leading slave trader in the place, for the Governor, his deputy, the Collector of Customs and the Commander of the troops."* ST, Chapter 32 (67. Admiral Dacres in Commons select committee 1850, 14.)

_ *"Early in the morning,"* he [Joseph Wright, a slave captured in the 1820s] wrote, *"we were brought to a white Portuguese for sale. After strict examination, the white man put me and some others aside. After that, they then made a bargain, how much he would take for each of us. After they were all agreed, the white man sent us into the slave fold [sic]...[where] I was...for about two months, with a rope around my neck. All the young boys had ropes round their necks in a row, and all the men with chains in a long row, for about fifty persons in a row, so that no one could escape without the other. At one time, the town took fire and about fifty slaves were consumed because the entry was crowded....[Then] we were all brought down close to [the] salt water...to be put in canoes. We were all very sorrowful in heart, because we were going to leave our land*

for another...[and] we had heard that the Portuguese were going to eat us when they got to their country....They began to put us in canoes to bring us to the Brig, one of the canoes drowned [sic] and half the slaves died....They stowed all the men under the deck; the boys and women were left on the deck...." ST, Chapter 33 (10. Narrative of Joseph Wright, in Curtin [32, 44], 330-31.)

*_ A British merchant living in Brazil reflected, in 1846, that Brazil was comparable to the British West Indies a generation before: "Scarcely an individual exists," he wrote, "who either directly or indirectly is not personally interested in the support of the slave system, and who would not look with the utmost distrust upon any change...." ST, Chapter 34 (9. T. Nelson, *Remarks on Slavery and the Slave Trade* (London, 1846).)*

*_ [King] Gelele [of Dahomey] refused [to put an end to the slave traffic]: if white men came to buy, why should he not sell? Wilmot asked how much money he needed. "No money will not induce me...I am not like the kings of Lagos and Benin. There are only two kings in Africa, Ashanti and Dahomey: I am the King of all the Blacks. Nothing will compensate me for the [loss of the] slave trade." Gelele also told Burton, "If I cannot sell my captives taken in war, I must kill them, and surely the English would not like that?" ST, Chapter 36 (16. Sir Richard Burton, ed., *A Mission to Gelele King of Dahomey* (London, 1966).)*

_ In 1864, José Agustín Argüelles, governor of Colón in Central Cuba, despite his famous name in antislaving circles, fled to the United States when accused of selling 141

slaves who he had freed after intercepting a ship of Zulueta's (the two were probably in collaboration). He was sent back to Cuba, to be tried and sentenced to life in the galleys (which sentence, admittedly, he did not serve). *ST*, Chapter 36 (18. Murray [29, 4], 311.)