

# THE NEGRO PROBLEM IN LIBERIA

BY OVERTON PRICE



**PRESIDENT ARTHUR BARCLAY**

THE first idea of a "Liberia"—settlement of free negroes—arose with the foundation of the British colony of Sierra Leone. After the close of the American War of Independence in 1783 it became necessary to provide for the negro troops who had served Great Britain faithfully in that unhappy struggle. They were at first deported to Nova Scotia, but had no place there in the body politic of white men; they were no longer slaves, but the idea of granting the suffrage to negroes was then displeasing to the dominant race. There was also the problem of the free Maroon negroes of Jamaica, who were irksome to the authorities in a land of slavery. So the idea of founding a free negro state of community in West Africa for the reception of enfranchised American negroes came into being about 1784, and in 1787 the colony of Sierra Leone was founded under a chartered company and taken over by the crown in 1808.

Early in the nineteenth century the same difficulty arose in the United States, namely, the presence of thousands of free negroes whose case had not been sufficiently provided for by the American Constitution. Somehow



A NATIVE CHRISTIAN FAMILY



A NATIVE VILLAGE IN THE INTERIOR



VIEW OF CAPE PALMAS

British protectorate of Sierra Leone and the French possessions of the Sudan and Ivory Coast.

Consequently the Liberian government has been forced of late years to live somewhat beyond its means in organizing a police and a marine, in occupying the Kru coast and in attempting to construct roads to places of importance in the interior. It has from time to time engaged European officers for its services; but whereas some of these engagements have been of noteworthy success, others have been the reverse, and it is difficult to locate the blame. European capital is somewhat shy of Liberia, partly owing to the turbulence of the interior natives (though this has been exaggerated, for white men very seldom really incur danger from the natives), but more on account of the irresponsible fickleness of the legislature, which is given too much to the hasty making and unmaking of laws and to conflicts of opinion with the executive.

Yet the country is extremely rich. Its rocks and river valleys produce both gold and diamonds, some of the coast districts (especially in the east) even give indications of the existence of bitumen, or oil-bearing strata, while the forests of the interior are remarkable for their wealth of rubber-bearing trees and lianas, their ebony, African teak and "mahogany," and the piassava fiber (derived from the raffia palm), which is used for so many purposes connected with the making of brooms and brushes. Then there is the oil-palm, with its two kinds of oil, both valuable to commerce—the oil of the husk and that of the kernel. The extraction of this last and its great value for special industries are said to have been discovered some seventy-five years ago by an American negro, one of the early colonists of Liberia. A great deal was done by these freed slave settlers, for which they have never received sufficient credit.

Unfortunately the attempted colonization of Liberia has been hindered by the American negro colonists proving almost as much liable to malarial fever and other African diseases as Europeans. They seem to have lost the relative immunity from these blood-germ maladies which their African ancestors enjoyed. The modern American-Liberian does not stand the climate of Liberia much better than the white man from Europe or America. The country is not unhealthy in the interior; it is the coast belt which, with its eternal heat and moisture, its very short dry seasons, and torrential rains (conditions which suit admirably the cultivation of rubber, coffee and cacao) saps the vitality of residents not of African birth. And the hinterland, with its superior conditions of climate, has already a somewhat large indigenous population, who are not eager for foreign additions to their numbers.

or other these free negroes and mulattoes—growing impatient of being taxed without representation—must be provided for. To several philanthropists, remembering Sierra Leone, thought to promote by private enterprise and philanthropy a similar colony across the sea which might provide for the return to West Africa (whence most of them had come) of the freed slaves of the United States. Indeed, there was a strong disposition to adopt Sierra Leone for this purpose, with the consent of the British government; but the local authorities of Sierra Leone showed themselves very averse from receiving American negroes, who might owe a divided allegiance.

Accordingly the American founders of "Liberia" (this name was not given to the infant state until 1824)—who were mostly white men with a few mulattoes and negroes—selected the Grain Coast, immediately to the south and east of Sierra Leone, for their experiment.

It was some weeks before the hostility of the natives, who were wedded to the slave trade, could be overcome, but in 1822 active operations were begun. A thirty-acre tract was allotted to each man with the means of cultivating it. The National Colonization society's agents became discouraged at the difficulties that were met and returned to America with a few disappointed ones; but the others rallied about a determined negro, Elijah Johnson, and remained. The colony was enlarged by the addition of new tracts. New settlements were afterward formed at Cape Mesurado and in the newly acquired Bassa Land, in which, in 1824, a town was founded and called Monrovia, in acknowledgment of pecuniary aid sent from Pittsburgh. Many of the negro-boring chiefs were received into the colony, and others were subdued. Trials of many kinds, deprivations and dissensions were the lot of the colony, managed by a society which did not fully know whether its aims were sentimental or practical. In 1847 Liberia was left to its own resources and declared an independent republic. The colony immediately began to show more prosperity, numerous churches and schools were founded, newspapers were established, and slavery in the neighboring states was abolished. The first president of independent Liberia was Roberts, an settler. He was a most able and courageous man and the country made rapid strides in civilization and other material lines

of progress under his administration.

The constitution of the republic is framed after that of the United States. There are a president, vice-president, a council of six ministers and a house of representatives. Voters must be of negro blood and own real estate. The natives generally do not avail themselves of the suffrage. No foreigner can own land without the consent of the government. The coast territory is formed into the counties of Bassa, Cape Palmas and Sinoe, with one superintendent each, and Montserrado, with four superintendents. The capital is Monrovia, named after President Monroe. English money is used, but American money is used usually in the keeping of accounts. There is a Liberian coinage and a rather large paper currency. The official language of the country is English. The civilized inhabitants are orthodox Protestants, mostly Episcopalians.

During the fifties and sixties of the last century the American-Liberians did much to explore the interior and enter into treaty relationships with the native chiefs. But thirty years ago their administration began to get into financial difficulties. It is not an easy thing to create a well-ordered, well-governed state in tropical Africa without a considerable capital to draw on. Consider for a moment what Great Britain has spent on Sierra Leone since 1787, and on the Gold Coast wars, the opening up of Nigeria; or the outlay of France on Senegambia or Dahomey; and then imagine how the government of Liberia could do without any reserve of capital bring law, order and civilization into a densely forested territory nearly the size of England, with a probable population of over a million warlike savages and semi-savages.

So long as Britain and France—the controlling powers—contented themselves with the mere occupation of a few coast towns on the seaboard of their West African dominions or protectorates, the Monrovia government could afford to do the same. But when these great European powers were compelled by force of circumstances to occupy and administer the regions behind their coasts the Liberians found themselves in a position of great difficulty. They had been allotted theoretically by France and England a considerable hinterland—more than 50,000 square miles—and were held responsible for the doings of the native tribes in that extensive interior. Now these tribes had never been subdued by the government of the republic. They were many of them in treaty relationships with the Monrovia administration, and such of them as had heard of the civilized negro government on the coast (and it must be remembered that much of the interior is dense forest, inhabited by

tribes who for ages have been isolated in that forest, and were—and are—quite ignorant of the world outside their tribal land) were quite willing to regard the Liberians as the ruling power on the seaboard. But they were very disinclined to obey orders from Monrovia if contrary to their own desires.

The tribes farthest inland looked upon the British and French—the "white men"—as aggressors who were putting down by force a most lucrative slave trade, who were forcibly disclosing the secrets of sacred streams like the Niger near its sources, who, in short, were not only to be opposed, but whose organized territories offered a most profitable field for raids and robberies. More than this, the import of guns, gunpowder, rifles (above all) and alcohol was being restricted or forbidden by the Europeans. The Liberian coast, especially where it was slenderly guarded by the Liberian administration, offered the one loophole through which these forbidden goods might be smuggled. Accordingly a great trade sprang up between these uncontrolled hinterland tribes and the Kru people on the coast, who affected a sort of detachment from the government by the American-Negro republic. In these ways the Liberian hinterland became a positive source of danger and expense to the

## Hiring Help In East Africa

The "servant problem" is bad enough in America, and the experiences mistresses have to relate are many and varied; but an infinitely wider range of possibilities is opened up when mere man—and a bachelor at that—tackles the servant and other household problems in an East African bungalow. Anything can happen—and does happen!

Native house servants of a sort are plentiful enough around the chief towns of British East Africa, Nairobi and Mombasa, and the slightest rumor that the Mzungu (white man) requires a "boy" or mpezi (cook) fills one's compound with cooks, "generals" and raw bidders, representing every tribe under Africa's sun, in the wide world says.

The average bachelor contents himself with four servants—a head "boy," a cook, a "toto" (youth) to assist them, and a mshenzi (draw, untrained native) for odd jobs, gardening, etc.

It is no easy task to make a selection from the host of eager, voluble applicants. Dirty, carefully stuck-together "baruas" (testimonials) are examined and the owners questioned, but it is unwise to put much faith in these documents, for it is no unusual occurrence for a "boy"—on the principle of "the more the merrier"—to proudly present you with three testimonials, every one bearing a different name from the one under which he introduces himself!

These genies are always greatly offended when you kick them off the veranda and tell them they have bought or stolen the documents from other natives! Upon one occasion a would-be cook brought me a "barua" signed by a well-known settler and worded:

"To whom it may concern: The bearer of this 'barua' is an infernal rogue and thief. Please kick him out."

By the time I had stopped laughing the nigger had arrived at the conclusion that something was wrong and was doing record time down the path, so I was unable to avail myself of the kind invitation.

## HORSE TRADE IN MISSOURI.

In St. Charles last week Lester Ingraham traded A. S. Osborn a horse for a motor boat. A few hours later Osborn discovered that the horse was worthless, so he went to the boat and removed the engine and the horse died as he was hauling it away. A jury in a justice's court awarded Ingraham the engine and \$1 damages.—Detroit Free Press

## Mean Trick to Play on Rival.

A characteristic anecdote is told of Cherubini, the most jealous of the irritable genius of composers. He had been prevailed upon to be present at the first representation of the work of a confrere, and, during the first acts, which were much applauded by the public, he had kept a gloomy silence. The third act was less favorably received and a certain passage especially seemed to cast a cold blanket over the spectators, when the old maestro, to the astonishment of his friends, was seen to applaud heartily. "Do you really like that duo?" asked one of them; "I should have thought it was one of the poorest and coldest in the whole opera." "You idiot," answered the maestro, with genuine natvete, "don't you see that if I did not applaud it he might possibly cut it out?"

## For a Clean Cellar.

When whitewashing a cellar add a tablespoonful of carbolic acid to every pintful of the whitewash. This is the best purifier you can have.

## FORTIFY THE CANAL

PRESIDENT WILL ASK FOR TWO MILLION DOLLARS.

## TIME TO BEGIN PROTECTION

President Also Wants Two Battleships of the Dreadnaught Style of Construction.

Beverly, Mass.—Before leaving Beverly for Boston President Taft announced that in his message to congress in December he will recommend the appropriation of \$2,000,000 to begin the work of fortifying the Panama canal. Mr. Taft has always favored the protection of the canal with great guns and he thinks the time has arrived to begin the work.

The president will also recommend to congress that provision be made for the two battleships of the dreadnaught type. Mr. Taft does not believe that the economy plans should preclude the construction of at least two battleships a year until such time as the Panama canal is completed. He believes that the canal will have the effect of doubling the efficiency of the navy and that after it is in operation the building of new battleships can be cut down to one a year.

The president will reach Washington next Sunday, the twenty-fifth. The cabinet will begin a series of daily meetings on the morning of Monday, the twenty-sixth. Secretary Hallinger, it is said, will attend all of the meetings and so far as Beverly is informed the Ballinger case will not be taken up. Economy of administration in all of the departments will be one of the many subjects considered by the cabinet. Estimates for the coming fiscal year also will be considered at great length. The president's supreme court appointment will be discussed with his cabinet advisers, although the president has announced that he will not make these appointments until after congress is in session.

**Argentine Shows Friendship.**  
Buenos Ayres.—The city has been made gay with decorations and lights in honor of the centenary of Chile, which is now being celebrated.

**United Irish Have Big Fund.**  
Dublin.—At the last report the United Irish Parliamentary fund amounted to \$56,770, raised since last New Year's day.

**Metcalfe Bolts Dahlman.**  
Lincoln.—Richard L. Metcalfe sent to C. H. Aldrich, republican nominee for governor, a letter offering his services to the David City candidate. In his letter Mr. Metcalfe says the democratic nominee was named by republicans.

**Famous Painter Near Death.**  
Los Angeles, Cal.—Paul De Longpre, the famous painter of flowers, lies seriously ill at the California hospital, following a mastoid surgical operation performed on him.

**Oldest Ex-Congressman Dies.**  
Kingwood, W. Va.—James Clark McGrew, who claimed the distinction of being the oldest ex-congressman in the United States, died at his home here Sunday in his 98th year.

**Chicago Has 2,160,283.**  
Washington.—The population of Chicago is 2,160,283, an increase of 486,708, or 28.7 per cent, as compared with 1,673,575 in 1900. The increase, however, was not so great proportionately as it was in decade of 1890-1900. Then it was 54.4 per cent.

**American Apples Liked.**  
Washington.—American apples tempt the English buyer. In proof of this statement Albert W. Swaim, American consul at Southampton reports that a shipment of apples from the Wenatchee section of the state of Washington commanded a higher price than any other American apple ever offered in the open English market, much of the shipment being sold at from 8 to 12 cents a pound and eagerly taken at that price. The secret of success is to send good fruit.

**Message from Taft.**  
Washington.—The text of the message sent to President Diaz of Mexico Saturday by President Taft, in reference to Mexican celebration of independence, was made public Sunday at the State department. It follows: "Upon this great anniversary allow me to add to the messages of cordiality taken to your excellency and the government and people of Mexico by the special ambassador and the delegates of the neighboring republics, my sincerest felicitations and best wishes."

**Larsen Dares the Rapids.**  
Niagara Falls, N. Y.—Captain Klaus Larsen, in his little motor boat, the Ferro, Sunday afternoon made a successful trip from the foot of the cataract through the whirlpool rapids to within a mile of Lewiston, a distance of four and one-half miles. He started from the Maid of the Mist dock at 4:45 and ran on a rock near the American shore at 5:30. Despite the battering of the whirlpool rapids, Larsen went through safely, but his boat was leaking badly at the finish and throughout the trip.

## NEW TYPE OF AEROPLANE.

**Machine Invented Can Make Seventy Miles an Hour.**  
New York.—Walter L. Fairchild, an electrical engineer of Manhattan, who has taken up aeronautics, made a flight at Garden City, L. I. He used an original type of monoplane and successfully flew back and forth across the aviation field several times. Mr. Fairchild has been trying out the various parts of his machine for three weeks thinks it is likely to develop a speed of seventy miles an hour.

## WAY TO MAKE MOCHA TART

Foundation Can Be Made of Either a Delicate Layer Cake or Small Ones.

Make for the foundation either a delicate layer cake or small cakes. The filling may be made either one or two ways. For the first, whip cream to a stiff froth, sweeten to taste, then whip in enough extract of coffee to flavor and make as dark as desired. It will require only a little, as too much liquefies the cream. Spread between the layers and pile up on top in pyramid shape. If desired, a little of the mocha can be used in the layers.

For the second filling, boil one cup of sugar and one-half cup black coffee together until the sirup will thread. Wash one cupful of butter in cold water to remove all the salt, then put in a piece of cheese cloth and pat until the moisture is dried out. Beat until creamy, adding slowly the beaten yolk of one egg and the sirup. Spread this filling between layers of one large cake or small cakes; or if preferred, pipe it over the tops of small cakes.

## The Home



To make a cup of coffee almost as nourishing as a meal stir into it an egg well beaten. First beat the egg in the cup, add a little cream, add then the sugar, and lastly the coffee poured in gradually. When adding the coffee, beat constantly with a small egg beater.

No household can afford to be without a bountiful supply of waxed paper. If bought in quantity it is much cheaper and is always in readiness when wanted. Among its various uses it makes an excellent cover for borrowed books, as it does not tear so easily as other papers and the glass keeps it from soiling so soon. This paper is better than a tablecloth to turn out hot cakes upon; and if bread, cake or sandwiches are wrapped in it they keep fresh much longer when prepared for picnics. It should also be used to wrap deviled eggs, ham or other picnic foods that are greasy or soft. One woman even makes a firm cornucopia of it to hold pickles or preserves.

## Dark Cake.

The following recipe is for a dark cake, which makes either one large cake or two small ones: Two cupfuls of light brown sugar, one-half cupful of dark molasses, two cupfuls of sour milk, one-half cupful of butter or oleomargarine, four cupfuls of flour, two teaspoonfuls of soda, one teaspoonful of cloves or allspice, one and one-half cupfuls of raisins. By adding more fruit will make a fruit cake.

## Ginger Snaps.

One cupful of molasses and brown sugar, one cupful of melted shortening—butter or lard—one cupful of hot coffee, two level teaspoonfuls of soda mixed with the molasses, one level teaspoonful of ginger, one scant teaspoonful of salt and enough sifted flour to mix a stiff dough. Let stand over night, roll out thin, cut in circles, and bake in a moderate oven.

## Butter Thins.

Fine and keep well. Three cups of flour, one cup butter, one-half teaspoon soda, all rubbed together. In another dish have three eggs, two cups of granulated sugar, one teaspoon vanilla (or any flavor desired). Mix with flour sufficient to roll. Roll thin and bake in quick oven, using care not to burn on bottom. Cut in any desired shape.

## Breakfast Tomatoes.

Wash, but do not peel, firm, smooth tomatoes. Cut in thick slices, dust with fine corn meal. Fry to a rich brown in smoking hot drippings or oil, and pile neatly on a hot platter with a piece of butter on each slice. These make a nice accompaniment to lamb or veal croquettes.

## Short Sheets.

If you have trouble with your sheets pulling from the foot of brass beds or iron ones, sew three buttons on the foot of mattress and make strong but unholes in lower hem of sheets to correspond with buttons, and button down, and you will have no trouble with them pulling up at foot.

## Turnip Cups With Peas.

Pare white turnips of medium size, scoop out hollows to form cups, and cook in an uncovered kettle until white and transparent. Place a small piece of butter in each cup and sprinkle with parsley, salt and pepper. Fill the cups with cooked green peas.

## Very Sweet Fudge.

Two cups of brown sugar, two cups of granulated sugar, one cup of milk, a teaspoonful of vanilla and two squares (four ounces) of chocolate, good sized lump of butter. Cook as directed for plain fudge. Beat very hard.

## Harlequin Fudge.

Use either the rule for plain fudge or delicious fudge, and when the mixture has been beaten until creamy pour over seeded raisins, dried currants and chopped pecans, mixed well together and spread thickly on bottom of pan.

## Chicken in Peas.

Cut the chicken into joints, as for a fricassee or currie, and put into a saucepan with a quart of young shelled peas, one spoonful of butter, one small sliced onion, one spring of parsley, moisten with drippings, dusting with flour. Stew, covered, until done. Add a little salt and sugar just before serving.

## The Spider and the Fly

What a change has come over the world since the time when children used to be taught what were considered to be pretty verses of the hateful, horrid spider and the innocent little fly who used to be invited to walk into his parlor, and, tempted by small attentions, be there caught, ruthlessly bound hand and foot and cruelly murdered. What a moral lesson is made for the young to avoid

## The Spider and the Fly

the attentions of the world, for the wages of sin is death, and he who loveth the dagger shall perish in it. As the French would say: "But, how we have changed all that!" Now we know that any agency that is destructive of the fly is a precious boon to mankind. We know that the harmless, innocent fly, of whom we used to talk during the winter at least in rather polite sympathetic tones,

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