

SIERRA LEONE
or
THE LIBERATED AFRICANS
IN A
SERIES OF LETTERS
FROM A
YOUNG LADY TO HER SISTER
IN 1833 AND 34.
MARY CHURCH

LONDON

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PREFACE.

From the interest which my account of Sierra Leone contained in the following Letters excited in my friends, I am induced to hope that their publication may be acceptable in general as an unprejudiced narrative of the Liberation, Location, Instruction, Habits, and Disposition of the Liberated Africans; and also a slight sketch of the principal Animals and Productions of Sierra Leone.

To such as are in any way connected with that Colony, or with the Missionary Societies, this Pamphlet may perhaps be doubly interesting; for even without those inducements, what can be more entertaining, as well as instructive, to an enlightened mind, than to contemplate the advance of religion and civilization amongst a people who have hitherto ranked so far below the rest of the world in every thing that raises man in the scale of creation?

The discovery of America became by the avarice and cruelty of European nations, the greatest calamity that ever befel Africa; her Sons were from that time encouraged in their internal wars, by a sure and lucrative sale for their captives; and even when peaceably employed, torn from their country, their homes, and all they loved best on earth to lead a miserable life on a foreign shore. The hourly dread of such a fate must be sufficient to damp the energies of any people, and deprive them of every wish for improvement: for although *they* do not regard captivity, and consequently *slavery* in their own country, as more degrading than being a prisoner of war is considered among us, yet when all chance of being freed by their own friends obtaining the ascendant is taken from them, their situation becomes truly dreadful even in their own estimation. England may justly pride herself on having been the first to express her abhorrence of the inhumanity with which they are treated, by making every effort for their freedom and instruction. Their freedom has, by Treaty, Law, Force, and the establishment of the Colony of Sierra Leone, been in a degree effected by Government; but for their instruction the liberated Africans are almost wholly indebted to the exertions of the individuals belonging to the Missionary Societies, who sacrifice their comfort and hazard their lives for their benefit; and nothing can be more meritorious than their conduct in this colony, where they have such arduous difficulties to encounter in the ignorance of the people and malignity of the climate. However, through those exertions, and from the earnest desire to profit by them (evident in the liberated Africans) we may fairly hope that Sierra Leone will become in time a great and powerful nation, willing and capable, independent of Europeans, of civilizing the rest of Africa. Then may England glory in having raised millions' of immortal souls from the grossest Idolatry, Ignorance, and Barbarity.

LETTERS
FROM SIERRA LEONE.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

I am truly thankful to be able to tell you that we anchored yesterday evening about five o'clock, and that we have had a very fair voyage. But I have not improved in my seamanship at all; the rough channel weather completely knocked me up; and although we had fair wind from the time we left the Lizard Point till within 600 miles of Sierra Leone, yet I never recovered myself so far as to really enjoy a single day. How strikingly does one feel the difference between *living* and *existing* on board ship, for they are certainly not synonymous terms. It appears to me that one can do nothing but eat and drink from morning till night: I may literally say that I lived but one short hour, and that was spent in admiring the magnificent Peak of Teneriffe rising above a bank of clouds. It was some time before I could be persuaded that it was really the snowy Peak I saw, for my imagination could never have conceived such a height.

You will expect a regular account, therefore I must keep to my reckoning. Where was I? Within 600 miles of Sierra Leone, there we lost our fair wind, to which succeeded a perfect calm for six days, and it took us five more with light breezes to finish our voyage, making twenty-nine altogether from Gravesend. I was prevented from observing the appearance of the coast whilst we were beating in, by a crowd of black people absolutely besieging the ship, and not choosing to take any hints that their company was disagreeable; however, this morning my eager curiosity was fully gratified. The view of Freetown with the beautiful range of hills beyond it is certainly splendid; although, I did not feel, as I have heard some people observe, that it made one forget for a time the dearest scenes of England. On the contrary, the entire dissimilarity to any thing European, or rather English, painfully reminded me of the immense distance which separated me from those I love. The Palm Trees, the Brush wood, in some parts down to the water's edge, the Orange Trees, intermixed with houses, all conspired to tell me I was to land on a foreign shore. But the novelty of the scenery was not the only thing that surprised me. I had expected to find four or five houses at the most, and the rest miserable cottages; instead of which, at a little distance, Freetown has the appearance of a large, well-built, and populous place. The apprehensions which Europeans ever must entertain on approaching the coast of Africa, were lulled; for one naturally supposes that Malaria can only arise from low and swampy ground, whereas, here the town is built upon a rock, and the hills rise immediately behind it: but since coming on shore, I have seen several Englishmen whose pale looks plainly show that something inimical to European constitutions must exist on the colony.

The house we are in has just been left by a person who did not care very much for cleanliness: I never saw such a dirty place in my life. The number of windows, doors, and blinds quite astonish me—it puts me in mind of the Irishman's story I heard some time ago, "that the walls were all doors." I must retract my praise of well-built, at least for this house, as it is rather a rough affair, and as far as I can see from the Verandah, all the houses appear to need repair. They all have Verandahs in front, some Venetian blinds, and some open, and generally a little garden or court adjoining, which has a pleasing effect, and gives one an idea of coolness; but I assure you that an idea of coolness is all that can be expected, with the thermometer at 84, and not a breath of air. The horizon is very gloomy, and there is a dense fog over the tops of the hills. I am told that this sort of weather prevails at this time of the year, and that we shall not have a clear sky for a month or more: It does not inspire one with cheerfulness, but I have not yet exhausted the stock I brought with me, and I can fancy so much occupation for the mind, in observing the progress of civilization and religion amongst these poor people that I trust my spirits will not fail me: besides, I shall have a great resource against dulness in committing all my thoughts to paper for your amusement, and instruction shall I say? or will that be too presumptuous? at all events, something

new surely, I shall be able to tell you. At this present moment, I see a grotesque figure entering the room that would furnish half-an-hour's conversation for us if we were together— Now do fancy to yourself an elderly black woman with a muslin gown and apron on, a coloured handkerchief tied round her head, and over that, a man's shaped blue beaver hat—in one hand an umbrella, and the other tossing about her pocket handkerchief. But I must not keep the poor woman waiting. Well, I have managed at last to understand that she is willing to wait on me until I can procure a servant; but I should think, she will not choose to do very much. She seemed not to consider herself at all inferior, for she walked across the room and took possession of the sofa with the greatest composure in the world, and insisted on shaking hands with me. Gradations of society, said I to myself, certainly do not seem very well understood here; and I suppose a person would be thought proud who endeavoured to teach them, but I believe I shall make the experiment, in my own house at least, for I do not see any reason for shaking hands with an African servant more than an English one— What do you say?

I understand a vessel is to sail to-morrow, so I must conclude, as I know how anxious you will be to hear of my safe arrival, and to unite with me in thankfulness for it. Give my kindest love to all at home, and believe me ever,

Your most affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

Having no one to chatter to, I think will be a great benefit to you in the letter writing way, as you are so fond of good correspondents, for, fortunately for the progress of all knowledge, one naturally feels an inclination to impart any thing that strikes the imagination as novel or interesting. I have been amusing myself this morning by walking up and down the Verandah, and observing the different dresses of the Africans; rather an idle occupation you will say, but if I do not see, how are you to hear. The result of my observations and enquiries is, that, amongst the liberated African women, the costume I mentioned to you in my last letter is a great favourite; others have only a piece of cloth wrapped around them just below their arms. The liberated African men have completely borrowed their dress from the English, but very few think it necessary to have a full suit; shoes and stockings are only worn by those who consider themselves rich. Bye the bye, somebody made me laugh when I remarked this, by saying, that in the Liberated African Stores, there are a large quantity of shoe brushes, shoemaker's tools, and scrubbing brushes, for people who hardly ever wear shoes, and very seldom have boarded floors in their houses.

The Kroomen wear a loin cloth; they are a tribe who come to Sierra Leone for the purpose of amassing a little money, with which they buy coloured cottons, handkerchiefs, &c, and then return to their own country, and procure as many wives as they can; and the more they have the richer they are considered; of these, the first married is called the "headwoman," and has some authority over the others, but it frequently happens that she is not the "favourite," in which case, the one who is, takes that title, but she is still obliged to pay respect to the "headwoman," How should you approve of having to obey her Ladyship, as well as the Husband? These Kroomen, I understand, are a temperate, industrious race, and often employed by the Merchants, as they will do more hard work than any other tribe. Each man has two or three boys, much in the same way, as our farmers have apprentices; they either work with him, or bring all the money they earn to him, which they do, until they are old enough to set up for themselves. They are very thievish, but this is not to be wondered at, when the lamentable fact is known, that there is not a single instance of a Krooman's being converted; they are exceedingly prejudiced in favour of their own superstition, and against the Christian religion, saying, that if they were to obey our God in Sierra Leone, when they went back to their own country, their God would kill them; consequently, poor creatures, they have not the advantage of being taught their duty. I have been led to enquire about them so much, from their being recommended as the best servants, but I should certainly rather employ the Liberated Africans, than people who shew such a decided repugnance to our religion; as I cannot presume to hope that I could do any thing towards their conversion, when the Missionaries, who are qualified to teach, have not succeeded: I think also, that as the liberated Africans are brought into the Colony without their consent, we ought to do our best for them, in preference to those who come of their own accord.

I really think Freetown is worse than London for noises at night, but they are of a very different sort; instead of carriages rolling along every minute, you have first the frogs, which commence at sunset; soon after the dogs begin to bark, and never cease till midnight, at different times you hear the monkeys chattering, donkeys braying, and the crown birds screeching; and at dawn, you might fancy yourself surrounded by poultry yards, there is such a crowing and cackling. I am got more accustomed to it now, but really I never closed my eyes the first night. There is another sound at five o'clock in the morning, which, although it awakes one rather earlier than usual, is very grateful when you remember the people you are among, and how different they would be, were it not for the blessed efforts of the Missionaries; I mean the singing in the Chapels. The Liberated Africans, I am told, assemble in great numbers, at that early hour, for prayers and psalm singing, before they go to their labour. Who would expect, that a people having the character of being naturally indolent, would be induced to such an exertion, merely, by the power of persuasion: I should think too, it must be exceedingly difficult to make them comprehend any thing for I never heard such gibberish as they talk by way of English; it takes half an

hour to make out what they mean to say, and yet they are quite indignant if you imply that they cannot speak our language. I believe the English make them worse than they would be otherwise, by imitating them, instead of speaking correctly, I have positively declared I will not follow this ridiculous custom, but the people say if I do not, the Africans will never understand me, however, I hope that by repeating my words a great many times, they will manage to do so. Amongst a population, composed as it is, of a number of different tribes, each speaking a different dialect, even this jargon must be very useful as a medium of communication, but a knowledge of the English language helps you but little in the attainment of it. An immense Cockroach is just scampering down the wall; they are so large and numerous that I am quite disgusted with them, and nobody can tell me how to get rid of them; generally they are an inch long, sometimes more, and in the evening, when I take a candle into my bedroom, there is such a buzz, and such a running to their hiding places, that I wish most sincerely for an hiding place too. Nothing is so disagreeable as any kind of insect in the house, and here we are plagued not only with these creatures, but also with Centipedes, Ants, and very large Spiders. However, there are few Mosquitoes, which are certainly the most troublesome.

How I am longing to hear from you; no one, I think, can have these feelings to such an extent, as those who are just arrived in a foreign country; finding themselves thrown amongst complete strangers, they turn with tenfold more affection than ever to their own home and friends, and wonder how they could be induced to leave them. The signal flag is up to announce a vessel entering the harbour, I trust it may bring me a letter. Good bye. My kindest love to all. I am ever,

Your most affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

I have received your dear letter, and had the happiness of knowing that you were well when you wrote, but alas, I soon remember the distance between us, and that you cannot tell me how you are now. What curious questions you ask: I am sure nobody would imagine it was for a young lady's information, I have been so inquisitive about Government Officers. Perhaps I shall be taken up for a spy, however before that happens you shall know all I do. Besides the Lieutenant Governor, who is also General Superintendant of the Liberated African Department, there are the Chief Justice, the Colonial Chaplain, the King's Advocate, the Colonial Secretary, the Assistant Superintendant of the Liberated African Department, the Colonial Surveyor, the Police Magistrate, Four Writers in the Secretary's Office, and Three or Four Clerks in the Assistant Superintendant's: There is a council of a certain number of Members, appointed by the King, who are styled Honourables; and Freetown has a Mayor and Two Aldermen. The Colony is divided into Seven Districts, viz: First Mountain, Second Mountain, Kissy, Wellington, Hastings and Waterloo, York and Kent, and the Bananas: Each District has a Manager who is also a Magistrate. Underlings, such as Messengers, Constables, &c. I suppose you will not want me to enumerate. There are Two Government Schools in Freetown, one for boys, the other for girls.

As to gaieties, I expected a long list of questions; but I cannot consider this quite the place for such matters, for various reasons—first, the unhealthiness of the climate; and then, the very limited society. Balls, there are none at present, but I understand there used to be what they call "Dignity Balls," (for the derivation of this term, I must refer you to some person more learned than myself) at which, all the washerwomen were present. Dinner parties were also very numerous and very large, sometimes fifty people at once; now a much more reasonable number is the fashion; and a much longer space of time between each party. I have heard it said that many merchants have ruined themselves by their extravagance in this way. There are races (the last thing one would expect to find in a hot climate) once a year. The race course is a very pretty spot of ground with a nice stand on it. The horses are generally small, "half barbs," I think they call them. I do not pretend to be a judge of their perfections, but I am much pleased with their appearance—their slender clean legs, blood-red nostrils, and arched necks strike my fancy exceedingly; but unfortunately for women, there is hardly a horse in the colony that has not been made a racer; consequently, it is difficult to find one quiet enough to be safe for a lady. Now, I believe you are acquainted with the amusements of Sierra Leone.

Mine is a very quiet ride, and a very small dinner party: but I can assure you there is some difficulty in providing for the substantial part of this latter affair. There is so little variety, that a very tolerable housekeeper in England would find herself rather at a nonplus; and having only black servants, to whom every single thing must be taught, sadly increases the trouble; however, they are very docile, and by a little patience and perseverance, I have succeeded in arriving to that point, to which, if you cannot attain, you cannot be comfortable—that is, that I can forget I am at dinner. You know we were told that the prices of eatables would be much lower than in England, but I do not find this the case. For the information of any friend who may be coming out, I will tell you what they are—Beef, 6d. Mutton, 10d. a pound; no Veal or Lamb to be had; Fowls, 8d. or 9d. apiece; Ducks, 2s.; Turkeys, about 28s.; Bread, 3d. a small roll; Wines Groceries, &c. not good, and enormously dear. All the cattle are much smaller than ours, particularly the sheep, which have hair instead of wool. There is little game to be procured.—A gentleman who went into the interior the other day shot a small animal which appeared to be of the deer kind, and sent it to us.—It is called a Fililombo, and is used as a substitute for a hare. Very good Pine Apples and Oranges are to be had in abundance, and a few Guavas. The other fruits, such as Pappaws, Bananas, Plaintains, and Cashew Nuts, I think insipid, but some like them. The Pappaw very much resembles a melon in appearance, and is used in its green state as a vegetable. The Bananas have exactly the taste of a sleepy pear; and the Plaintains are only eatable in my opinion when made into fritters. The Cashew Nut is like a chestnut fastened to an apple by the stem. As to Vegetables, we have Rice, Yams, Cassada, and a Plant similar to our Winter Spinach, and these, with a little Fish, form the

principal subsistence of the Africans. Yams I dare say you have seen, Cassada looks the same sort of thing, but smaller.

I am sure, after this long history, you must allow that I have been very observing, and very obedient to your commands, in detailing all I see or hear. Dinner, as Miss Edgeworth says, must come upon the table every day and therefore you know, I must observe first, the particulars in which this important affair differs from what I have been accustomed to. Bye and bye, I hope to have something more interesting to tell you; but nothing is uninteresting, however trivial, when it happens to those we love. Is it? I feel a thankfulness more than usual for the enjoyment of family affection, when I compare our happy lot with that of these poor Africans, who, although every thing is done for their comfort that can be, must still, I should think, bitterly remember that they are torn from all whom they loved; and even when, by God's grace, their minds are enlightened, and in their conversion they feel a more than compensation for their own sufferings, must they not then recollect, that those who were most dear to them may, perhaps, never receive this greatest of all blessings; the truth of Dr. Watts' little hymn on this subject, "Lord I ascribe it to thy grace, &c." must certainly be felt by Europeans living in Africa: This feeling is only for one's self, but a most lively gratitude is also due, that the miseries of these unfortunate people are permitted to be so much for their ultimate good, and what a consolation it must be to the Missionaries, in their absence from home, to be the instruments of it. None but the rising generation in Sierra Leone can say, "this is the land of my birth;" we are all strangers to it, met together in the furtherance of one great object, the civilization of Africa; but the fatal climate will not allow many Europeans to do much towards it: I said we, as if I were speaking of myself, but I meant my nation in conjunction with others. It is getting late, so I must wish you good night, and beg you to believe me, ever,

Your most affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

A very disagreeable Hearnattan is blowing this morning; this wind is considered healthy, and new comers generally like it, but I am not of the number; it puts me in mind of the Mediterranean Scirous; I find that it has the same effect of making the skin feel dry and parched; it is accompanied by a very fine sand, which is exceedingly hurtful to the eyes; Paper and books curl up with it. as if they were dried before a fire, and glass becomes so brittle, that you can break a wine glass in two with the greatest ease. Yesterday I walked about the Town a little, and was pleased to see that the Church is nearly completed; it is a neat building, and has a very cool appearance on the inside, although I cannot say that it is cool in reality; the story that we heard of its having cost seventy thousand pounds, I am told is not the case; I do not know exactly how many people it would hold but I have observed with great regret that the attendance of both Europeans and natives is very small: From the Church, I went to the Market Place, which appears to be convenient, but not in good repair; there was an immense crowd of people in it, whose eager faces and unceasing chatter struck me as being very different, from the idea which some people seem to have, that the Africans will not exert themselves in any way, unless they are compelled to; the same competition, the same endeavours to obtain customers, which we see in our own people, were just as evident amongst them: There is also a Fish Market close by the water side, and very near it are the Buildings and Yards of the Liberated African Department. There are several Dissenting Chapels, and in some the Preachers are blacks, I believe original settlers; I understand they have large Congregations, which is very natural, as of course, the people must have a little prejudice in favour of persons of their own colour; those Preachers are only Fishermen, but they keep up their respectability, and are much looked up to.

The cleanliness of the Town is quite remarkable, I do not remember any place where there is so little to offend the eye; this is partly owing, I suppose, to the influence of the fervent sun in drying up every thing damp, but still the credit of being a decorous people is due to them. I wish they would be a little more careful with their fires, sometimes the alarm bell is rung twice in a night, and although no bodily accidents have happened, and I always hear in the morning, that it was only the grass roof of one of their little huts, still I cannot, at the time, divest myself of the feeling, that it may be something worse; they say this nuisance is very prevalent in the dry season, and the people do not mind it enough to make them cautious; but they soon will, for the clay built wall, and roof thatched with grass, are disappearing, and making room for the board or stone wall, and shingles; numbers of small comfortable houses are building all over the Town, and giving the promise of a more substantial appearance, and these generally belong to the Liberated Africans: What an interesting state of society these people are in, there is so much visible improvement, and, from what little intercourse I have had with them, there appears to be such a desire for more; they also express great thankfulness for their freedom, and for the blessing of having the Gospel preached to them, and an affectionate reverence for the Missionaries; and it is not only at the time of receiving kindness and instruction that they are grateful; I observed this particularly from their fond veneration for Hannah Killam, I have never mentioned her name to one of them, without being told how good she was, how kind she was, or to use their own phrase, that, "she was good too much." Her vocabularies are very correct, I have tried them with persons of several tribes, and always found that they understood me immediately; but the Kroomen seemed to be very jealous of my knowing their language; several times, when I repeated the name of any thing, they told me it was wrong, and gave me another word in its place; however, upon examination, I discovered that Hannah Killam was right. One Krooman asked me very anxiously, "what you want to speak Kroo for, ma'am?" and I could not persuade him that it was merely for the purpose of conversation; he seemed to imagine that something bad was to happen in consequence of it.

Just now I heard a baby crying, and rose up to see where it was, under the piazza of the opposite house, a woman was washing her child with a little water in a *pint-cup*, when she had finished, she fastened it on her back without wiping it at all: I cannot conceive how the poor little things are comfortable carried

in that way, and yet I see them very often, sleeping as soundly as if they were in a cradle. Generally, they take their babies to the brook and bathe them, but they always have to thank the Sun for the operation of drying. Have I told you that the children do not wear clothes until they are four or five years old, except to be smart, or on a Sunday? you might fancy them little bronze statues, endowed with the power of motion. I think I can observe a difference in the countenance, of the children born in the colony and those brought here; the former have more intelligence and openness; they also have an independence of spirit, and an exultation in their freedom, which is very agreeable to English feelings: What hopes in the rising generation, for the benefit of Africa, may we not indulge in; free, spirited, intelligent, and at the same time docile, and anxious for instruction, they present the greatest encouragement for the exertions of those who wish to improve them: At the same time the climate throws almost insurmountable difficulties in the way of Europeans, and consequently the progress of civilization amongst the natives is impeded; but if, by the blessing of God on the arduous labours of the Missionaries, the largest proportion, of those who are now children, are brought up in the knowledge of their duty to God and man, we may surely, without being very enthusiastic, venture to trust, that this knowledge will be transmitted by them to their posterity.

I hear that another Vessel is to sail to-morrow; this place is very convenient for writing home, as from the superiority of the Sierra Leone Water, all the Timber Ships from the River Melicouri, as well as those which come down our own River from the Interior, touch here to obtain some of it. My best love to all, and believe me ever,

Your very affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

I generally devote a small portion of every day in writing to you, but a cut finger has prevented my doing so since last Thursday; however, my awkwardness was the occasion of my seeing something new. You know a cobweb is a general remedy—I asked for one, and the servant brought me a beautiful little round web, which exactly resembled the best Bath paper in consistency and appearance, and I found it answered the purpose better than the finest court plaister. I have since watched for the spider which made it—they are very large, the body being about the size of a bean, and the legs in proportion; they are perfectly harmless. As yet, I have not met with any noxious insect or reptile, except the Centipedes, which certainly look very venomous, and I am told their bite is extremely painful. I saw one caught the other day, and on asking the boy if it would bite, he looked at me in seeming astonishment, and said, "If he bite you, you cry all day."

A Krooman came this morning, who wanted a place, and brought a very good character; I asked his name, but I told him I did not want any servant. His name, however, and the one in the character did not agree, and when I charged him with it, he very honestly confessed that, "He had borrowed the book to speak good for him," and was very angry that the book, as he called it, had not performed what he expected. The Kroomen, I find, are quite looked down upon by the liberated Africans, and if they are in service together, and any thing is missed, the Kroomen is immediately suspected by his fellow servants without any examination. A lady told me of one who bitterly lamented the bad name his tribe had acquired, and said, it was no use now to be honest, as no person would believe them to be so. Poor ignorant people, they have no inducement for good conduct, but the opinion of their fellow creatures.

I had written thus far when my washerwoman made her appearance. When I first arrived, I expected this would be a very troublesome affair, but I can assure you, that the things are very tolerably got up, except dresses, and are brought home with much more regularity than is usual in England; I never miss a single article. You will fancy that I am getting quite partial to Sierra Leone in every thing, but this is not the case; the climate would be sufficient to prevent that: I am only astonished, knowing the very low opinion generally entertained of the Africans, by people whom I have heard speak of them in England, to find that those settled here are already equal to us in most of the common purposes of life.—It proves either that the Africans are very quick in learning, or, that the system pursued in teaching them was planned with great wisdom, or perhaps both. The good lady wanted to be paid the charges, one pound a month for one person, or three shillings a dozen. I gave her the amount in "cut monies," and she carefully examined their stamps before she left me.—This term arises from the dollar being merely divided into quarters. Formerly, some clever people choose to make five quarters from one dollar, but now, each piece must have a government stamp, with the initials, W. R. on it, to make it current. I am going to ride, so good bye.

Your letter, dearest sister, in date December has arrived. How it glads my heart to see your hand writing, and to hear all the little affairs at home. I am pleased to find that my epistles contribute so much to your amusement as you say, as it gives me such an excuse for scribbling; but really the more I see of the liberated Africans, the more interesting I find them; and from our knowing so little of them before, I am sure, at all events, that it cannot be a threadbare topic with us.

You ask, how they observe the Sunday, and I can assure you that Freetown in this respect, would put many places in England to the blush—The greatest quietness and order prevails; nothing of any sort is sold, and the chapels are crowded, some three, some four times, in the course of the day. Their observance is more apparent too, because they do not, as our people, enjoy their walk between the services. The repose of lying on their "Country Sofas," or in their "Nets," is more congenial to their habits, and those who can read generally have a book in their hands. The Country Sofa is made of the canes of bamboo, fastened together in the shape of a settle you may have seen in a farmer's kitchen,

except that it is wider. The Net is suspended from the roof of their little Piazza, like a sailor's hammock.

When in London, I heard the Colony of Liberia, founded by the Americans, very much praised, but we do not think much of our neighbours; it is a known fact that none of them have applied themselves to Agriculture, without which, of course, they can never expect to get on, and people say, that, instead of making any attempts to civilize the Natives, or even to obtain their good will, they only think of what they can gain from them, or how they can overreach them; they have the character of being completely needy adventurers, but at the same time very proud, and even their own paper, the *Liberia Herald*, (for they are silly enough to publish a paper) accuses the female part of the community of ruining the Colony by dressing so extravagantly; but surely this is the men's fault, and if they cannot keep their own families in order, how are they to improve others. Some little jealousy, I suppose, there must be between two rival Colonies, but I have heard these facts from people not interested either way: The climate too is much worse than Sierra Leone. No European has ever slept on shore without having the fever, and the Americans, who are all coloured people, have suffered most dreadfully.

I suppose you have not heard of poor Mr. Lander's death, which happened at Fernando Po, in consequence of wounds received in the interior. Great things had been expected from his enterprising spirit, and it is much to be lamented that he should have thought it unnecessary to conciliate the chiefs with whose subjects he wished to trade: they required some tribute which he refused to pay, and in resisting their attempts to take it by force, he lost his life. My paper admonishes me that it is time to conclude. My love to all. I am ever,

Your most affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

I passed a very pleasant day last week, in making one of a party, on a visit to Dalla Moodie, the Chief of the Mandingoes, who lives on the Bullom Shore on the opposite side of the river: we set off very early in the morning, and arrived about nine o'clock. Dalla Moodie was so gallant as to have chairs in readiness to convey the ladies to his residence, as the ascent, although short, is very steep; but I must confess, that before I was half way up, I wished myself on my feet, for I expected every moment I should fall out of the chair; however, we did mount in safety, and on the brow of the hill stood Dalla Moodie himself to receive us, dressed in a purple velvet robe embroidered in gold, a cap with a plume of ostrich feathers, and red morocco boots—He is a venerable looking old man, with a white beard; and if he had left the boots out of the dress, would have had a very royal appearance.

The robe was presented to him by some of our merchants —It is made as they usually wear it, which is something like a shirt without collar or sleeves, having a triangular shaped pocket on the breast: under this, some wear trowsers and sandals, and on their heads an embroidered or plain red cap. I think the Mandingoes are the most handsome tribe I have seen—they have long hair, and well formed features, and generally their countenances are very intelligent. Now I have introduced them, I will proceed to the breakfast, which was excellent, and consisted of Fowls dressed in various ways, Ham, Rice, and Tea, which Dalla Moodie did us the honour of preparing. The flavour of Palm Oil predominated in the Gravies, otherwise the cookery would have satisfied Dr. Kitchiner; and Dalla Moodie did the honours with great ease and politeness. After breakfast, the Kurangoes danced and played to us; they are people who earn their living in this way, and a more savage looking set I never beheld; they completely realized my idea of a savage's dance;—such horrid contortions of their faces and bodies—such yells—and such an exertion as it seemed to the poor women, that it made me feel quite uncomfortable; in some parts of the dance they shook their heads in the same way as the little figures of Mandarins, except that the expression was of pain instead of laughter. Their musical instruments I cannot describe with any hopes of your being able to imagine them, except the drum, which was merely a calabash covered with parchment. Some of them had a number of "Grigris," or charms fastened round their necks and waists; what the grigris contain, I know not, but they attach great importance to them, and believe that they preserve them from sickness or any misfortune;—these were small leather cases about two inches square. When we were tired of this, we walked round the town, which was divided into circles, with cane fences: the circles open into one another, and each contains a family. They build their huts around the fences as long as it is convenient, and when it will not hold any more, the younger branches are obliged to begin another. The head of the family exercises a patriarchal authority within his circle, and settles all small "parlavers," or quarrel with the inhabitant of another circle; in case of discontent with his decision, they appeal to Dalla Moodie. It was a time of festival, and therefore they were all unemployed; but I was told that they very seldom labour themselves, for their unfortunate wives and slaves cultivate the ground. They cannot at all understand our feelings in regard to slavery, and openly declare that they will never be induced to put a stop to it. At a meeting of the native chiefs, some time since, Dalla Moodie in finishing his harangue upon this subject, said, "As long as the sun rises in the east, so long will we have slaves." But how can we wonder at these poor ignorant creatures, when those who profess themselves christians, do not blush to maintain that slavery is not a crime. The Mandingoes are Mahometans, and we went into their mosque at prayer time, as they admit every body that can "read book;" it is built in the same way as their houses, with a mud wall, and a thatched circular roof; the floor is of the same material as the walls, and is divided into rows by means of small trenches, which answer the purpose of our pews. Each man brought with him a skin or mat to sit upon, and a string of beads: after they had performed their first devotions, a number of them went to bring Dalla Moodie, who does not come till the crier has called the people seven times. He had changed his dress for a scarlet cloth robe, and a turban. As soon as he had seated himself on a very handsome leopard skin, the service began. The Priest read a number of short sentences, and at the end of each, the people touched their foreheads to the ground. Then another Priest read some of the Koran; after which,

Dalla Moodie made a speech to the people, and a man stood behind him, and repeated every sentence in a loud voice. When he had ended, we returned to his house to dinner; seven or eight poor women, who are his wives, brought it in. Their dish covers are made of grass, very neatly woven, but the rest of the equipage is borrowed from us. Dalla Moodie asked the ladies to drink wine with him, but not the gentlemen. There were a number of sons and attendants lounging about. The style of rude magnificence in which he lives, puts one in mind of Cedric the Saxon; but there is one point in which his Highness and Cedric greatly differ. Women are considered inferior, instead of being looked up to—that is, Africans. Soon after dinner, we prepared for our departure; Dalla Moodie accompanied us to the boats, and expressed his sense of the honour that had been done him. We reached Freetown late in the evening, and although I had been much amused by the many novelties I had witnessed, yet I was very glad to feel myself again amongst a christian people, and I retired to rest with a thankful heart, for the blessings conferred on the liberated Africans; and a prayer that at some future time, they might be the means of enlightening their less fortunate neighbours. My best love to all.

Ever your most affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

A Prize came in last week with four hundred and odd Slaves on board: I have been making many enquiries about them, and am told that the miseries the poor creatures suffer even after they are under British Protection, from their crowded state, beggars all description; many, ignorant of what is become of them, when they are freed from their irons, throw themselves overboard in despair, and obstinately reject all efforts to save them. How they are treated after their arrival in America I know not, but what in this world can compensate them for losing with their freedom, their native country, and the objects of their affection. When they arrive in this harbour, they have no means of being aware of what is wished to be done for them, if they had, what would be their hopes and anxieties, The mixed Commission Court decide whether the Prize is legal or not, if legal, the Slaves are given over to the Liberated African Department. There are buildings appropriated for their reception, and every attention is paid to their health, diet, and comfort: As soon as it is convenient the men are located, and until that time they are employed on the public works: By location I mean, that each man has space for his hut near some village, and a portion of ground to farm allotted to him, which are his property, whilst he chooses to inhabit the hut or cultivate the farm, but no longer: This restraint upon them at first is found to be necessary, in order to correct their wandering habits; they are allowed two pence a day for six months, by which time, their farms are become productive. On leaving the yard, a certain quantity of clothes, tools, and cooking utensils are given them; Whilst their huts are building, they lodge with any of the Inhabitants of the Village who are able to receive them, and the Manager's superintendance is especially exercised over these new settlers; in case of illness, they are maintained at the expense of Government in the Hospital at Kiskey. The Women generally remain with the Department at Freetown until they are married. but sometimes they are placed in the most respectable of the liberated African Families, to be maintained in exchange for their labour, so long as they remain single. There is a difference of opinion as to which of these is the best plan, some say that when married from the yard, they have no idea of the obligations of marriage, and that afterwards if they disagree with their husbands, they urge this ignorance as an excuse; and on the other hand it is argued, that let the people who take charge of them be ever so well behaved themselves, yet it is not to be expected, that they can have that restraint over persons not related to them, which is necessary in a place, where the comparatively small number of women in proportion to men causes them to be much sought after. However the women when taken from the yard are now allowed the power of refusal, and the men who seek wives are obliged to bring with them a certificate of good character from the Manager and Minister of the District where they reside, and also to prove that they are able to maintain them. The boys and girls are either educated and maintained by Government, until of a certain age, or apprenticed, and they are nearly in as much request as the women, for the Liberated Africans seem to think a servant almost necessary; I suppose this habit arises from slavery being so prevalent even amongst themselves, in their native country, and it shows how very much these poor children require that vigilant care and protection from the Government which is afforded them. The Indentures are drawn up with the greatest attention, and the masters and mistresses are bound to clothe and feed them, to cause them to be instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, to bring them before the General Superintendant whenever he chooses, and at the end of their term, which is five or seven years, according to their age, to give them ten dollars in money, and two suits of clothes. The applicants for Apprentices are obliged to bring with them, besides a certificate similar to that I mentioned before, one surety for a boy and two for a girl; you see there is an evident endeavour to raise our sex, which I hope may prove successful, for I am sorry to say that my friends, as you call them, have not that respect for women, which is generally allowed to be the natural consequence of civilization. Formerly, the sum of money to be given at the expiration of the apprenticeship was much higher, and consequently from inability to pay the whole, the masters got into a custom of omitting it altogether, and I have heard of cases of ill treatment of apprentices which could not be punished as severely as they deserved, from some illegality in the indentures. The only apprentice I have personally known, does her mistress, a Liberated African, great credit; she can wash and iron very well, and understands a housemaid's work as far as putting a

bed room in order; I was much pleased with her attachment to her mistress, she told me that, "her mammy was good too much," and that when her apprenticeship was over she should like to live with her.

Have I not been very industrious in my researches? I shall expect the reward of your praise.

Mr. Haensel, a gentleman of the Church Missionary Society, who is endeavouring to reduce the Timmani language to writing, preached last Sunday, and took for his text, the cities of refuge commanded for the Israelites: The beautiful and energetic manner in which he exhorted us, not to depend on our own righteousness, but to flee to our Saviour for refuge, I think I shall never forget. Sierra Leone is in my opinion, a place very much calculated to excite devotion, for it must be impossible to have constantly before your eyes, a people raised as these are from the lowest state of barbarism, to the exercise of most of the social virtues, by means of religion, and not to feel the unspeakable mercy of the author of it: We are also more than in our own country reminded of the instability of human life, and the consequent necessity of looking for something better, God bless you. My love to all. I am ever,

Your affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

Yesterday I took my favourite ride to the village of Kissy, which is about three miles from Freetown. The road is tolerable and the scenery pleasing, particularly a small deep vale, in which there are several waterfalls, and many magnificent trees. The village itself is prettily situated on the slope of a hill, and contains a Chapel built by the Church Missionary Society, and the Government Hospital. There are a few stone houses, but the generality are composed of the usual materials, viz.—clay walls, and roofs thatched with grass. I was much gratified to see the number of children educating by the society. The school is held in the church, and there were 330 fine healthy looking children present; they displayed great emulation, and the head class read the bible not only with fluency, but with such correctness of tone and emphasis, that I was quite astonished. But I find from conversing with the people, that they do not attempt to employ their children out of school hours: this is to be lamented, yet in a country where the means of sustenance are procured with so little labour, it must be difficult to impress upon the parents' minds, that independent of works of necessity, industry is requisite for their children's happiness.

The Farms around this village produce Yams, Cassada, Cocoa, Indian Corn, Arrow Root, and Ginger, but the Africans complain of difficulty in disposing of their surplus provisions, as they cannot procure customers enough of their own class at Freetown, and they say our merchants do not give them a fair price for their Arrow Root, Ginger, Cassada, Starch, &c. However, as the population increases this evil will correct itself, and even now, when we regard Sierra Leone as a nursery of Agents, for the religious instruction and civilization of Africa, this superabundance may be considered a benefit, as it gives them leisure to improve their minds. The only manufacture is a kind of black soap.

They are very inquisitive about what is done in England, and their innocent surprise and pity for our poverty, when I told them we had no Cassada, was truly amusing. I must give you a conversation I had with a very intelligent looking man, for it proves that they are not contented, as some say, to do nothing but bask in the sun.—I asked what was his employment, he said, farming, but that he was poor; I enquired how that could be, as I saw he had a good cottage, plenty of food, and tolerable clothes for himself and family; he allowed all this, but made me understand that he considered a man not progressing in circumstances as little better than a horse, and that he wanted to substitute a wooden house, in the place of his clay-built cottage, and for that, in course of time, to give way to stone walls. This spirit, although it may breed discontent at first, yet shows the feeling there is to act upon, and that if pains were taken to ensure them a fair profit on their exports, they would want no other stimulus.

The Government Hospital must be an incalculable benefit, particularly to the newly arrived Africans, but when they are able to act for themselves, their prejudice in favour of their country doctors and old women, and against the restraint necessary in an establishment of this sort is so great that until their diseases become very serious they are reluctant to go into it; then indeed they are anxious to do so, but it is often too late. I believe the average number in the Hospital is rather more than one hundred: Those who are discharged as incurable are put on the invalid list, and receive the Government allowance of two pence a day, for the remainder of their lives.

I was at Kissy last Sunday just after Evening Service, and certainly I never saw a more orderly well-behaved Congregation, and very decently dressed; I think it is almost incredible, that the Missionaries could have done so much good, in so short a time; but we are told "all things are possible with God," and indeed as far as I can see, they completely follow the doctrine that, "it is with the heart (not with the head) that man believeth unto righteousness:" they do not content themselves with preaching, they live among the people, they are kind to them in temporal as well as spiritual matters, they lay "line upon line, and precept upon precept," and in fact, they show them by their own conduct the beauties of a christian life.

Wellington, about three miles further on the road from Freetown, is a very flourishing village. Many Pensioners and disbanded Soldiers reside there, and they lay out a good part of their money in building. A stone Chapel erecting by their own labour, and entirely at their own expense, is at once a proof of their easy circumstances, and their propriety of feeling. A minister of the methodist persuasion is to preach in it. The church is served by the clergyman of Kissy, and the children attend the school under his care, as there is none in this village. To the manufacture of soap they add that of a small quantity of salt. The marriage of an apprentice from her master's house, which happened whilst I was there, gave me a pleasing idea of his respectability, and accordingly, I found that he was a person of great importance with his neighbours, one whose opinion was looked up to, and whose advice was respected.

This Colony certainly makes me feel more pride in Old England than I ever did; it is a monument of charity worthy of her, and I cannot repress my indignation when people talk with the greatest levity, of its being abandoned, on account of expense; they seem to consider as nothing, the breach of every obligation towards the Africans, and also of good faith with the Merchants; if their argument were the fatality of the climate it would be more just.

I think I have chattered enough for this time, and must therefore wish you good bye. Your letters come very very seldom. My best love to all. I am ever,

Your most affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR BERTHA,

I have been visiting the Bananas, (two or three pretty little islands, considered very healthy, and resorted to by persons in delicate health as a kind of watering place,) and the adjacent villages of York and Kent, I went by water, and touched at York first; the Manager's house is at the very top of a steep hill, and as I was to spend the day there, a country palanquin was brought to carry me up; it resembles a sheet fastened at each end to a long pole, which is supported by two men, and if you will credit it, I was stupid enough to get into this conveyance, with my head downwards, and literally never discovered the reason of my great uncomfortableness in it, until some time after; however, when I arrived at the house, I was amply repaid by the comparative coolness of the air, and comfort in the view: I say comfort, because the scenery is more quiet, than grand: The hills enclose the village, and give it a snug appearance; a neat market place in the midst, with benches, where I saw several people busily engaged in conversation, after the day's business was over, reminded me of the "seats for talking age, &c.;" and a charming little island, with several trees on it, at a distance from the shore, just sufficient to show that it was not a peninsula, completed the prospect.

In the Government School House, a number of the Liberated African Girls are maintained, and instructed but the method pursued, does not at all equal in its effects, that of the Missionary Societies; the Children are quite confused, when taken from the chapter in which they have been accustomed to read. I always endeavour in my rambles to induce the people to converse familiarly with me, as I think it is the best way that I can satisfy my curiosity, as to their opinions and ideas; I find they are gradually acquiring some notion of the rights of property, although I only discovered this to be the case, by the indignation expressed, at their not being able to cut wood wherever they choose, and being obliged to make compensation for the trespasses of their cattle; the old woman who told me this, said, that the "white man" had taught their people a pretty thing, that all the land was divided into farms, which nobody but the owner must touch, and that they expected her to be always watching her pigs and goats: I suppose the old lady's arrival in the colony was not until she had attained too great an age, to approve of any thing new; but it shows that her younger companions are sensible of the advantages derived, by the industrious man, from the partition and appropriation of land. The Liberated Africans are not yet quite united as one people, and I suppose it will take some time to effect this desirable object, for the different tribes have great objections to intermarrying, and although each tribe will generally take care of their own sick, and old people, they have not learnt to make their charity universal; however, they all agree in saying, that Sierra Leone is their children's country, although they will not hear of its being called their own; therefore it is to be hoped that with the rising generation, the differences of tribe will vanish: Their answers, when I enquired if they did not think Sierra Leone a good place, very much excited my sympathy: Yes, they said, very good, and they thanked God, and the white man, for freeing them from slavery, and bringing them here, but yet, our fathers and mothers are not here, nor shall we ever see again the hut in which they lived: The idea, that their children would not have that bitter feeling, seemed to be a great comfort to them.

Early the next morning I went to the Bananas; Dublin, the principal village, where the manager resides, is in very good order, but Ricketts, at the other end of the island, appeared to be sadly behind hand; the people were dirty both in their houses and dress, and idleness, and disorder seemed to prevail. At Dublin there is a School for boys, similar to that at York for Girls, but the house is very much out of repair. Kent, on the opposite shore, is a large well populated village, but unfortunately is not the residence of any of the Missionaries, or has it a separate Manager; this is much to be lamented, as it has the convenience of a Church and School House, and the inhabitants are most desirous of instruction; I heard that they had petitioned to have a Manager, and two grants of land to erect Chapels: The present Schoolmaster is a coloured person, paid by the Government: A woman offered to teach girls to sew, stitch, and hem, at one shilling and sixpence each; would you undertake this task for that price? I have seen the immense Ant Hills; they are at least six feet high, I could hardly believe them to be formed by

such small creatures, until I examined them: they are in the shape of a sugar loaf, and on breaking off a bit, I found the inside resembled a honey-comb: The Ants are white, with a red head, and about half an inch in length; they call them Buga Bugs.

On my return to Freetown, a very important personage came to call upon me, "the lady of the butcher:" Mrs Carew is a good specimen of the Liberated Africans; she told me with very proper gratitude where it is due; that she always remembered from what she had risen; that she came here without a farthing, but that by God's blessing on her own industry, and the assistance of kind friends, that she had brought up a large family, and was at present very well to do in the world; that her eldest daughter was going to be married, and that one of her sons was educating in London: She is the contractor for the soldier's rations, at least her name is always used; I do not know for what reason the husband is thrown into the back ground, perhaps he is not so clever: The good lady had on a coral necklace, and gold earrings, what do yon say to that? My Paper is filled. Best love to all. I am ever,

Your affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR SISTER,

Last Thursday three of your letters arrived, to my great joy—I have read them over and over again, and felt myself almost at home whilst doing so, but this feeling too soon vanishes. Your question, whether the circumstance of there being dissenting ministers does not create confusion in the people's minds, is very natural; but as far as I can judge, it does not; for I have never heard of the slightest disagreement between the different societies: indeed, the subject has never been spoken of before me, and as I am always very solicitous to know every particular that may affect the liberated Africans, I think this would hardly be the case if such an evil existed; the people, you know, cannot be advanced enough to understand the doctrines upon which they differ; and their duties to God and man must be the same.

Ah, my dearest sister, the cruelty, the barbarism of Slavery no one can imagine who has not beheld the effects. I could not restrain myself from tears last evening, at seeing five or six young children, literally skeletons, who they were conveying to the hospital: their bones were almost protruding through their skins, and they were so weak, that they could hardly lift their hands to their heads. Generally, the poor creatures do not suffer quite so much, but there was some illegality in the capture of these. The case was first tried in America, and an appeal was made to the Court in this Colony: however, it was found that the prize could not be considered lawful; consequently, the unfortunate slaves were obliged to be given up to the owner; but he was persuaded to release sixty-four, who could not possibly have survived a third voyage across the Atlantic. By medical care and nursing, it is hoped these will now recover. One cannot but lament that such abominable traffic should be tolerated at all; but by treaty, vessels are not to be taken in certain latitudes. Even here, in a harbour under British protection, they were not given enough to eat, until it was sent to them. I trust the time will come when the liberated Africans themselves, will not permit such an outrage to their feelings and to humanity, as, that their countrymen should be brought before their eyes in this dreadful state, and suffered to be taken away again by their inhuman masters with impunity.

I was obliged to rise up just now, in great haste, to have all the windows and blinds fastened, to shut out a Tornado: These tempests always come on very suddenly and the wind is certainly terrific, but we have not experienced any in which the rain, &c, is worse than a thunder storm in England. The Tornado has cleared the atmosphere a little, which before was exceedingly gloomy. I am beginning to feel the damp of the rainy season, and strange as it may appear, with the thermometer above 80, enjoy standing before the fire. We have had many showers, but instead of the air feeling cool and refreshing after them, it is hot and damp, and there is a rank vegetable smell which must be unhealthy: yet the ground in the immediate vicinity of Freetown, except towards King Tom's Point, is pretty well cleared. The afternoon looks so fine that I shall take a ride I have been thinking of for some days, to the village of Goderich.

29th. I wished for you yesterday, my dear sister, that you might have enjoyed with me my delightful ride; the country is just wild enough to give the zest of a little difficulty. Part of our way along was a hard sandy beach, and we had some streams to cross, and some rocky hills to mount, and I was generally the foremost. What do you think of that? Goderich is just the place, in outward appearance at least, to give a favourable opinion of the liberated Africans. The greatest number of the inhabitants are mechanics, who had been taught and employed at Ascension, and other places; but for what reason sent here, I do not know. They have displayed their acquirements by making their cottages comfortable; and several had little corner cupboards with crockery ranged on them; and they, as well as their children, were all neatly dressed. I went to the school, but cannot say much for their proficiency. The children were very young, and had only a native teacher, which may account for it. The preacher in their church, is a Mr. Elliott, an American I believe, and they profess to be of Lady Huntingdon's Society. On our way to Goderich, we passed through Congo, Wilberforce, and Lumley. At Congo, the Wesleyan Methodist Society have a school and chapel, which the people are enlarging and repairing by voluntary

labour and subscription. At Wilberforce, a school has been recently established by the same society, in honour to the memory of Mr. Wilberforce; and one of their missionaries officiates in the church, and also in that of Lumley. The school at Lumley gets on pretty well considering the master is a native; but the people prefer those conducted by the missionaries, as a proof of which, I was told, that a widow, the mother of five children removed with them from this village to Regent, solely that they might have the benefit of superior instruction. Who can say after that, that the Africans are indifferent, and not desirous of improvement?

Near Lumley I saw the curious way in which they manufacture Salt—Two large cone shaped baskets were supported over a wooden trough; they were filled with earth and sand taken from the sea shore, through which salt water was continually poured: when all the saline particles were washed into the trough, the water was boiled till the salt precipitated. This is a tedious process, and I should think the much easier one of a salt pan could be easily taught them.

I picked several beautiful flowers in my ride, but they had either no smell, or a bad one; and I thought how much more refreshing our sweet roses and mignonette would have been. Alas! I must wait some time before I shall enjoy those again. Good bye. I am ever,

Your affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR SISTER,

Before sunrise last Friday, I was mounted on my poney, slowly picking my way up a steep mountain road, and from time to time, as I could get sure footing, turning to admire the view below: The Barrack Hill, on the very summit of which are the soldier's quarters, reminding one of the the fantastic Chinese houses painted on old china, and around which a carriage drive sweeps, lay immediately beneath: A little further on, Freetown strikes one, by its regular irregularity; it is regular, because the streets are wide, and all run parallel to each other, but the houses are of very different sizes, and interspersed with orange, plantain, and pappaw trees, courts and gardens: The harbour was remarkably full of shipping, and I could just see that King Tom's Point, on the left, is quite a peninsula; the sea bounded the horizon: The first village we came to was Gloster, which is built on a small elevation, in a dell formed by three mountains; the church, manager's house, and school house, are close to each other, and look down upon the rest; the church is in very bad repair, so much so, that the people are afraid to assemble in it. and they have commenced, of themselves, a temporary building, which is to have a stone foundation, boarded sides and floor, and a bamboo roof. A Missionary of the Church Society is resident here, and conducts a very large school: A loom has been set up by the society, and two boys are learning to weave, under the instruction of an American; I saw the piece of cotton that they had finished, which I thought very well for a beginning, but it appears to me, that the loom is too complicated in its machinery, and that consequently, the boys will not learn so fast as to be encouraging; I should think the simple affair of our serge weavers, would answer the purpose much better: The Cotton is grown in the colony, and I am told is of excellent quality.

We then proceeded to Bathurst and Charlotte, which, from the heights commanding the vale of Charlotte, appear to be but one village; from a turn in the road, the vale with a beautiful range of hills on each side, suddenly bursts upon you; that to the right is lofty, and although cultivation is making rapid strides in dismantling the forests which clothed it, yet towards the summits a sufficient quantity of timber is left, to produce a very pleasing effect; several waterfalls descend from these hills; the range on the left is lower, and I could trace the windings of the Sierra Leone river, through the plain beyond. These two villages are peculiarly fortunate in having, the the zealous, active, kind, and constant superintendance of Mr. and Mrs. Weeks, of the Church Missionary Society; I do not know that I ever felt greater pleasure, than in witnessing the affectionate, yet respectful manner with which they are looked up to, especially by their scholars; They have about three hundred under their tuition; the discipline and order kept up amongst them is admirable, and the result must satisfy their most sanguine friends: Mrs. Weeks gave me a most pleasing surprise, by taking me unexpectedly into a room, where six intelligent looking neatly dressed girls were busily engaged with spinning wheels, which the society have brought out for them: Above eighty Liberated African boys are under Mr. Weeks' care, and for a certain portion of the day, he employs them in cultivating a farm, and instructs them in the best manner of raising cotton, arrow root, ginger, &c. I suppose it is from having this example, that the children here are usefully employed out of school hours.

Bathurst Church is also out of repair, and a temporary building is erecting in its place. A very large Church has been begun and left in an unfinished state at Charlotte, the people are most anxious to have it completed, and indeed the population increases so fast, that it is much to be desired it were: I heard they offered to subscribe for this purpose; they attend Divine Service at Bathurst at present: A great number of the inhabitants are sawyers, and shingle makers; the rest are principally employed in agriculture, and they take their surplus produce to Free, town Market; the distance is twelve miles, and as they have no means of conveyance, but in baskets on their shoulders, this is another convincing proof of their industry and perseverance.

I rode home quickly through Regent, which I will not therefore pretend to describe; It has a school house conducted by a native teacher, under the superintendance of the Church Missionary Society, and

I understand a Clergyman is to reside in it. This Colony exemplifies the saying, that, "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few," and indeed, with such a climate it can hardly be expected to be otherwise. By the time I returned home, I was much fatigued, but do not find that my exertion has injured my health. Your letter in date April, has just reached me, but I must defer answering our friend's question until my next. I am ever,

Your very affectionate Sister,

MARY CHURCH.

MY DEAR SISTER,

You say that our friend wishes me to assist him in forming an opinion as to the progress of this Colony towards the ulterior object of its establishment—"The Abolition of the Slave Trade, by means of the propagation of Christianity, and the advance of Commerce and Civilization in Africa." Of course, I would not pretend to judge for myself in such an important question; but if you show him my letters, he will see the impression made on my own mind; and I will now endeavour to state the substance of what I have heard from those who are more competent to decide.—

In this most interesting enquiry, the state of society and the means of sustenance are chiefly to be considered; that is, first, whether the society be in a fit state for the accomplishment of the object; and secondly, if it be so, whether there be means of sustenance adequate to its increase for that purpose. The population is divided into three great classes, each of them important. The European as directing the Government and Commerce—the free and original settlers, as forming the middle class—and the liberated Africans from their numbers.

In the mass then as a whole, Is there sufficient tone to bear, with the prospect of any favourable result, the annual introduction of about 3000 Slaves in a state of barbarism and paganism, ignorant of all their duties towards God and each other?

This question can only be answered by facts. The liberated African so degraded and debased on his first arrival, gradually assumes another station—His charms and incantations are superseded by an outward observance at least of the forms of Christianity. The lax intercourse of the sexes gives way to the obligations of marriage, and the consequent reciprocal duties of parents and children are created. On these, follow industry and order; and in a few years, the savage is found either a useful artizaa in the town, or a labourer in the villages, surrounded by his family, with ample means of support, and in the practice and comforts of civilized life—The old consoling themselves for the loss of their country in the freedom of their children, and the children exulting in their freedom as their first birthright. I can assure you that this is no exaggerated statement. In my casual conversations with the people such sentiments have been frequently expressed by the men; and the boys invariably taunt their less fortunate companions, the apprentices, in the pride of their birth.

If this be the fact, and that it be the fact, I am told is undeniable; Are the means of sustenance equal to the necessary increase? Happily, a great portion of the community are Agriculturists; and from the fertility of the soil, and the nature of the food, the quantity necessary for a family may be raised by the labour of a quarter of a year.

Thus then is established in the very land of slavery and infidelity, a nation of free black Christians (32,000 souls) settling with complete triumph—the superiority of free over slave labour—giving entire refutation to the calumny of their unfitness for all the duties of social life— increasing in numbers, and with means adequate to this increase—and whose religion, knowledge, and habits must extend with themselves to the blessing and civilization of their country.

It would be presumptuous in me to offer an opinion how this great good has been effected; but sure I am, that much, very much, is to be attributed to the exertions of the different religious societies; and as far as I can see, the moral state of the liberated Africans in this Colony, promises all that can be wished by the best friends of humanity and religion. God bless you, my dear Sister.

I am ever, your's affectionately,

MARY CHURCH.