

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY IN LIBERIA

COMMUNICATION
BY THE GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA

dated December 15th, 1930

transmitting the

COMMISSION'S REPORT

GENEVA, 1930.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

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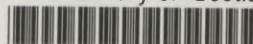
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Geneva, December 15th, 1930.

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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY IN LIBERIA

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Note by the Secretary-General:

The Secretary-General has the honour to communicate to the Council and Members of the League a letter, dated December 15th, 1930, from the permanent delegate of the Republic of Liberia accredited to the League of Nations, enclosing the Report of the International Commission of Enquiry, which the permanent delegate of the Republic of Liberia has transmitted to the Secretary-General on the instructions of his Government.

Series of League of Nations Publications

VI.B. SLAVERY

1930. VI.B.6.

LETTER FROM THE PERMANENT DELEGATE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

(Translation.)

Permanent Delegation
of the Republic of Liberia
Accredited to the League of Nations.
L L 1072

Geneva, December 15th, 1930.

Sir,

With reference to my letters of September 16th and October 14th, 1929, February 8th and 15th and October 14th, 1930¹, I have the honour to submit herewith copy of the report on slavery and forced labour in the Republic of Liberia, which the International Commission of Enquiry, before which the matter was laid by my Government on April 8th, 1930, has presented to it after five months' work. It will be seen from the report that the Commission of Enquiry finds :

(1) That, although classic slavery carrying the idea of slave-markets and slave-dealers no longer exists as such in the Republic of Liberia, there are cases of inter- and intra-tribal domestic slavery and cases of the pawn system ;

(2) That domestic slavery has always been disapproved of and discouraged by my Government, and that any slave who appeals to the courts for release or brings proceedings against his master for ill-treatment has always been declared free and emancipated ;

(3) That there has been no evidence that leading citizens of the country have participated in domestic slavery, but that there is evidence that some Americo-Liberians have taken natives as pawns and have often criminally abused the system ;

(4) That forced or compulsory labour has been made use of in the Republic of Liberia for public utility works (road construction, building of barracks, etc.) ; but that, in certain cases, labour recruited by County Superintendents and District Commissioners for public purposes has been diverted to private use on the farms and plantations of high Government officials and private citizens ;

(5) That some of the contract labourers shipped to Fernando Po and French Gabon have occasionally been recruited under conditions of compulsion, bearing, in the view of the Commission, some slight resemblance to the slave-trade ;

(6) That labour employed for private purposes on privately owned plantations has been impressed for this service on the authority of high Government officials ;

(7) That the Vice-President of the Republic, the Honourable Allen N. Yancy, and other high Government officials, as well as County Superintendents and District Commissioners, have given their sanction for the compulsory recruitment of labour for road construction, for shipment abroad and for other work.

In accordance with its terms of reference as laid down by my Government, which I previously submitted to you², the International Commission of Enquiry has formulated suggestions and recommendations to which my Government has devoted close attention. On receiving the report, my Government promptly issued decrees and a presidential proclamation dated October 1st last, introducing a number of measures and effecting certain reforms, among which I may for the moment mention the following :

(1) Recasting of native policy, complete reorganisation of the administration of the interior of the country with the assistance and cooperation of foreign specialist officials.

(2) Introduction of the policy of " the open door " ; abolition of the barriers between civilised and uncivilised citizens, and institution of absolute freedom of trade.

(3) My Government has just asked the United States Government to appoint two special commissioners to assist and co-operate in reorganising the administration of the interior of the country.

(4) All domestic slaves in native tribes have been declared permanently *free and emancipated*, domestic slavery in every form being abolished, declared illegal and prohibited under severe penalties.

¹ Official Nos. C.446.1929.VI ; C.510.M.170.1929.VI ; C.613.M.239.1930.VI ; *Official Journal* of the League of Nations, November 1929, pages 1682, 1683 ; 1766, 1767 ; December 1929, pages 1870, 1871 ; August 1930, pages 975, 976.

² See my letter of October 14th, 1929, Official No. C.510.M.170.1929.VI, *Official Journal* of the League of Nations, December 1929, pages 1870, 1871.

(5) The pawn system has been completely abolished, declared illegal and prohibited under severe penalties.

(6) The system of shipping labour abroad has been completely stopped and abolished, declared illegal and prohibited under severe penalties.

(7) My Government has introduced a number of health measures.

(8) My Government is engaged in devising a plan for giving effect to the other recommendations and suggestions made by the International Commission of Enquiry.

I shall have the honour of submitting to you copies of the laws, decrees and proclamations of my Government regarding these measures.

I may state incidentally, that certain high Government officials, including the President, Sir C. D. B. King, and Vice-President Yancy, have resigned.

Further measures will doubtless be taken, for my Government is firmly resolved : (a) to take account, as far as possible, of all the recommendations and suggestions of the International Commission of Enquiry ; (b) to make every effort to stamp out every vestige of domestic slavery, the pawn system, and forced labour, except for public works allowed by the Convention abolishing forced labour adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1930 ; (c) to take steps to promote the intellectual, moral, social and economic development of the country.

It may also be worth while to recall that my Government has long since ratified the Slavery Convention of 1926, and has unreservedly accepted the Convention abolishing forced labour adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1930, although that Convention was not accepted by all the members represented at the Conference.

I may be permitted to allude here to what other Governments have said at the Assembly of the League and at the last two International Labour Conferences : (a) it is very difficult to uproot in a brief period of time immemorial customs and traditions which have been part of the social system of native tribes in Africa ; (b) on certain African tribes forced or compulsory labour seems in many cases to have an educative effect, and, generally speaking, forced or compulsory labour is sometimes indispensable for public works—as was indeed admitted by the last International Labour Conference.

By hearing a number of witnesses, the Commission of Enquiry learned of isolated facts, chiefly referring to the years 1919 to 1928 ; but these facts cannot be taken as representing a general rule, and seem to have only a *relative value*, because, as the Commission admits, it was working at an unfavourable period, when the subject uppermost in the public mind was the presidential election campaign ; for at such a time the most insignificant fact in any country may become an electoral weapon for one political party or another. The Commission has referred in its report to the extraordinary power of rumours, the existence of intrigues and secret manoeuvres, the forging of documents, etc. Is the Commission quite sure that none of the witnesses it heard was swayed by political motives or influenced by the election campaign ?

Furthermore, as the Commission's difficulties were aggravated during three months by the rainy season, it is to be feared that difficulties were also encountered in ensuring the impartiality of witnesses. Far be it from me, however, to depreciate the great merits, the remarkable value of the Commission's work, and my Government's appreciation ; on the contrary, I desire to offer a tribute to the Commission and to express once again my Government's appreciation and profound gratitude to its members, especially Dr. Christy, the member appointed by the Council of the League, and Dr. Charles Johnson, the member appointed by the United States Government, for the often difficult and delicate work they so successfully accomplished.

On the other hand, I am compelled to point out that a certain section of the Press, which is systematically hostile to the Republic of Liberia and is always on the lookout for sensational stories, has not hesitated to seize upon this present enquiry as an opportunity for misleading the public by statements contrary to the truth.

Out of a large number of cases I will mention only one. Several great dailies, which have the reputation of being well informed and enjoy a certain degree of authority, have gone so far as to tell the public that *this Commission was set up in Liberia at the request and on the initiative of the British Government*. I have no idea where and when the British Government took the initiative in the matter, but I do know that that same British Government has always been, in the community of nations, one of the Governments that have displayed most respect for the sovereignty and independence of other countries, especially small countries. As I had the honour of doing during the discussions in the Sixth Committee of several Assemblies of the League of Nations, I would pay tribute here to the British Government for its campaign against slavery, a campaign which has earned the sympathy, appreciation and gratitude of all mankind. It is a pleasure to me to take this opportunity of again expressing my appreciation and gratitude to the Rapporteur at the Council Session of September 1929 on my Government's request for the appointment of a representative to serve on the Commission. The Rapporteur was, in fact, the distinguished representative of the British Government.

I would emphasise what are matters of common knowledge : (a) it was the Legislature of the Republic of Liberia and my Government that *spontaneously and voluntarily decided*, in June 1929, to submit the question to an International Commission of Enquiry ; (b) in July 1929, my Government decided that the Commission should consist of three members ; (c) in August 1929, my Government decided to ask the United States Government and the Council of the League of Nations each to appoint one member of the Commission, my Government itself having appointed the third member ;¹ (d) in a letter of September 16th, 1929, my Government informed the Council of the League of Nations of its decision to refer the matter to an International Commission of Enquiry, and asked it to appoint its representative on the Commission ; (e) my Government *spontaneously and voluntarily* laid down the programme, terms and conditions of the enquiry ;² (f) on April 8th, 1930, the President of the Republic, the Honourable Sir C. D. B. King, set up the International Commission of Enquiry at the Executive Mansion in Monrovia.

The facts can be readily ascertained by even superficially consulting the attached report, the *Official Journal* of the League of Nations, or any impartial newspaper.

Certain great daily papers have not merely ignored these facts, but forget what the impartial section of the Press has not forgotten—namely, that, notwithstanding the facts established by the Commission, my Government *is deserving of the sincerest gratitude and appreciation for having been the first, and as yet the only, Government which, not content with merely sending information written on paper to the League regarding the application of the Slavery Convention, has set an unprecedented example of courage, and one worthy of imitation, and decided, on its own initiative and of its own free will, with frankness and honesty carried to excess, to refer to an International Commission of Enquiry, and even to empower that Commission to submit recommendations and suggestions.*

Again, certain lecturers have not hesitated to start a campaign to arouse public opinion against the Republic of Liberia by denouncing and cleverly exaggerating the cases of slavery, the pawn system, etc., established by the International Commission of Enquiry, as if such conditions existed in Liberia alone.

Far be it from me to excuse Liberia by accusing other countries, but I should like to point out that, according to reliable information, it is common knowledge that in other countries than Liberia, not only do domestic slavery and the pawn system flourish, but there is also the system of selling children, in the strict sense of the word “selling”, like ordinary goods on the market. It is common knowledge that in other countries than Liberia forced labour is in full force, and *in one region unhappy wretches are forced to swim from the harbour to a vessel anchored in the open sea, carrying hundredweights of goods or heavy luggage on their backs.* It is common knowledge that, in one region with a population of some ten millions, domestic slavery is not merely in full force, but is tolerated by the Government. It is likewise common knowledge that—as the distinguished representative of the British Empire at the last Assembly of the League, Lord Cecil, himself said—there are still no fewer than five million slaves in the world. I may add that, according to reliable information, there are no fewer than two million slaves, in the traditional sense of the word, in one single country which has signed the Slavery Convention.

Certain newspapers, in particular, have estimated the number of domestic slaves in Liberia up to September 1930 at 400,000. Even if this arbitrary and paradoxical estimate could be accepted, there would be no cause for surprise after what I have just said, especially when it is remembered that the population of Liberia is two million five hundred thousand, and that the absence of railways makes Government control difficult.

In conclusion, I desire to emphasise the fact that almost the whole of the attached report deals only with conditions from 1919 to 1928, and that these conditions no longer exist ; in other words, *the present report is not a contemporary report, but a report belonging to the past.*

I have the honour once more on behalf of my Government to offer my thanks to the Council of the League of Nations, to yourself and to the members of the International Commission of Enquiry.

(Signed Antoine SOTTILE.

*Chargé d'Affaires, Permanent Delegate
of the Republic of Liberia accredited
to the League of Nations.*

¹ See my letter to you of September 16th, 1929, official number C.446.1929.VI.

² See my letter to you of October 14th, 1929.

REPORT
OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY
INTO THE EXISTENCE OF
SLAVERY AND FORCED LABOUR
IN THE
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

MONROVIA, LIBERIA — *August 1930.*

Members :

Dr. Cuthbert CHRISTY, League of Nations, *Chairman.*
Dr. Charles Spurgeon JOHNSON, America.
Hon. Arthur BARCLAY, Liberia.

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INCEPTION OF THE COMMISSION.

In 1922, the Third Assembly of the League of Nations, on the proposal of the Sixth Committee, decided to include in the agenda of the next Assembly the question of slavery, and by a resolution of the Council steps were taken to study the question. Out of the interest the Anti-Slavery Commission was formed, with the view of continuing the investigation of the question. On June 12th, 1924, the Commission was constituted by the Council with the following membership : M. DELAFOSSE (France), M. FREIRE d'ANDRADE (Portugal), M. GOHR (Chairman), (Belgium), Sir Frederick LUGARD (Great Britain), M. VAN REES (Netherlands), Commander RONCAGLI (Italy) and Mr. H. A. GRIMSHAW (International Labour Organisation). Its object, among others, was "to bring about, as soon as possible, the abolition of slavery in all its forms," and "to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery".

All States Members of the League of Nations and non-member States specified by the Council of the League were invited to make observations regarding the programme of the Commission, appoint plenipotentiaries to the Assembly, make effort to adopt at once all possible measures in conformity with the provisions of the Draft Convention, and "to assist one another forthwith in the abolition of the slave trade, slavery and conditions analogous thereto, by all practicable means, and in particular, by the conclusion of special agreements and arrangements".

In 1926, after the passing by the Seventh Assembly of resolutions approving the Slavery Convention drafted by its Sixth Committee, all States Members and non-member States were invited to ratify the Convention. The opinion was at the same time expressed that any resort to forced labour for public purposes should be limited to the minimum, and the Assembly referred to the International Labour Organization the matter of studying the best means of preventing forced or compulsory labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery. One prompt effect of the discussion and signing of the Slavery Convention was the promulgation of new legislation by a number of Governments, such as Abyssinia, Sierra Leone and the Portuguese African Colonies, with regard to slavery and forced labour.

In course of the discussions of the Anti-Slavery Commission, the Government of Liberia had been cited as one of the countries in which conditions of a highly questionable nature existed. Most of the information was drawn from fragmentary evidence of participating members, from books and other accounts of travellers and students coming to their attention. REEVES, in "The Black Republic", published in 1923, is a notable example of the open charges, although it should be stated that the conditions described were founded upon observations made about 25 years ago. Lady Simons' "Slavery" deals at length with Liberia, alleging slavery as cited from second-hand accounts. In recent years the most notable reference is that which appears in Raymond BUELL's "The Native Problem in Africa". Awakening public interest in the question was noted in the frequency of discussions in both the American and European press regarding the existence of slavery or analogous conditions in the Republic of Liberia. The fact that this Republic had been founded as a refuge for American Negroes from this condition gave especial importance to the persistent charges, which assumed graver proportions during the year 1929. In keeping with the traditional policy of friendliness of the United States Government towards this Republic, the American State Department, on June 8th 1929, directed a dispatch to the American Minister to be transmitted to the Secretary of State of Liberia. The Minister's memorandum, in part was as follows :

"I am directed by the Secretary of State to advise your Excellency that there have come to the attention of the Government of the United States from several sources reports bearing reliable evidence of authenticity which definitely indicate that existing conditions incident to the so-called 'export' of labour from Liberia to Fernando Po have resulted in the development of a system which seems hardly distinguishable from organized slave trade, and that in the enforcement of this system the services of the Liberian Frontier Force, and the services and influence of certain high Government officials are constantly and systematically used."

In his reply to the above dispatch the Secretary of State, Republic of Liberia, on June 11th, 1929, wrote as follows :

“ With regard to the specific allegations which have been made, I deem it my duty to record my Government’s solemn and categorical denial of the existence in the Republic of such labour conditions as would justify the characterization which has been applied to these conditions in your dispatch, and to declare that the Government of the Republic will have no objection to this question being investigated on the spot by a competent, impartial and unprejudiced commission.”

In reply to this the American Department of State informed the Liberian Government that : “ The Government of the United States is gratified to learn that its friendly offices have been met by the offer on the part of Liberia to have this question investigated on the spot by a competent, impartial and unprejudiced commission.”

The Liberian Government’s offer to institute a Commission of investigation having been accepted by the United States Government, M. A. Sottile, Chargé d’Affaires, Permanent Delegate of the Liberian Republic accredited to the League of Nations, in a letter to the President of the Council of the League, on September 16th, 1929, wrote as follows :

“ As this campaign and these publications may influence the public, and especially members of the League of Nations, I have the honour to inform you that, in order to dispel once and for all even the slightest doubts, and in order to enlighten the League of Nations and the public, my Government has decided to put the matter into the hands of an International Inquiry Commission, which shall meet on the spot and, by means of an impartial, serious and detailed investigation, find out whether slavery or forced labour is or is not practised in Liberia.

“ The Liberian Government proposes to form an International Inquiry Commission, to be composed of three members : one member to be appointed by the Government of the United States ; one member, as my Government hopes, to be appointed by the Council of the League of Nations ; one member to be appointed by the Liberian Government.

“ ... In order that the members of this Commission may be completely independent of the Liberian Government, my Government has the honour to propose that the League of Nations itself should pay the expenses entailed in the appointment and mission of the member appointed by the Council.”

This proposal having been accepted by the League Council, President King instructed the Secretary of State to draw up Terms of Reference, and to arrange that the Commission should be independent in character and international in its composition.

The American Member, Dr. Charles S. Johnson, reached Monrovia on March 8th, the League of Nations Member, Dr. Cuthbert Christy, arrived on March 22nd. The Liberian representative, ex-President Arthur Barclay, of Monrovia, was already in the country. The Commission was formally constituted by President C. D. B. King at the Executive Mansion, Monrovia, on April 7th, 1930.

INTRODUCTION.

The constitution of the Commission by the President on April 7th empowered it to ascertain :

- (a) Whether slavery as defined in the Anti-Slavery Convention in fact exists in the Republic.
- (b) Whether this system is participated in or encouraged by the Government of the Republic.
- (c) Whether and what leading citizens of the Country participate therein.
- (d) To what extent compulsory labour exists as a factor in the social and industrial economy of the State, either for public or private purposes, and, if it does exist, in what manner it has been recruited and employed whether for public or private purposes.
- (e) Whether shipment of contract labourers to Fernando Po under the terms of arrangement with Spain, or shipment of such labourers to the Congo or any other foreign parts is associated with slavery, and whether the method employed in recruiting such labourers carries any compulsion.
- (f) Whether the labour employed for private purposes on privately owned or leased plantations is recruited by voluntary enlistments or is forcibly impressed for this service by the Liberian Government or by its authority.
- (g) Whether the Liberian Government has at any time given sanction or approval to the recruiting of labour with the aid and assistance of the Liberian Frontier Force or other persons holding official positions or in Government employ, or private individuals have been implicated in such recruiting with or without Government's approval.

Under special provisions of the law (1926) of the Republic defining the powers of a Commission of Inquiry this Commission was authorised to issue summonses to witnesses and, if necessary, to enforce their attendance. At the wish of President King, with the full concurrence of the American and Liberian members, the League of Nations member was requested to serve as Chairman. Because of the peculiar nature of the Commission and its international composition, it was decided that only with full freedom of action could it carry out its investigation and make its findings. The particular instructions, therefore, with which it had been supplied were waived by the President, although accepted in many particulars as aids to carrying out that procedure which the Commissioners felt would be most effective to adopt. A proclamation was issued by the President embodying the Terms of Reference and explaining the purpose of the inquiry. At the same time announcements that the sittings of the Commission would commence forthwith were dispatched to the principal towns and stations of the Republic.

Sittings were held in chambers set apart in the Department of State, Monrovia. A staff was provided consisting of a Secretary, two stenographers, two messengers and two Frontier Force guards. These latter were deemed unnecessary and a possible intimidation to native witnesses, and were shortly withdrawn. The rôle of secretary could not, in the circumstances, be completely fulfilled. The stenographic record of the proceedings proved to be of value to the Commissioners in keeping before them a reasonably accurate account of the numerous depositions, and additional accuracy in this respect was assured by the Secretary to the American member.

The first meeting of the Commission was held on April 8th, and the subsequent three days' sittings were occupied with matters of procedure. Briefly it was agreed that persons wishing to give evidence within the limits of the Terms of Reference should be asked to do so,

each receiving a summons for a specified time. Persons thought or known to be acquainted with particular facts into which the Commission was inquiring were summoned to appear and were questioned on oath.

Natives unfamiliar with English were permitted to bring their own interpreters. Official documents, and in numerous instances private documents, bearing upon incidents under discussion were made available when their existence was known, and responsible Cabinet officers and heads of Departments of Government were, in course of the sittings, invited to give evidence direct upon items of the Terms of Reference which concerned their sphere, as well as to offer clarification of various evidence otherwise presented.

The first sittings in Monrovia continued from April 14th to April 29th ; after which the League of Nations and American members proceeded to Kakata some sixty miles from the Monrovia Coast, where, with a portion of the staff they heard the testimony of natives, their chiefs and sub-chiefs, who came in from sections nearby and as far removed as four days' walk. The Liberian member, Mr. Arthur Barclay, out of consideration for advanced years, though active in sessions in Monrovia, preferred not to undertake the visits to the interior sections.

On May 10th the two Commissioners proceeded to Cape Palmas in Maryland County, from which point, at the other extremity of the Republic, they could reach or be reached by persons from both District 4 and 5 of the Hinterland, and Maryland and Sinoe in the county jurisdictions on the coast. From Cape Palmas they visited three native towns on the coast. At Garraway, due to difficulties of transportation and the limited period in which observations were to be made, they decided upon separate routes in order to cover a wider area. The League of Nations Commissioner proceeded to Webbo by way of Gydetabo and Plebo, the American member taking a course from Grand Cess through the Wedabo, Trempe, and Barrobo Sections to the same point. They returned to Monrovia on July 7th, and sittings were resumed and continued to the end of the four months' period, August 8th, stipulated for this phase of the work.

In the conduct of the hearings special effort was made to provide an atmosphere for giving testimony on all sides unhindered. The witnesses were carefully questioned, their statements further checked by such documentary evidence, official and otherwise, as was available to the Commission, and, so far as indicated in the itinerary of the Commission, through personal examination of the evidence in the sections in question. Although interpreters were selected with greatest care, and depositions in the native languages interpreted by sentences to ensure most faithful rendering, it is inevitable that a certain colouring should appear in the verbatim reports traceable to this difficulty.

Both at Kakata and in Maryland County, natives were met in council with the chiefs and elders of the village. They selected their spokesman, gave assent to the statement of facts as given, and promptly interjected corrections where there was disagreement. At Kakata there more were than 800 in attendance. For the various meetings in Maryland County the number exceeded 3,000.

In making its findings the Commission has had before it the recorded testimony of 109 witnesses summoned before it in its Monrovia hearings ; 39 spokesmen for sections and towns at Kakata and 116 such spokesmen in Maryland County. Of these witnesses 20 were native Paramount Chiefs, 82 sub-chiefs, 103 natives, 3 Cabinet Members, 26 public officials, including Justices of the Supreme Court, Senators, County Superintendents, District Commissioner etc., 18 Americo-Liberians, 9 Africo-Liberians, and others totalling 264 depositions. Of further help to the Commission were the informal interviews with a large number of persons in various parts of the country. These do not appear in the list of witnesses.

In giving proper significance to the content of this report several factors should be kept in mind. The latter three months of the period of the inquiry fell within the season of the rains. While this did not prevent movement it impeded it considerably as a result of the condition of the roads and paths, and the co-incident fact of the farming season which occupied many of the natives at some distance from their villages. The road programme was in many sections suspended during the entire period of the Commission's session, and, except in special instances noted in the report, full observation of operations could not be made on the spot.

The Commissioners have been aware that the significance of their presence in any section would tend to prompt restriction of special practices likely to be criticised. Again, the state of records in many of the bureaux, made it very difficult to confirm or amplify testimony, and the virtual absence of records and statistics for any of the towns, made it difficult to carry out any study of native social conditions.

In the evidence presented there is a good deal which, though a related part of the testimony sought under the Terms of Reference, might yet be considered an unwarranted extension of the Commission's limits of inquiry. In meeting this an attempt has been made to incorporate only that evidence which seems vitally related to the major issues under concern. Another not less important and somewhat unique factor has been the extraordinary force of rumours. The Commission feels that it should at the very outset indicate its awareness of frequently mischievous currents of discussion, which on occasion reached the embarrassing extreme of

forged documents purporting to be official papers of the Governments represented in the inquiry and imputing special political design. In the Commission's effort to avoid these intangible entanglements stress has been placed throughout upon the direct experience of the deponents. The Commission, further, has found some difficulty in disentangling evidence of fundamental economic and social conditions from an extravagant emphasis upon politics in the Republic, an emphasis accentuated by the nearness of the Presidential election, with numerous factions active.

A problem has been presented regarding the use of names in the report. The material for the first section dealing with slavery and analogous practices, represents in large part the following up, in different parts of the country, of conditions mentioned together with names in testimony given in Monrovia.

Although the sittings were held in camera, the names of those testifying and of those mentioned in the testimony was known. Moreover, in other aspects of the cases considered many of these names have come to attention in complaints officially registered. Consequently it has not been thought necessary to delete these names from the Report. In the forced labour section, however, the material for which was gathered from villages along the coast and in the interior, when the Commissioners travelled unaccompanied by any Government officials, it is a different matter. It would obviously be an injustice to disclose the names of those who testified. Names have accordingly not been mentioned in the latter section. The keynote of the inquiry has been throughout the future welfare of the country.

Acknowledgements are due to President C. D. B. King for personal assistance and consideration ; and both to officials of the Government and citizens of the Republic who have facilitated the work of the Commission by affording information, access to records, and by suggesting names of those who could testify before it or who could contribute to an understanding of special conditions. The Commission has also to thank Mr. W. D. Hines and the Firestone Company for valuable transport and other facilities much appreciated by the Commissioners.

The form which this report takes falls into two major divisions : (a) Slavery and analogous practices, and (b) forced labour for public and private purposes. And because of our Terms of Reference they are so grouped. It is within the competence of the Commission to make recommendations. These follow the factual outlay and represent the best judgment of this Commission upon the facts given, in sufficient detail, to indicate their own significance.

SLAVERY AND ANALOGOUS PRACTICES.

Terms of Reference:

(a) Whether slavery as defined in the Anti-Slavery Convention in fact exists in the Republic.

(b) Whether this system is participated in or encouraged by the Government of the Republic.

(c) Whether and what leading citizens of the Country participate therein.

.....

(e) Whether shipment of contract labourers to Fernando Po under the terms of arrangement with Spain, or shipment of such labourers to the Congo or any other foreign parts is associated with slavery, and whether the method employed in recruiting such labourers carries any compulsion.

.....

The definition of slavery as formulated by the Anti-Slavery Convention admittedly avoids detailed description for a comprehensive formula. In its present form it leaves little room for distinguishing between degrees of restrictive freedom, a circumstance common in Africa, and as between various tribes in Liberia. The difference has great importance to the present inquiry for the reason that it becomes extremely tedious to distinguish certain forms of restrictive freedom in the European sense, from phases of characteristic social systems in Africa. The status in which "any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised", becomes, thus, as a definition against which to make judgment in a given condition in Liberia, too inadequate in one sense and too comprehensive in another. Powers attaching to the right of ownership, for example, are as much involved in customary recognition of the authority of the chiefs, and of native marriage as in adoption or in milder forms of domestic slavery generally. The concept of slavery most common in the literature of abolition is that of an institution, involving a commercialized traffic, slave raiding, transfer by sale, inheritance or gift, and characterized by exercise of all rights of ownership. The fact, however, that forms of domestic and predial slavery, and even compulsory labour, are associated with the definition and with the discussions of slavery tends to confirm the importance given by the Convention to these forms of slavery in status while calling them at times by other names. For, whereas slavery in its most rigid aspect with inhuman methods of capture and trade is admittedly tending to disappear in Africa, as between certain forms of domestic slavery as practiced by some tribes and compulsory labour as a sequel to more civilized measures of direct exploitation, the grosser features are more often now to be found attached to the latter. But here, however, the temporal feature is not noted in the definition. It becomes a question whether raiding, capture and exchange for money according to the will of the master, and constituting a condition exactly analogous to slave raiding, slave dealing and slave trading, *but usually for a limited period, rather than for the life time of the subject*, are to be classed with domestic slavery as practiced among tribes, which, in its present commonest forms, does not appear to be as inhumanely exacting. There is the further question whether practices restrictive of the liberty of persons and analogous to slavery, which are apparently temporary but tend to become permanent in practice, from lack of power of legal redress on the part of the person involved, are reasonably to be viewed as slavery proper.

The Rapporteur of the Assembly Committee responsible for the drafting of the Convention has explained that reference to domestic slavery and similar conditions are omitted because it was believed that such conditions came within the definition of slavery contained in the first article and that no further publication of them in expressed terms was necessary. This

applies not only to domestic slavery but to all those conditions mentioned by the Temporary Slavery Commission, *i.e.*, debt slavery, enslaving of persons disguised as payment of dues, etc.

The Attorney General of Liberia has recently had occasion to classify a specific set of acts as slave trading. On the occasion of a reported raiding of villages and forcible capture of natives in the interior of Sinoe County for shipment out of the country, he gave instructions that the "persons endeavoring to coerce labourers must be apprehended and prosecuted for slave trading, and that labourers forcibly detained and deprived of their liberty must be released upon a writ of *habeas corpus*."

Two important provisos of the Anti-Slavery Convention, as signed by 36 Governments and ratified by the United States Government, were "to bring about . . . as soon as possible the complete abolition of slavery in all its forms" and "to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery".

The Commission, after carefully considering many sets of evidence, embodied in documents, testimony and records of individual observations of the Commissioners in the hinterland, finds itself, in point of its findings, between the two provisos of the Convention. And while it feels that it would be quite justifiable, within the limits of the definition, to include a large portion of its data and observations under item (a), in the interest of achieving the objective of the Convention, "to bring about the abolition of slavery in all its forms", it has decided to group its evidence which shall be the basis of its findings under the following divisions :

A. Common Slavery.

1. Oppressive forms of slavery involving a commercialized traffic, and transfer of slaves and their offspring by sale, gift or inheritance.
2. Domestic slavery as practised inter-tribally and intra-tribally in Liberia, involving full proprietary rights, and related to the social system of tribes involved.
3. Pawning.

B. Oppressive practices restrictive of the freedom of persons, constituting conditions analogous to slavery and tending to acquire the status of common or classic slavery.

The Commission is convinced that the "definition" of slavery is not so important to the welfare of Liberia and all of its people, as the study of the conditions themselves, with a view to their ultimate correction, and is therefore content to let the facts both speak for and classify themselves.

A. COMMON SLAVERY.

A constitutional provision in the Government of the Republic of Liberia prohibits slavery and the recognition of the status of slavery.¹

Domestic Slavery.

The constitution of Liberia and the Government, it appears, have until recently applied effectively only to the civilized elements of the population, living near the coast and numbering about 10,000. Jurisdiction over the interior began only about 25 years ago and only with this jurisdiction came any measure of regulation or even important knowledge of the customs of tribes living within the boundaries of the country. Moreover, captives in inter-tribal wars have been the chief source of slaves and many of them continue in their status as captive slaves. No estimate of the number, however, is possible. There is in the country neither registration nor census of free or dependent classes of the population. Whereas slavery as such has no legal status in Liberia, so long as pawning has, the substitution is easily effected and the result essentially the same.

The only methods discerned by which the practice of inter-tribal and intra-tribal domestic slavery has been dealt with by the Government have been :

(a) Statements by the President at various Conferences with chiefs in which he emphasized the constitutional provision against slavery, acknowledged the need of servants and permitted pawning as a substitute. This statement at best could only discourage further taking, buying and selling of slaves and not release those already held. The decision of the President, it is held by the Attorney General of the Republic, has not the validity of legislative action and is only a temporary expedient pending legislation. Such legislation has been strongly

¹ Article I, section 4. Constitution of the Republic of Liberia.

"There shall be no slavery within this Republic; nor shall any citizen of this Republic, or any person resident therein, deal in slaves either within or without this Republic, directly or indirectly."

recommended and with some popular support, but, on the objection of chiefs, the issue was not pressed. As a consequence there has been no statute enacted which abolishes the status, unless it is assumed that it is covered in the constitutional provision. In this case it would appear that since the framing of the Constitution the Government either could not or was not disposed to enforce its provisions in the interior.

(b) The releasing of slaves when brought to court. A certain meagreness appears in this provision, in the testimony of the official in charge of the court of Native Appeals, to the effect that the only guide to his decisions in such cases was the verbal instruction to release complainants if there was evidence of cruel treatment ; that few cases reach his court.

It appears to the Commission quite unnecessary to elaborate extensively upon the existence of inter-tribal domestic slavery, in view of the recognition of this in the official documents of the Republic. In 1923 the Attorney General of the Republic (Grimes) made the following observation, which he repeated before the Commission in 1930 as a situation unchanged.¹

The tribes among whom domestic slavery was most common were the Vais, Kpellis (Kpesssehs), Boosies, and to a certain extent, the Bassas, and it is not unknown among the others with the exception of the Krus and the Grebos. These captive slaves may be redeemed by relatives or others on payment of specific sums. Between 1912 and 1920 the redemption price for women was £4.0.0. and for men £3.0.0. Since 1920 the price for women has been £6.0.0. and for men £3.0.0.

The Secretary of the Department of the Interior has testified that only when cases are brought to attention through a complaint, is the prohibition given force. The judge in charge of the Court of Native Appeals testified that the only guide to action in the matter of handling cases of domestic slavery was the verbal instruction of the Secretary of the Department of the Interior and his knowledge of the statement made by the President at the Suehn Conference.

That cases of domestic slavery are current and come to the attention of the Court in Monrovia which handles matters only within the County Jurisdiction, is supported by the fact that a case of a Vai seeking release from a Gollah was presented during the month in which this testimony was given.

¹ *Report and Opinions of L. A. Grimes, Attorney-General of Liberia.* 1923 ; page 9.

" For several years there has been a growing agitation in favour of a strict enforcement of the Constitutional provision that :

" ' There shall be no slavery within this Republic ; nor shall any citizen of this Republic, or any person resident therein, deal in slaves either within or without this Republic, directly or indirectly. ' "

(See Constitution of Liberia, Article I, section 4.)

" In justice to everybody concerned I must state (1) that the system of domestic servitude in vogue is not confined to Liberia, but is more or less prevalent throughout West Africa. (2) That it is radically different from slavery of the kind that existed in Europe and the Western Hemisphere up to the middle of the 19th century. Independently of the horrors which in the United States followed in the wake of this ' curse of curses ' the effect even in Western Africa was that :

" ' Clan feeling and clan hospitality becoming weakened began to decay . . . The solitary traveller was no longer safe. The hunter who had wandered too far from home in pursuit of game, the farmer on his secluded farm, women going to market or to the spring were ruthlessly captured and sold into foreign slavery. Then it was that parents spurning all holy impulses and dead to natural love and affection, sold their very offspring into foreign bondage. But through fire and sword and bloodshed, which desolated many a prosperous village, amid all the wailings of the unhappy captives the distinction between the alien slaves and native bondsmen was well marked, and never once do we hear any native in bondage called a slave, a Bokor. ' (See F. C. L., pages 7-8.)

" Domestic servitude in Africa is, and always was, of an entirely different character. Here the servile relationship may arise from one of three reasons ; either where unprotected peasants, or persons who are impoverished commend themselves to a more powerful neighbour for protection or sustenance, giving their services in return ; or (2) where persons burdened with debt pledge themselves and their belongings to one who could and would pay ; or (3) those who in return for some great service rendered them, their relations or ancestors are bound to serve their benefactor and his family.

" Though the services of these persons are transferrable from master to master still the relationship was more akin to that of lord and vassal in feudal times ; all of them having been treated as members of their master's household, and not a few have succeeded as heir to their master's estate.

" Still there are some of our people who contended in previous administrations that all involuntary restraint should be immediately prohibited ; and as they were legally correct in said contention would have forced the measure through but for the determined opposition of most of the leading aboriginal chieftains of all the principal aboriginal tribes.

" What we now suggest as a means of gradually educating our aboriginal people up to the ideals set in our Constitution is that inasmuch as all of that class of our citizens is rapidly acquiring property, both personal and real, of constantly increasing value, a statute be passed forbidding them to pawn any human being, and the officials of our Interior administration be directed to instruct them, in case of need, to pledge their goods and chattels, or should they be insufficient, to mortgage their lands in lieu. "

Individuals were brought to the notice of the Commissioners, one in Monrovia and one in District No. 1, who brought young persons from the hinterland and received in return for the sale of their indefinite services sums varying from £4.0.0. to £6.0.0. One of these men was recently appointed paramount chief.

There is in present customary law recognition of two classes of persons who may be pawned : slaves and free born. The Message of President King for the year 1929 in commenting upon the charges of slavery in Liberia, makes the observation that " traffic in human beings has disappeared except in isolated cases which have been condemned by the Government and punished when brought to its notice ", and points to similar conditions of slavery in adjacent territories to Liberia. The disappearance of this form of slavery is thus made contingent upon the extension of jurisdiction in the hinterland, which at present is handicapped by the financial condition of the country as well as by the type of officials available for service in the hinterland.

The Commission has no evidence that there is traffic in slaves or slaveholding by Americo-Liberians in the classic sense involving *all* of the rights of ownership, but there is evidence that they have taken natives as pawns, certain extreme cases in which the system of pawning has been excessively abused ; and, by certain individuals of important position in the Government, forcible deprivation of the liberty of native subjects under conditions hardly distinguishable from slavery of the most oppressive type, hereinafter to be described.

Pawning.

Pawning is recognized by the Government of Liberia as an old native custom. In substance it is an arrangement by which, in return for money, a human being, usually a child relative, may be given in servitude for an indefinite period, without compensation to the person held, and without privilege. Both slave and free born may be pawned, the distinction being in the character of the token given, a leopard's tooth for free born, a piece of metal or mat for a slave pawn, without which the transaction, in the judgment of the Government of Liberia, is " slave dealing ". With or without the token the effect upon the person held, is, of course, the same. A form of contract is given.

Gbowah Compound
Bharzon Dist — 4

May 25th, 1928.

" This is to certify that I Sidi Weah at Gbowah Section have pawned one girl and one boy to Sergeant Johnny Williams until the amount £13.10 thirteen pounds ten shillings sterling which I due him be pay to him *at any time*.

Principal
Sidi Weah

Witness
Moses : S. Weah

Approved

J. C. Phillips
D. C. Coast
District L. F. F.
23, May, 1928 "

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT
Liberian Hinterland

Bharzon Station
August 24, 1928.

" This is to certify that one Mynabe of the Batu Section, District No. 4, did in my presence pledge his daughter by name of Tenny to 1st Sergt. Johnny Williams, for the full and just sum of (£5.0.0.) Five pounds sterling to be redeemed within two weeks from the date the amount was paid, *or at any other time*.

(Signed)
District Commissioner
Acting."

Because of the customary and necessary intermediation of a third person, it is not customary or usual that pawns redeem themselves although in 1923 the President decreed that "pawns may redeem themselves".¹ The stipulation that the pawn must give his consent is further questionable as amelioration of the status, since most of the pawns are children and incapable both under civilized and native law of giving consent.

The relation of the system of pawning as practised in Liberia to the Convention's definition of slavery may be recounted as follows :

(1) The person pawned cannot be redeemed except through the intermediation of a third party.

(2) All the labour of the person pawned belongs to the holder of the pawn.

(3) The duration of the contract is indefinite.

(4) In practice it is impossible for a person pawned to redeem himself.

(5) The only distinction between pawning and slave dealing, in the view of the government itself, is the passing of a token.

(6) Holders may have female pawns to wife.

(7) The price of a pawn is the price of a slave.

(8) If a pawn run away or die the holder is entitled to the money given for him, or the replacing of the pawn.

(9) A pawn may be repawned by the holder.

(10) If a woman in pawn is taken to wife by any other than the holder of the pawn such holder is entitled to compensation of £3.0.0.

In practice, persons may be sold under the guise of pawning by the simple secret agreement that the pawn will never be redeemed. It has been competently testified before the Commission that when the natives who require slaves as a part of their social economy learned that the Government did not recognize slavery, the form of transfer was changed without affecting the result of the deal. Later tribal pawning lessens the chance of redemption. Instances are noted of persons remaining in pawn for a period of 10, 40 years and for a life time. A pawned woman was presented to the Commissioners at Kakata who had been held in pawn for six years for the sum of £1.0.0., repawned by the holder and unable to secure her release. One of the Commissioners was presented with a case of a man of forty who had been pawned as a child, the pawner dead and no hope of redemption remaining for him.

Direct evidence of the current practice of pawning and of its effects, if required, may be drawn from the following sworn instances :

(a) Jadgua, a headman from Kanga, living near Royesville, fined £18.0.2 for road delinquencies, pawned his *wife and child* for £7.0.0 to one Kankawah. They have been in pawn five years without prospect of redemption.²

(b) Johnny Carr, town chief of Bengonow, fined £17.12.6 for road delinquencies, pawned his son to one Kamapu, and a coffee farm, two years ago without prospect of redemption.³

(c) Varnai Quai, a headman from Baimeh, fined for road delinquencies and for failure to provide carriers, £17.5.0., pawned two sons for £8.0.0 and £7.0.0 respectively to one Karpali in Weiyo two years ago without much prospect of redemption.⁴

(d) Jallah, of Teh Section, fined £5.0.0 for road delinquencies, pawned his son to one Mr. Law, an Americo-Liberian for £5.0.0., two years and four months from April 21, 1930. The boy ran away after four months, and court costs for returning him increased his redemption fee by £7.13.0. For each day the boy was away the court decided he had to pay to the holder one shilling.⁵

(e) Varnie, from Teh Section, fined £14.0.0 for road delinquencies, pawned his sister to one Vombo in Zodie for £3.0.0. She has been a pawn for two years.⁶

¹ See Departmental Regulations, page 5.

² A 160 Testimony of Jadgua before the Commission in Monrovia April 25th, 1930.

³ Testimony of Johnny Carr before the Commission in Monrovia April 25th, 1930.

⁴ Testimony of Varnai Quai before the Commission in Monrovia, April 22nd, 1930.

⁵ Testimony of Jallah before the Commission in Monrovia, April 21st, 1930.

⁶ Testimony of Varnie before the Commission in Monrovia, April 21st, 1930.

(f) Judge Witherspoon when County Attorney in Sinoe County acknowledged to having released 14 pawned children at Nana Kru by writ. ¹

(g) Paramount Chief Nyola of Sengbeh pawned his child to pay fine of £20.0.0 imposed by President King. ²

(h) Ten town chiefs and headmen of Sengbeh pawned their children to pay fine of \$412.00 for road delinquencies. ³

(i) Chief Yarkpazeur, town chief of Boporo, fined \$317.00, testified to pawning to secure money for fines and taxes. ⁴

(j) A town chief in the Kakata Section, testified to pawning his children and others of his people pawning their children to pay fines.

(k) A witness, before the Commission at Kakata, testified to having pawned his child for tax money.

(l) A town chief of Kakata, before the Commission at Kakata testified to his people's placing their children in pawn to Vais to get money for food and fines.

(m) In Bassa County there were frequent citations of pawning, one notable example of which was an abuse of the system for profit involving civilized persons in the following manner: A man will take a number of women in pawn and place them at work on his farm. They, in turn are encouraged to entice young men into intimate relations with them and the young men are immediately seized, fined and made to work out the amount of the fine on the farm.

Again, although Justices of the Peace are appealed to by pawns and if they have served a considerable period and show evidence of cruel treatment are sometimes released on general principles by the Justice, though without the strict support of the law. There have been instances reported, however, of the holder of a pawn turning over a pawn to the Justice of the Peace to pay the cost of court litigation and if the pawn should run away he has recourse to a fine upon the family of the pawn.

A bill introduced by D. Twe to curb the practices of pawning was passed by the House but killed in the Senate in 1928.

B. OPPRESSIVE PRACTICES RESTRICTIVE OF THE FREEDOM OF PERSONS, CONSTITUTING CONDITIONS ANALOGOUS TO SLAVERY AND TENDING TO ACQUIRE THE STATUS OF CLASSIC SLAVERY.

Sinoe.

1. Forcible recruiting and shipment of native labour to Fernando Po from the County of Sinoe, with the aid of Frontier Force soldiers, armed messengers and certain Liberian Government officials proceeded under Samuel Ross of Greenville as late as 1928, when he was appointed Postmaster General of Liberia. After his transfer to the Capital, and as Postmaster General, he continued his recruiting in Monrovia and Montserrado County, sending native boys to Sinoe for transshipment, despite, or in evasion of the law prohibiting exportation of labour out of the country from Montserrado County. There is convincing evidence that forced shipments were made from Sinoe County as early as 1924 when boys were sent down to Mr. Ross by Captain Howard under armed guard, with rice ostensibly for sale, kept under guard until the arrival of the Spanish steamer for Fernando Po and shipped. The incident was reported in that year to the Secretary of the Interior and to the President by P. C. Lemandine, then District Commissioner for Sinoe County, stationed at Sikon. The raiding and forcible recruiting were repeated during the same year until a number estimated as between 600 and 800 had been so delivered. The District Commissioner who protested alleges that he was recalled from his station and eventually relieved of office.

2. Some time between August 1st and September 21st, 1927, Ed. H. Blackett, a Quartermaster for Commissioner Watson of District No. 4, was ordered by D. C. Watson to capture with the aid of soldiers a large number of natives from the towns in his section, secure and deliver them to Mr. Sammy Ross in Greenville, Sinoe. Each native was to carry a hamper of rice to be sold, and, in addition, his own food. Blackett caught 330 men and delivered them to Mr. Ross. They were carried across the river, confined in a special compound reserved for this purpose, and shipped on the S.S. *San Carlos* the following day. The evidence heard by the Commission leaves little doubt of the truth of this incident.

¹ Testimony of Hon. J. J. Witherspoon before the Commission, Monrovia, April 15, 1930.

² Testimony of Chief Nyola before the Commission April 25th, 1930.

³ See testimony before Commission, Monrovia, April 25, 1930.

⁴ Testimony of Chief Yarkpazeur before the Commission.

It is cited by D. Twe, whose boy, Ganta by name, was one of the group tied and carried aboard the *San Carlos* and shipped. A passenger on the *San Carlos*, J. R. D. Padmore, seeking to go ashore at Sinoe was informed by one of the ship's officers that their stop would be only long enough to take on "some labourers for Fernando Po." He observed Ross and the Honorable Phillip F. Simpson, a member of the House of Representatives, with police and these labourers, "some of whom had to be pushed on." Senator Roberts of Sinoe observed these boys en route to the compound of Ross under the escort of soldiers, "two soldiers after every ten boys." Mr. Cass Pelham, a son-in-law of Ross, escorted them on board. Jacob Dennis, employed by Ross as a guard, gave similar testimony to which was added the fact that despite vigilance ten of the boys escaped during the night from the compound. Further witnesses of this fact were Justice Grigsby, of Sinoe, then Superintendent of the County, and Blackett, the Quartermaster who, armed with instructions, captured, tied and brought the boys to Greenville presenting them to Ross.¹

On the 21st of September, 1927, Blackett was again ordered by D. C. Watson to take soldiers and capture as many male natives as he could, not exceeding 250, and deliver them to Sammy Ross for shipment to Fernando Po. Each man was to take one hamper of cleaned rice ostensibly for his rations. Blackett took soldiers and caught 250 men who were in turn delivered to Ross.

Chief Nomeh, of Sikon in Sinoe interior, confirms the visit and forcible capture of his men, stating that Blackett flogged and tied all who refused to go with him and took away about "four boat loads"; and that his people ran into the bush. Later, the chief himself deserted his section and came to live with Mr. James Roberts in Greenville for protection from further raids.²

Senator J. W. Roberts, it happens, encountered Blackett en route with the men and asked "why they were being sent to Fernando Po." Blackett told him that he was only carrying out orders.³

They arrived in Greenville on the 5th of October. Mr. Reginald A. Sherman, then Postmaster General, arrived in Greenville, Sinoe, on the 4th of October on the S.S. *Mesurado* to inspect the local postal service.⁴

The ship was demonstrating the advantages of radio communication with points on the coast. Sammy Ross brought a radiogram to him aboard ship with the request that he forward it, for him, to the Secretary of State. This message asked that Mr. Ross be allowed to send some boys whom he had on hand, by a German steamer instead of the usual Spanish steamer, since there was involved the expense of feeding them.⁵

The message was sent but, on Mr. Sherman's return to shore, a second message was presented by Ross with an offer of £25.0.0 and payment of a back personal debt of £17.0.0 for his approval of the shipment of the boys. Sherman refused and inquired of C. D. Majors, then local Postmaster, the meaning of the bribe. It was explained that the boys were being "forced out of the country".⁶

The impression current was that Ross had powerful influences behind him in Monrovia and any interference would be politically unwise. He had thus not been molested in the former shipments. Postmaster-General Sherman then, in company with C. D. Majors, crossed the river to the compound.⁷

He found these natives closely guarded by soldiers of the Liberian Frontier Force and by armed messengers belonging to District Commissioner Watson. Blackett objected to his interference with "a matter that did not concern him" and referred him to Mr. Ross.⁸

Sherman returned to the S.S. *Mesurado* and sent an indignant radiogram to the Attorney General of Liberia and to Secretary of State Barclay, then acting President in the absence of President King, and received the reply that if the men were being shipped against their will it was *slave trading* and it should be stopped.⁹

The interrupted shipment aroused the interest of Greenville town and many of its leading citizens were led to inquire into the matter and finally to institute court action¹⁰.

¹ See sworn Testimony before Commission sitting in Monrovia, as given by D. Twe, J. R. D. Padmore, Senator Roberts, Jacob Dennis, Justice Grigsby and Ed. Blackett.

² See Nomeh Testimony before the Commission in Monrovia.

³ See Testimony of E. H. Blackett before the Commission in Monrovia, and of Senator Roberts before the Commission in Monrovia.

⁴ See Testimony of Hon. Reginald A. Sherman before the Commission.

⁵ See Sherman Testimony, also (Documents) Radiograms to Secretary of State. (Appendix.)

⁶ See Sherman Testimony; C. D. Majors Testimony.

⁷ Idem.

⁸ See Testimony—Blackett; Bedell; Majors.

⁹ See Radiogram message (Documents); Sherman Testimony; also testimony of Hon. L. A. Grimes, Attorney General, Liberia.

¹⁰ See Hon. J. J. Witherspoon, Testimony.

Talks with the labourers and the actual investigation by County Superintendent Grigsby revealed that the men had been captured and were being forced to leave the country for Fernando Po against their will.¹

One detail on which there was difference of view appears important. It was currently understood that the men, as had been the custom, were sent down by District Commissioner Watson with rice to sell for tax money, and that Blackett connived with Ross to ship them. The contrary, however, appears in the following letter, the signed original of which was presented to the Commission by Blackett :

Interior Department,

Liberian Hinterland.

Tchien H. Q. Dist. No. 4.

September 21, 1927.

Reff : " Instruction "
" Mr. Ed. H. A. Blackett,
District Quarter-Master
District Number Four L. H.

Sir :

You are hereby ordered to proceed immediately with these soldiers, upon the receipt of this letter, by the instruction of the Honourable Commissioner General John W. Cooper, of the Liberian Hinterland, R. L. down to Greenville, Sinoe, with as many men labourers as you possibly can, not exceeding 250, and there deliver them to the Hon. Samuel A. Ross, for the purpose of being shipped to Fernando Po, per orders of his Excellency, the President C. D. B. King : each man is to take with him one hamper of cleaned rice for their ration, and after the shipment, whatever is left you are to sell it out and report the cash here at this office on your return, to assist in paying off the staff.

Fail not : observing the above I remain,

Yours,

Faithfully,

(Sgd) J. B. Watson,
District Commissioner.

P.S. — You are to make a general list of the names of the men shipped, and from each section they are from.

Idem.

Note. — In a special session of the Commission requested by the President he disclaimed having given orders as quoted in the letter, but offered no further suggestion of the spuriousness of the letter.

Question. — That leaves the letter, as far as its immediate source is concerned, as it stands, Mr. President, or do you suggest the spuriousness of the entire letter ?

President King. — No, not the spuriousness, but I have reference to the suggestion of orders of the President. It was not done by my orders at all.

(Testimony of His Excellency, President Charles D. B. King, R. L., July 31, 1930.)

Blackett testified that the rice was sold by him and the money given to Watson. Further, that on the second errand he carried back £47.0.0 from Mr. Ross to D. C. Watson, as his part of the payment for the boys.

An attempt was made to secure an indictment against Blackett solely, but the Grand Jury refused unless Ross was also indicted. The case was pending for the February term of court, 1928, when Ross was appointed Postmaster General to succeed Sherman, the complainant ; Witherspoon, the young County Attorney in charge of the case and Grigsby, the County Superintendent, who investigated the case, were relieved of their offices.² District Commissioner Watson is now stationed in District No. 2 of the Liberian Hinterland.

¹ See Testimony of Associate Justice Grigsby, then County Superintendent of Sinoe, Hon. J. J. Witherspoon, Judge of Circuit Court, Hon. J. N. Lewis, Hon. A. G. Monger, now Superintendent of the County, and of Mr. C. D. Majors, Greenville Postmaster.

² See A 176.

Wedabo.

In the instance of the recruitment and shipment of natives to the island of Fernando Po to be cited there has been deprivation of the liberty of persons not merely through the compulsion of physical violence, involving capture, flogging and tying by soldiers of the Frontier Force and armed messengers ; but through indirect compulsion exercised in excessive fines upon chiefs, intimidation, bribery, extortion, the creating or reviving of old tribal differences over land, together with the exploitation of intimate phases of tribal custom. The Commission feels that to understand this situation properly it is necessary to keep in mind the present remnant authority of chiefs, and particularly, paramount chiefs, over their people, stronger in some sections than in others of course ; the communality of a large amount of the property and earnings of those able to work ; the traditional right, and, frequently, the present power of the chief to levy upon these in the interest of the tribe ; the respect of the tribe for their old people and for tradition itself ; the custom of young men of the Grebo and Kru tribes in the section of Maryland County in question, to seek a period of service on the English Coast as a means of earning dowry money for the purchase of their wives ; the religious significance attached to the augury of the gods, through their medicine men, regarding their safe voyage and return ; and, unfortunately, the ignorance of natives and native chiefs of the technicalities of legal practice in the " civilized " courts in which they so frequently find themselves. The opportunities for exploitation are frequent and in the section in question it appears that few opportunities have been neglected to extract from the natives, through their chiefs, their communal funds, as well as much of their food, rice, fowls and cattle.

The Poo River people are a small tribe wedged in, on the beach, between the Garroway people, who are of Grebo stock, and the beach section of the Wedabo people, also a related group. ¹

There have been, at various times in the past, flares of tribal difference, but some 25 years or more ago they settled their differences and agreed mutually to keep the peace. One condition of this was that the Wedabos, a larger people, might be permitted to pass, unmolested through their country, en route to Cape Palmas, a seaport. In 1908 the peace was confirmed with the legal sanction of the civilized courts and again peace was confirmed in the country fashion known to the tribes. At various times afterwards, however, Wedabo people passing through were set upon, without warning, and killed. The number killed between 1908 and 1923 totalled seven.

Mr. Allen N. Yancy, who was Superintendent of Maryland County from 1920 to 1928 was appealed to at various times by the Wedabo people and, apparently having slight interest then in these tribal bickerings, is reported to have remarked on one occasion : " You Wedabo people are damn fools. When you see people are killing you why don't you do something to them instead of always complaining? " ²

In 1923 a dispute arose between the two tribes over the capture of a fish which eventuated in a tribal fight in which three Poo River people were killed. Frank Harris was then Commissioner of the Kru Coast, stationed at Grand Cess, and, hearing of the affair, summoned Paramount Chief Tuweley Jeh, who had been at his home in Soloken (interior) during the fight, and Togby, and their chiefs and sub-chiefs to the number of sixty. These chiefs were first stripped on the road, tied and flogged. The chiefs were held and Paramount Chief Jeh sent home to collect £100.0.0. This was done. Superintendent Yancy then heard of the matter and ordered the case turned over to him. Commissioner Harris sent out and caught seven Wedabo boys as probable culprits, but without asking the chiefs who were guilty.

On reporting to Superintendent Yancy, Chief Jeh was told he needed lawyers and knowing no Americo-Liberian lawyers in Cape Palmas, Supt. Yancy recommended Senators W. V. S. Tubman and Dossen and County Attorney Dominy Cooper. But lawyers must be paid, so the Superintendent told Jeh to " go back and bring lawyers £100.0.0. " This was done. The matter reached Court and Supt. Yancy said : " This is not enough for lawyers. " Jeh went back to his people with this word and they advised him to borrow the amount required from

¹ These Poo River people are Krus who migrated down the coast in search of land many years ago and probably before the Wedabo tribes settled on the land next to them and to the rear of them. They are related to the Krus above Grand Cess but now speak a dialect which is Kru at the base but employing many Grebo words. The Wedabo beach is used merely as an outlet to the sea and is under Chief Wamplu. The farming country, the largest towns and the capital, Soloken, where the Paramount Chief Tuweley Jeh resides, are one day or two days back in the interior.

² Testimony of Paramount Chief Tuweley Jeh, Wedabo Section. A411. See also decision of His Excellency on " The Matter of the Webado People killing three men of the Poo River People, Rendered at the Executive Mansion, Monrovia, on October 23, 1924. "

the Cavalla River Company. He borrowed £300.0.0 giving the entire amount to Supt. Yancy. The lawyers said: "All right. Case finished." And the Court said: "You are free."

Supt. Yancy then told Chief Jeh: "I am one who set you free. You must give me 'thank you'."

Jeh went home, collected £60.0.0 and sent it to Supt. Yancy by Karpeh, a headman and confidential messenger for the Chief.

The settlement of the case, however, was not satisfactory to the Poo River people and the following year, 1924, they sent a delegation to President King.¹

The President ordered Paramount Chief Jeh to Monrovia and with the Chief went his Sub-Chief Tarplah and his messenger Karpeh. Funds for travel had to be borrowed. Jeh was authorized by the Wedabo people to approach Woodin Company for a loan of £100.0.0. In Cape Palmas he met Supt. Yancy and told him he had been called to Monrovia and would have to borrow £100.0.0 from Woodins. The Superintendent told him: "No. I will borrow it for you." He did this and returned. Instead of giving him the £100.0.0 he deducted £40.0.0 more for Senator Tubman who had served as lawyer, £25.0.0 for John Delaney who had served as interpreter, and of the original amount handed to Jeh £20.0.0. Jeh proceeded to Monrovia.

According to the testimony of Jeh the President then said: "Jeh, stand up. Poo River people say you are killing them."

Jeh replied: "True. Yes. Poo River people kill us—seven people. So I kill these two people. But not one man. A crowd beat them to death."

The President then told him that was why he had called him to Monrovia and that he would detain him there until Tarplah and Karpeh went back to the Wedabo people and collected an executive fine of £300.0.0 imposed for his release. Jeh instructed Tarplah and Karpeh to go home, call the people together and get their permission to try to borrow it from the white traders of Cape Palmas.²

The actual decision of the President, after naming John Delaney as interpreter and rehearing the case and finding the Wedabo people guilty of the double crime of retaliating with murder for murder, and of killing the messengers sent to them, was as follows:

"(1) The Wedabo people must produce the persons who killed the three men of the Poo River Tribe.

"(2) That the Wedabo people also pay, for allowing the act to be committed in their towns, a fine of *Three Hundred Pounds Sterling*.

"(3) That on failure to produce the men who killed the persons in question by the Wedabo people, their towns on the beach in which the act was committed will be broken up by the Government and their inhabitants sent back into the interior to some spot selected by the government. This cogeny (sic) will happen if after the expiration of *two months* the parties are not produced who killed the three Poo River people.

"The Government will hold the Paramount Chief of the Wedabo people up here until the persons who killed the Poo River people have been produced. If these people are not produced within 20 years, 40 years, or indefinitely, he will remain in the hands of the Government for such a period of time; but if they find the persons within two months or so, he will be set at liberty. It must be understood that whether or not the persons are produced, the fine of Three Hundred Pounds is to be paid by the Wedabo tribe; but they must produce the people, the Paramount Chief remaining here until they are produced, and that failing the production, the towns on the beach will be destroyed."³

Karpeh and Tarplah reached Cape Palmas with the instructions of Jeh and were met by Supt. Yancy who asked and was told the result of the Monrovia hearing. He advised them that since they had no sure credit in Cape Palmas they let him advance the money and in return let him have a number of men for Fernando Po. The messengers protested that they were not the Chief and could only carry out the Chief's orders, and they proceeded to their country. Then Supt. Yancy called a meeting of all the chiefs of the Wedabo Country at Wedabo Beach, and placed the matter again before them. Chief Martin of Gbanken spoke up saying that Karpeh had given the message to them about Fernando Po but that they would get the money otherwise. Supt. Yancy then is reported to have said: "If I say you will go there, you will go. The people seem to agree. If you dissuade them I will make your town pay the full £300.0.0 for Jeh's release and in addition a fine of £200.0.0." Thereafter Chief Martin was silent, and when the other Chiefs remarked "This Fernando Po, we don't want to go there. We will pay," Martin said, "You must consent to go." And they agreed. Then Supt. Yancy said simply, "I want 500 men."

Chief Wamplu of Wedabo Beach Town said, "Finished. But Poo River is closed because of our difficulty, so we can't get them to Cape Palmas to ship."

¹ See Documents Appendices IX and XI.

² Testimony of Paramount Chief Jeh.

³ See Decision of His Excellency, the President of Liberia, in the "Matter of the Wedabo People, etc."

Supt. Yancy promised to bring a ship to Wedabo Beach, which was not and never had been a port of call.

The Spanish ship *Montserrat* reached Wedabo Beach at 12 o'clock on December 8th and on board were Supt. Yancy, P. C. Parker, Spanish Vice Consul, Mr. John Myers Scott, and one other Liberian whose name was not recalled, who had come up from Cape Palmas on the special trip. The men were not on hand. Supt. Yancy was impatient. "If they are not here by seven o'clock I'll burn these two towns." The people were frightened and as hostages they went aboard the ship to stay until the men were delivered. During the night they sent messengers to the interior begging the boys to come to save their towns from being destroyed and at daybreak 316 of the 500 who had been recruited from all the towns of the Wedabos, while Jeh was still a prisoner in Monrovia, were marched down to the beach.

Note. — Verification of this incident is to be found in the original of a letter sent by the Superintendent of the County to the Secretary of State under the date of December 8, 1924, which reads in part as follows :

"I take pleasure to inform you that the Spanish Steamer "*Montserrat*" arrived here in Port about 4 o'clock on the inst. and after shipping 80 boys from this Port we proceed to Weddabo at 6.30 a.m. next day going at half speed arrived Wedabo at 12 o'clock Noon, and laid over till next morning by the request of the Chieftain and took on board 316 boys, there was about 200 more to be shipped but the Captain would not wait to take them and left at 12 o'clock Noon. The balance of the boys will be shipped from this Port, (*i.e.* I mean those from that point particularly.)"

The ship sailed. Arrived at Fernando Po, the Liberian Consul, Mr. Gabriel Johnson, turned the boys over to the "Curador" and they were divided among the plantations.

When the £300.0.0 had been paid and the 500 men had gone, the President said to Jeh, "Go home now. But the people who killed Poo River People you must have given to Supt. Yancy when you get home."

When Jeh returned he found his towns empty and his women weeping and asked what grief had come to them. They told him of the shipment of 500 of their men and boys and that Supt. Yancy had demanded 200 more.¹

Jeh said, "They can not go. It will destroy our country."

According to President King's instructions he ordered three men sent to Supt. Yancy for punishment. The men were carried by Supt. Yancy to his private farm in Webbo and placed at work.

When Supt. Yancy heard that Jeh was refusing to send the 200 additional men he became vexed, and sent a large company of soldiers under John Delaney to rebuke his impertinence and to take the men.

Leaving Cape Palmas at the South, they did not attack the first Wedabo towns but marched through until the last town had been reached and suddenly fell upon the town of Julucan.²

They caught 12 of the old men of the town, flogged and tied them, killed three cows and three goats for their "chop" and demanded £10.0.0. They marched the old men to Soloken.³

At Soloken John Delaney and 12 soldiers called for the Chief. The town had been so stripped of young men in the first lot there was little to demand. He thereupon caught two of the elders, the town chief, tying and flogging them, called for three bags of rice, one goat and £5.0.0 sterling and departed with the hostages, stopping next at Jalatuen.⁴

Here they demanded young men, and "went flogging men, women and children" indiscriminately. The people ran into the bush. Finding no young men they caught and secured 12 of the old men of the town; demanded and received one bag of rice, one cow, three goats and £10.0.0 sterling for their food. From Jalatuen the procession moved on to Gbanken.⁵

It was midnight and rain had been falling. Soldiers surprised the Chief and the town people of Gbanken by dragging them from their huts, throwing them to the ground and flogging them with whips.

Chief Martin asked: "What be this matter? Ve Fernando Po palava? The first men gone, 500. Why you no let me know you come for more?"

They caught 15 old men, took three goats, one bullock, two bags of rice and £17.0.0.

The long procession then left the country going by way of Wedabo Beach to Garroway thence to Harper. The old men and the chiefs were flogged during the march. As added punishment they were forced to carry a goat in their outstretched arms and forbidden to put the animal either on their heads or shoulders.⁶

¹ See Jeh Document and Testimony.

² See Testimony of Chief Toklah of Julucan.

³ See Testimony of Chief Key of Soloken.

⁴ See Testimony of Chief Zibo of Jalatuen.

⁵ See Testimony of Chief Martin of Gbanken.

⁶ See Testimony of M'Vlen M'Clen, young hereditary chief, headman of Jalatuen. Testimony of Ple and N'Yenpan.

The hostages were delivered to Supt. Yancy in Harper, and at first placed in jail for detention until the 200 young men were delivered. While they were being held, Chief Zibo's son, a young man, came to the Superintendent and said that there were not 200 young men left in the towns and that the holding of their old men was useless. He was placed in confinement with the old men.¹

Later these old men were removed to Supt. Yancy's farm at Webbo and set to cleaning coffee and cassava, carrying sticks and making lines for his rubber trees. Messengers were sent to their homes for their food. They remained at this about two months when the full 200 young men surrendered thinking that the respected elders of the town might be released. Then Superintendent Yancy approached Zibo's son saying : " You said there were no more young men. You see you have 200. Just for this I am going to send you to Fernando Po as headman over these men." The 200 were shipped. Of the original 700 many died ; others returned, but with very little money.

Wedabo Beach, Jalatuen, Soloken, Jalatah and Kordor of the Wedabo Section were visited by the American Commissioner. In Soloken the Bigtown with the aid of civilized native interpreters each of the 405 huts of the town was entered, the families counted, and other pertinent information secured.²

The once fairly populous town now has a total of 651 inhabitants with thirty per cent more females than males. That is, for every 100 males, there were 130 females, and for the active ages, 20-40, there were 150 females for every 100 males. Most important, it seems, of the families remaining there 91 of their men and boys had either died at Fernando Po, or for some other reason failed to return or communicate with the tribe. Of those who returned two were ill and one insane. The town Kordor, which is about two hours' walk from Soloken, was visited and photographed. Forty-one huts were inhabited at the time of the Fernando Po demands. All are deserted now, the town site overgrown with weeds and tough vines, the thatched roofs and mud covered sides crumbling in. It is a scene of desolation. The site of the town of Jalatah was also visited and photographed. All that remains to identify it is a breadfruit tree. The houses have been torn down and during the past five years the site has been used as a rice farm. The Wedabo people, however, have been compelled to pay £60.0.0 annually as taxes upon the huts that formerly stood there, and still are required to pay these hut taxes.

The Traffic in Boys.

In 1928 Supt. Yancy was made Vice President of Liberia. Calling another meeting of chiefs at Wedabo Beach he said to them : " I have just returned from Monrovia and I have an order from the President that each Paramount Chief must furnish me men for Fernando Po. From each Paramount Chief here I want 60 men. If he refuses, then for each man less than 60 he must pay £10.0.0. If he does not pay and does not send men, I will send soldiers to destroy his town. Whoever doubts that I make this demand on the authority of the President can go to Monrovia and ask if what I say is true or not. Then he will find out from the President himself".³

One Chief said : " Since we begin we never see this thing. If anybody wants to go to Gold Coast they go themselves ; never they sent by force."

And another said, " This Fernando Po since we here we no go. But Wedabo people you took them there to punish them ; plenty you send ; 140 die there. What we done that you send us too ? " ⁴

Jack Jarraca⁵ of Grand Cess, whose Paramount Chief's commission had been given to him by Mr. Yancy after extracting £600.0.0 from the town leaders who opposed him as unfit, then spoke thus, " Since you have been instructed by the President, no one will refuse. Since the President has ordered it, it will be carried out." ⁶

And Paramount Chief Jury of Picannini Cess spoke, " Mr. Yancy, we are building road without pay or feeding ; we pay taxes without receiving any commission. We are bearing this kind of condition because here is our country, and yet the President say we must go to Fernando Po. How can this be done ? We can not send people to Fernando Po and to the road. Where we got such an amount of people ? " ⁷

However, Paramount Chief Broh of Frenropo, sent two messengers to President King to inquire if he had given such word to the Vice President⁸. These messengers were Solomon N'Yepan and Nyantenee. The messengers reached Monrovia and sought counsel of relatives living in Kru Town.⁹ Jim Doe and Karpeh, a former Governor of Kru Town, carried them first to the Secretary of the Interior and later to the President.¹⁰

¹ See Testimony of Chief Zibo.

² See Special Memorandum on Native Villages.

³ See Testimony of Chief Nimley of Grand Cess, Paramount Chief Broh of Frenropo, Paramount Chief Jury of Picannini Cess, Paramount Chief Nyan (Yarn) of Suehn, Paramount Chief Jeh of Wedabo.

⁴ See Testimony of Paramount Chief Nyan (Yarn) of Suehn.

⁵ See Testimony Grand Cess.

⁶ See Testimony of D. D. Twegby, Speaker for Paramount Chief Jack Jarraca of Grand Cess.

⁷ See Testimony of Paramount Chief Jury, also Testimony of Chief Nimley of Grand Cess.

⁸ See Testimony : Paramount Chief Broh, Paramount Chief Jury, Paramount Chief Nimley, Paramount Chief Nyan (Yarn), Paramount Chief Jeh.

⁹ See Testimony of Karpeh, Governor of Kru Town.

¹⁰ See Testimony of Jim Doe, Monrovia Sitings ; Testimony of Karpeh, Monrovia Sitings.

The President warned them of the gravity of the charges, disclaimed any such order as was reported, and sent back for further confirmation. When word reached Cape Palmas that Chief Broh's messengers had returned from Monrovia with word that the President disclaimed the charges, there was great relief. Promptly, however, Supt. Brooks of Maryland County, Senator W. V. S. Tubman and the Honourable McBorough went to Picannini Cess and inquired of Broh whether or not and why he had sent messengers to the President. He was seized, arrested and placed on the steam launch for Cape Palmas. At Grand Cess the party went ashore to sleep leaving Chief Broh aboard alone. During the night a rough sea upset the launch, and washed it upon the bank; Chief Broh remained upon a rock until morning. At Cape Palmas, he was made a prisoner in the house of Supt. Brooks, and, thus detained, was guarded by a group of Frontier Force soldiers, while others proceeded to his country where they arrested forty men.¹ They tied the men with sticks behind their legs, flogged men and women indiscriminately, killed domestic animals and destroyed Broh's commission from the President as Paramount Chief.²

The soldiers proceeded to the town of the Chiefs of Suehn, Topo, Baropo, and Wedabo. These Paramount Chiefs were placed in confinement with Broh. At Suehn and Wedabo they came during the night, tying and flogging men and women, and helping themselves to rice and fowls.³

Not only did they kill four cows for chop but Captain Phillips demanded and got "rum money" amounting to £40.0.0. Of the 12 men captured at Suehn one of them, Wyley Cojah, died from the beating by the soldiers.

All were then removed to Vice President Yancy's farm and the chiefs flogged in the presence of their people. Broh was accused of making fools of the other chiefs by his action and all were fined:

Frenropo	£200.0.0
Kpalagbo	394.0.0
Topo	100.0.0
Suehn	100.0.0

These fines were paid⁴

From the ill treatment by soldiers on this mission these men from Broh's section died: Mandoo, Keke, Doyalah and Nimini.

While the chiefs were in prison a part of the Baropo people under Speaker Bellor went to the Vice President, and in turn received favorable consideration on a long standing land dispute. Bellor states⁵ that he paid over £500.0.0.

Question. — Has there been recently any palaver between your people and other people?

Bellor. — True. So big palava Frenropo. No sit down one place now. No 'gree with each other.

Question. — Is that on a land matter?

Bellor. — Yes, sir.

Question. — Has the Government settled that yet?

Bellor. — Mr. Brooks and Mr. Yancy were there and settled it.

Question. — Was it settled to the satisfaction of the people?

Bellor. — As people judged now, satisfied.

Question. — Did your people pay any money in connection with the settlement of the case?

Bellor. — Yes.

Question. — How much?

Bellor. — Because cannot count exactly money, but from beginning of that palava over £500.0.0. Man from Cape Palmas say Government find no small paper for we for money we pay (receipt).

Question. — To whom did you pay money?

Bellor. — Pay Mr. Brooks."

¹ See statement of complaint of Chief Broh to President King.

² *Idem.*

³ See Testimony of Chief Nyan (Yarn) of Suehn.

⁴ See Testimony of Paramount Chief Broh, Jury, Gofa and Statement of complaint made to the President by Broh, Jury, Gofa, Appendices X and XII.

⁵ See Bellor Testimony A 405.

On the release of Broh he went personally with certain other chiefs to Monrovia to complain to the President, arriving while the President was attending the 1929 Kakata Conference. On his return the charges were repeated in the presence of Vice President Yancy. They received no judgment but were told to return to Maryland and the Secretary of the Interior would come to investigate. While the chiefs were away, however, soldiers were sent to their towns. In Chief Jury's town they caught and tied men and women, including Jury's wife, and carried some of them to Cape Palmas.¹

In the Topo country they demanded 5 bags of rice for the soldiers and a cow for the Captain which he carried home. Speaker Boryono Doco acting in the absence of Gofa describes what happened further :

" After this he (Lieutenant Phillips) dismissed us ; he said he was going in to bathe and see about chop and ordered us to return to his quarters two o'clock after breakfast. At the appointed time all the men of the town gathered in front of the zinc house he occupied, he ordered his soldiers to surround us on all sides ; and when he was satisfied that all of the men were completely surrounded, he put this question to us ; ' Where is your Paramount Chief Gofa ? ' I arose and answered him that Gofa went to Monrovia. He asked me, ' What is your name ? ' I said to him, ' My name is Boryono Doco.' Lieutenant Phillips then said he liked the man who would tell the truth. He raised his big rubber whip and began to flog me as hard as he could and when he was tired, he ordered the soldiers to throw me down. The soldiers seized me, threw me down and began to beat me. After this severe beating, the soldiers put my foot between two pieces of hard wood and then tied the ends of the stick together, the tighter the ropes were drawn, the more the stick pressed into my flesh. I suffered awfully from this cruel treatment, the scar of the sore cut into my flesh by one of the sticks is right on my foot and I can show it to any person. I am not the only one who was flogged. The soldiers jumped into the crowd and beat the other men right and left and tied as many as they could and put them through the same torture. Afterward the Lieutenant put all of us into one house and locked us up at sunset. Yanfor and Magbe, the two oldest men of the tribe who are even older than Paramount Chief Gofa, were amongst the crowd ; in fact, the two men are owners of the country. We did not want them to sleep in confinement, so we went to Lieut. Phillips and begged him to release them. He asked us to give him £10 if we did not want the old men to sleep in the guard house. The people gave Chief Gofa's speaker, M'ma Doe, £10 for the old men's release and he paid the money to Lieut. Phillips. Upon the receipt of the £10.0.0 he released the two men.

" After the release of the old men who are in the guard house are 24 men. On the following morning when Lieut. Phillips and the soldiers were about to take us all to Harper as prisoners the people begged him to release me, they pointed out to him that being sick from the results of the severe flogging from his soldiers and himself, I might die on the way if he carried me to Harper, because the soldiers were most liable to beat me again on the journey. He agreed to release me, but asked the people to take me out of his hands, that is, they must bring something to pay for my release. They gave him £4 but he refused to accept it, and demanded a cow, and said that he would carry me if it is not forthcoming. On hearing this the women began to cry and there was a great cry in the town. My family caught a grown cow with young one and gave it to Lieut. Phillips and I was released.

" He took the remaining 23 persons and moved off to Harper. The Lieutenant reached Harper very late in the night and gave the men to Vice President Yancy who sent them to his farm just before daybreak the next morning. The men were so severely flogged by the soldiers on the two day journey from out town to Harper that one of them Kohkoh Jehleh by name, died from the effect of the beating two days after they reached the prison house at the Vice President's farm.

" When the news of Jehleh's death reached us, my people, the Topo tribe, sent M'ma Doe as a special messenger to Vice President Yancy to find out what was the reason for the arrest of the men Lieut. Phillips took to Harper and treated so cruelly that one was killed by beating. He said he sent and arrested the men because Paramount Chief Gofa of the Topo tribe went to Monrovia to report him to the President and he would not release the remaining 22 men unless we sent him £100. We collected the £100 and gave it to the same M'ma Doe and Gebo Chea, and the two men carried the money and paid it to the Vice President. After the receipt of this money, he said to the two men, ' I see this £100. I accept this amount as a fine for your Paramount Chief going to Monrovia to report me, but I like to know what got in the heads of your big men to allow Gofa to go to Monrovia. For this reason you must go and tell your people to send me another £100, before I release the prisoners.' The two messengers returned to us with the news of the additional demand for money. We collected the second £100.0.0 and sent it to the Vice President by the same messengers. They paid the money to him and he released the men and sent them home by our messengers."

¹ Testimony of Chief Jury A 400.

The Commissioners found over a wide area, and in the testimony, direct and indirect, involving several thousand natives, convincing corroboration of details of the incidents as narrated herein from many sources. It seems improbable that the Secretary of the Interior could have discovered any different situation.

It is significant that the fear which controls the Chiefs and their subjects, from whom these drafts have been made for Fernando Po and Libreville, and the sadness, were found to have been registered in the songs of the people.¹

The Pressure of Fines.

The Wedabo Beach incident narrated serves the Commission as an example of the use of governmental authority in a manner not distinguishable to the native, from the Government itself. Exploitation of the tribal relationship of natives to their chiefs has been a most effective means of getting the semblance of consent to shipment, throwing the burden of force upon the chief. When the chiefs have resisted as in the case cited they can be urged to terms by the gradual process of impoverishment of the whole of the people. The effect upon the liberty of the men is the same, whether the deprivation of this liberty comes directly from without or indirectly from within. The fines extorted from the chiefs concerned in the Wedabo Beach resistance to the attempt to get men, have been drawn from the related experiences of the chiefs and appear as follows :

Paramount Chief Jeh.

Initial fine imposed by President King	£300.0.0
Paid to the District Commissioner at Grand Cess	100.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy for 3 lawyers (Tubman, Cooper & Dossen)	100.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy for above lawyers	300.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy at temporary settlement of case	60.0.0
Paid through Sub-Chiefs to Supt. Brooks	14.0.0
Paid to Lt. Phillips by Sub-Chief	1.0.0
Paid by Sub-Chief Martin to Lt. Phillips	10.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy by Paramount Chief Jeh	5.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy by Paramount Chief Jeh	20.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy by Paramount Chief Jeh	40.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy by Paramount Chief Jeh	40.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy by Paramount Sub-Chief Zibo	8.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy by Paramount Sub-Chief Zibo	50.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy by Paramount Chief Martin	60.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy for release of Jeh by Wedabo people	140.0.0
Total Cash	£1,248.0.0
Less executive fine	300.0.0
	£948.0.0

Cattle and rice demanded by soldiers on raids amounted to seven cows, one goat and three bags of rice.

¹ One such song recorded upon a small phonograph record-apparatus, without investigational design, turned out on translation to be—"The Sad Song of the Wedabo Women"

We were here when trouble come to our people ;
 For this trouble Jeh was imprisoned and fined.
 For this reason Yancy came to our country—
 He caught our husbands and our brothers,
 Sail them to 'Nana Poo
 And there they die !
 And there they die !
 Tell us
 Yancy, why ?
 Yancy, why ?
 Wedabo women have no husbands,
 Yancy, why ?
 Wedabo women have no brothers,
 Yancy, why ?
 Mothers, fathers, sons have died,
 Waiting for the return
 Yancy, why ?
 etc., etc.

The song goes on, calling the names of boys long away ; saying " We cannot blame you that you did not die gloriously in war. If you had died in war in the rule of Jeh, he would be responsible. A ruler is responsible if they die in war. But they were stolen away from Jeh. They were stolen away from their people and have never returned. Yancy, why ?—etc.

Chief Yarn of Suehn.

Paid to Lt. Phillips on his threat to burn town.	£40.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy for releasing old men captured for Chief's refusal to send men to Fernando Po	100.0.0
Paid Mr. Yancy to release men on road to work their farms	80.0.0
Total	<u>£220.0.0</u>

Cattle taken in raids by Lt. Phillips were three cows and nine goats.

Chief Gofa of Topo.

Paid to Lt. Phillips by Gofa's Speaker	£10.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy for releasing 22 men held in punishment for refusing Fernando Po boys	100.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy—a second sum for releasing 22 men held in punishment for refusing Fernando Po boys	100.0.0
Paid to Mr. Yancy to have men released from road during farming season	80.0.0
Total	<u>£290.0.0</u>

In addition five bags of rice and one cow.

Chief Broh of Frenropo.

Paid to Mr. Yancy as fine for sending to President King regarding Fernando Po demands	£200.0.0
Paid to Supt. Brooks for motor launch sent to arrest him for sending messengers to Monrovia	72.10.0
Paid to Senator Tubman on case which never reached Court	110.0.0
Paid to Supt. Brooks for his expenses to Grand Cess	25.0.0
Paid to defray expenses of a Commission sent to inquire into tribal dispute	75.0.0
Total	<u>£482.10.0</u>

The total of these sums paid by four chiefs was £1,940.10.0 (or over \$9,500.00) exclusive of cattle, of incidental fines of other chiefs in the same connection, and of the large fines of these four mentioned strictly on the land issue, which in its present unsettled state remains as a potential source of further fines.

Raiding of Villages for Men.

(a) In 1927 Superintendent Yancy demanded 100 boys from the Barrabo Section for Fernando Po. He gave the order to District Commissioner Scott. The Commissioner gave the order in turn to the Paramount Chief. The Chief, objecting, delayed and soldiers were sent to catch them. The men ran to the bush.

It is not unusual for men to go down the coast to work on steamers and even in certain of the British Colonies. Treatment has been considerate and pay good, although much of it has been abstracted on their return through legal customs, charges and illegal charges imposed by wharfingers, amounting to 100% of the value of their goods, and frequently more. However, the boys do not go haphazardly even to work on the boats. It is a country custom for them to consult the oracles through their medicine men. If favorable, they leave quietly and voluntarily; if unfavorable they await another occasion. The open demands, however, called for men whether the gods willed or not.

When the soldiers came to Barrabo, the Paramount Chief, afraid, said, "I am trying." Soldiers said: "We'll get them for you." They caught and secured old men, women and children. The young men in the bush when they heard, surrendered rather than have the elders carried off or further abused. The group which left in 1927 had not been returned in 1930 when the section was visited¹.

¹ See Testimony of Chiefs of Barrabo. A 436-7.

(b) Soldiers were sent into Tareyteybeylu in March 1929, at night to capture men for Fernando Po. They terrorized the town and caught ten boys carrying them off to Webbo. They flogged the chief, tied and imprisoned him. The headman who asked why he was being forced to Fernando Po was flogged severely and fined £6.0.0 to get his liberty.

(c) In 1929 Mr. Yancy visited Manohlu, and asked for boys for Fernando Po. They were refused. Commissioner Proud then came and caught 20 boys with the aid of soldiers and imprisoned the chief. While they were searching the town some of the boys ran off. Others together with the women were weeping. He improvised a prison from a house holding the boys until he had caught a sufficient number. And they were marched off to town, with their hands tied behind their backs. They were held in Cape Palmas for about a week and placed aboard a Spanish Steamer for Fernando Po.¹

(d) A Frontier Force bugler, Robert, testified before the Commission in Monrovia that, following an order to Captain Whisnant of the Liberian Frontier Force for 20 men, he with other soldiers captured the required number and delivered them to Mr. Yancy. "Those who did not want to go to the coast were put in a guard house in Harper and those who wanted to go were shipped. He sent those back who did not want to go."²

(e) The following sworn testimony was given to the Commission in session in Monrovia by Victor Cooper of Cape Palmas, a surveyor :

"This very month April (1929) I returned to Cape Palmas. After my arrival I asked for Chief Broh. I heard that he was in jail at the Superintendent's (Brooks') home. A week or so later, one evening at about 6.30 to 7 p.m., I saw a large crowd on Water Street. I then went to the crowd to see what was happening. There I saw men lined up in rows of twos as fast as they were crossed from Puduke to Harper City by the Liberian Frontier Force under command of Lt. Phillips. After they had all been crossed they were counted and they were about 300 in number. It was a pitiful sight ; these men had been walking all day and all night without eating and flogged at the same time. It was late in the night when they finished crossing. Some were carried in the Masonic Hall to sleep and some to Mr. Yancy's compound.

"The next day these men were missing out of the town. Enquiring for them I was told that they were carried before day that morning to Mr. Yancy's farm. I was anxious to go out to his farm to see these people as I had great interest in them and also in sympathy. I was then advised not to go, and that even if I were to go I would not be permitted to see them or witness the investigation. With that I stayed."

(f) In 1928, after the appeals of the men against forcing boys to Fernando Po had proved unsuccessful, a group of several hundred women marched down to Cape Palmas to petition Vice President not to send away their husbands and brothers. They ranged helplessly about the town ; made their petition but without avail, and returned to their homes disheartened. The visit of the women was generally known, remarked by several persons of importance in Cape Palmas before the Commissioners, and by one in particular of good reputation and a former high official of the Government, to whom these women made appeal for the help of his influence. It was further admitted by Mr. Collins, one of the recruiting agents for Mr. Yancy, who was, however, disposed to disparage the importance of the incident.

(g) Kuia, a Grebo native from Biabo (Maryland County), arriving in Monrovia from Fernando Po during the sitting of the Commission (July 1930) appeared and under oath testified that in March 1929, soldiers came to his town Suke, under Paramount Chief Kassa, at night, knocking at doors and capturing and tying all men and women occupants. The town was terrorized. Many of the men escaped to the bush, but were spirited back when they learned that their wives were being held. They were then marched to Cape Palmas, without food or adequate clothing and delivered to Mr. Yancy. They were told that if they tried to escape their town would be burned. Mr. Yancy placed a large number of them in a big house where they awaited the arrival of the steamer.

Question. — What was the name of the man who caught you ?

Kuia. — It was in night. Dark. Came out scared. Grab me. Couldn't ask his name.

Question. — Were they soldiers ?

Kuia. — Yes—soldiers.

Question. — What did they do ?

Kuia. — Took me to Cape Palmas, so to carry me to Fernando Po. Mr. Yancy put me in a big house and say if any of you go, burn your country.

Question. — Did Mr. Yancy ask if you wanted to go or not ?

Kuia. — He didn't ask. Simply count number and then make law, go to Fernando Po.

Question. — When Mr. Yancy locked you in the house before he sent you to the steamer, did he carry you before any Government official ?

¹ See Testimony of Chief Hoto of Manohlu. A 369.

² See Testimony of Robert. A 81.

Kuia. — No.

Question. — Did Mr. Yancy tell you the Government caught you ?

Kuia. — Mr. Yancy said it was instruction of the Government.

He had worked in Fernando Po fourteen months and brought back a slip for payment of £1.12.3.

Curaduria Colonial

Fernando Po

El bracero *Kuya*..... natural de *Monrovia*, percibira' a su desembarco en la Republica de Liberia la cantidad de Libras 1-12-3 importe de la liquidacion de su contrato num..... de..... de..... 192.. que le sera entregada por el Capitan del Vapor *Legazzi* (or *Legazpi*).

Liquidacion pesetas 76,25
Tipo de cambia 1/4 (?)
Fraccion pagada a mano
Liquido Libras -£1,12,3.

{ Stamp
of
Seal }

El curador colonial
(Signed)

(Translation)

Colonial Protectorate

Fernando Po

The labourer *Kuya*..... native of *Monrovia*, will collect upon his disembarking in the republic of Liberia the sum of Pounds sterling 1.12.3—amount of settlement of his contract no..... of....., 192., which will be handed over to him by the Captain of the S.S. *LEGAZZI* (or *Legazpi*)

Santa Isabel, June 14, 1930.

Settlement—pesetas 76'25
Standard exchange 1/4 (?)
Part paid in hand
Settlement £1.12.3.

{ Stamp
of
Seal }

The Colonial Governor
(Signed)

(h) Paramount Chief Choami of Kronroke testified that he had been sent for by the District Commissioner and told that he had been required to demand boys for Fernando Po. The Commissioner admitted that in his first talk to the chiefs he had advised against allowing men to be taken to Fernando Po, his reason being, apart from the objection to the Island, that he was trying to introduce a communal planting scheme designed to bolster up the products of the area, but that he had received such a strong letter from the central Government that chiefs would be dealt with upon refusal. The chief objected and he was placed under guard. Fifty men were asked for but forty would be accepted. Because of the number of boys on the road work he was unable to find the number. After an hour in the guard room he was brought out again and asked for the boys. Still refusing the Commissioner threatened to send soldiers to get them. He requested permission to return with his counsellors and try to get them himself. He was released but two soldiers were sent with him. When his people saw the soldiers they ran to the bush. The soldiers then caught women, tied them and held them until morning. The chief sent his messengers for the men but only the old ones and several sub-chiefs returned. They were carried to the D. C.'s compound. The women were then sent for. The remainder is quoted from the statement of Chief Choami.

“ The chiefs and the old men said to the District Commissioner, ‘ Is it possible for us to leave our wives and children to go to Fernando Po ? Fernando Po is not a very good place to be ; people die there frequently. If you want us to work on the road, or at Firestone’s we will go, but not to Fernando Po.’

“ ‘ But you have to go to Fernando Po. You did not give young men therefore you will have to go.’

“ Then the old men said, ‘ Let us go and see if we can catch our young men, but Fernando Po is a place where men die often and we do not want to go.’

“ Then he said, ‘ If you all do not want to go then the Chief of every town must stay until men are found.’ Therefore chiefs returned to the guard room while the old men went to look for boys. When he was coming out he met all the women who had been coming toward Nyaaake to meet him, the king.

“ The women said, ‘ Since you left us yesterday, they put us in a small house and if you had to go to the call of nature you had to be held by soldiers.’

“ The Chief said, ‘ Let the women go. ’

“ Soldiers said, ‘ No. The D. C.’s orders must be obeyed. ’

“ So he returned to the District Commissioner and said, ‘ I go look for men and see how soldiers treat our women. ’

“ He said, ‘ Well, if you don’t want to go to Fernando Po, you will be treated so. Tell the women to get their husbands from the bush or they will have to go. ’

“ They said, ‘ All right. We will go, if our husbands said so. ’

“ When the soldiers came in the town to get the women, all ran. One woman ran and fell in ditch and broke her leg. Next morning he carried to the barracks thirty men.

“ ‘ These boys that you want sent to Fernando Po have we got to get something from them as we get from the boys who go to Firestone’s ? ’

“ He said, ‘ It is none of your business and it is not mine to tell you. They are going for four to six months. ’

“ So afterwards at the expiration of six months, he went to the District Commissioner and said, ‘ Where are the boys ? ’

“ ‘ I will write to Yancy and what he says I will tell you. ’ ”

The District Commissioner was questioned by the Commissioners on this incident. It was substantially correct although the District Commissioner in question was one of the frankest of the officials met during the course of the field visits. He had advised against the recruiting for shipment out of the country, but, because of the difficulty of distinguishing between governmental authority and authority of higher government officials requiring private action from subordinate government officials he was faced with a situation.

In December 1928 he received a communication from the Vice President saying he had a letter from President King which he had been instructed to deliver in person and not by proxy to the District Commissioner and he requested him to come to Cape Palmas to receive it.

“ This letter comes to advise you that I arrived in Cape Palmas on last week Wednesday and in leaving Monrovia the President handed me a letter bearing your address and of which he asked me to tender you this in person and not by proxy.

“ In view of this fact I shall be pleased to have you come to Harper at an early date and thereby take receipt of same. ”

The District Commissioner, however, was at that time sick and replied that he could not undertake the trip down the river to Cape Palmas. Later Mr. Yancy instructed him to join him on a certain date at Gbolobo, but the District Commissioner was still unable to keep the appointment, with the result that the Vice President subsequently appeared himself at the D.C.’s station at Webbo. He brought with him the letter previously mentioned dated December 3rd, 1928, received in Monrovia from the President. This letter contained the following paragraph :

“ Honourable Allen N. Yancy of Maryland, has the Government’s permission to ship a limited number of labourers from Cape Palmas to Fernando Po ; if any in your District are desirous of enlisting for such service, I should be obliged for any assistance you can give him towards the accomplishment of his undertaking. ”

After receipt of these letters, both upon the official stationery of their high offices the District Commissioner felt himself obliged to act when on July 2, 1929, Mr. Yancy wrote him telling him that one Mr. Danile had received a certificate from him to recruit two hundred more labourers for Fernando Po. Chief Choami’s experience suggests how thoroughly he carried out his orders as he understood them. Later another letter from Mr. Yancy, dated July 10, 1929, requested him to look out for and arrest eleven Bassa boys who had “ eloped ” from a gang being taken to Cape Palmas.

The Customs Record shows the following entry which could easily be traced by the Commissioners :

“ List of Labourers shipped from Maryland County to the Spanish Protectorate of Fernando Po by the Cape Palmas Recruiting Company, engaged for the service of one year from Date hereinunder.

Per S.S. Montevideo.

	Names	Town	Chief	Tribe
21	Freeman	Tedeke	Choami	Webbo
22	Monday	»	»	»
23	Half Dinner	Tededeju	»	»
24	Every Day	Dudu	»	»
25	Jacob	Tarteh	»	»
26	Teacup	»	»	»
27	Sea-breeze	Kono-Wodoke	»	»
28	Davis	»	»	»
29	Davis No. 2	»	»	»
30	David	»	»	»

252	Seydi	Worteke	Kliyee	Gedebo

N.B. — Nos. 76-137 Labourers ¹ of the Bassa are for two (2) years engagement.

For the Cape Palmas Recruiting Co.,

(Signed) Allen N. YANCY.

Recruiting Agent, Maryland County, R.L.

Registered according to law on the 4th day of January, 1929, two hundred & fifty-two labourers to be shipped by the S.S. *Africano* to the port of Fernando Po for the full space of (1) one year from date thereof.

Except from Nos. 76-137 Labourers who are of the Bassa Tribe, for the full space of (2) two years from the date hereof.

4th January 1929
O. K.
S. M. Perry
S. C.
5-1 : 29

(Signed) S. A. D. THOMSON,
Labour Agent, Md. Co., R.L.

Libreville.

A. *Kidnapping.* — On June 13, 1928 at Cape Palmas, 145 labourers, principally Kru and Grebo, were carried aboard the S.S. *Sierra Leone*, in the belief that they were going to the Gold Coast to work. It is usual for the men of these tribes to seek work as deck hands on steamers, or for work in certain of the British Colonies. They were of the belief further, that they had been recruited by Mr. Alhaj Massaquoi, then Agent of the E. & H. Nissen Line, who had approached them with the offer of such employment on the coast. When the ship left Cape Palmas, instead of stopping at the Gold Coast, it continued in open sea beyond the points familiar to the men. They became alarmed and approached the Captain with inquiries. He then told them that he had orders from Mr. Massaquoi to carry them not to Lagos but to Libreville in the French Congo. It developed further that the headman knew that the boys were not to stop at the Gold Coast. On arrival at Libreville, 140 of these labourers were separated into small groups, assigned to various employers and transferred to the interior.

The objection to Libreville is the nature of the work—the handling of heavy logs which, for these untrained natives, have resulted in many serious injuries, together with reports of ill-treatment and cruelty brought by returning labourers. Messrs. E. & H. Nissen are concessionnaires in the French Congo.

¹ It is worth noting in this connection that the 61 Bassa labourers shipped from Grand Bassa, are a direct evasion of a law of the Republic designed to protect these tribes even from voluntary shipment out of the country :

“ Sec. 1346. — *No Shipment from Montserrado and Bassa Counties.* — It shall be unlawful for any person to ship any Liberian citizen beyond the limits of the Republic to reside as labourers in any foreign country or colony from the County of Montserrado including the Territory of Grand Cape Mount, or from the County of Grand Bassa. Any person violating this provision shall be liable to a fine of fifty dollars for each person so shipped.”

Of this particular lot sent, 4 returned—the headman, his assistant and two labourers. One of the lot died *en route*. Many angles of this question have been presented before the Commission and attention has been drawn to the case largely as a result of the somewhat confused controversy.

(a) The four men who returned contended for payment as deck workers, and were refused payment by Mr. Massaquoi.

(b) The 140 men had been used as stevedores for some time loading and unloading the ship and at the end of a period were sent ashore at Libreville.

(c) They contended that they were deliberately misled by Mr. Massaquoi and would never have consented to go to Libreville to remain any period.

(d) The case had been investigated by the Department of Justice and it was decided that the men *should be paid*.

(e) The four returned men presented slips from the Captain which showed that they had worked as stevedores for fifty-five days.

(f) Pay for the four men and responsibility for the 140 were disclaimed by Mr. Massaquoi on the grounds that :

(1) He had, by the time of their return, wired his resignation to the Copenhagen headquarters of E. & H. Nissen Company although he still retained all papers and the power of attorney of the Company.

(2) He could not recruit boys because he did not have a license.

(3) That the boys were shipped by Mr. Yancy for his firm.

(4) They were definitely recruited for Libreville.

(5) Some of the boys were recruited by the Cavalla River Company.¹

Regarding the responsibility for recruiting of the men Mr. Massaquoi's testimony was as follows :

“ *Question.* — Is there any documentary evidence anywhere that the men knew they were going definitely to work at Libreville ?

Massaquoi. — I refer you to the Cavalla River Company ; they got some of the boys and they knew that the boys were going to Libreville.

Question. — You have no positive knowledge that the boys were told ?

Massaquoi. — I have positive knowledge so far as the Cavalla River Company is concerned.

Question. — Is there any evidence to show that the boys knew they were going to Libreville and not to the Gold Coast ?

Massaquoi. — I am sure there is, because the Cavalla River Company had men to recruit these boys for Mr. Yancy and I am sure they were told.”

The Commissioners followed up many of these points later in Cape Palmas. The Cavalla River Company statement is as follows :

“ The Cavalla River Company have not at any time directly or indirectly been instrumental in recruiting Labourers for Libreville. We have, however, been connected in a business way with Mr. Alhaj Massaquoi representing himself to be the Liberian Manager for Messrs. E. & H. Nissen of Copenhagen. We understand that Mr. Massaquoi recruited several gangs of Labourers in this district for the purpose of sending them to Libreville to work for the Union forestière africaine. We were asked by Mr. Massaquoi to undertake the feeding of these Labourers whilst awaiting shipment, and in some cases, during Mr. Massaquoi's absence, he authorized us to pay the local Authorities the various fees payable on the embarkation of labourers to ports outside the Republic. Our operations in this respect have invariably been secured by a substantial amount standing to Massaquoi's credit in our books. We regret our inability to furnish you with any details as regards the number of boys shipped to Libreville as we had no interest whatsoever in the matter except as purveyors of food.”

¹ See Testimony before the Commission in Monrovia, Alhaj Massaquoi, A 127 ; D. Twe, A 75 ; Record of Proceedings of investigation by Solicitor General (Department of Justice) on complaint of Headman Friday, et al.

Mr. Yancy presented to the Commissioners a memorandum on the affair as follows :

" There were some labourers recruited by Mr. Alhaj Massaquoi's Nissen Company for the Congo, without my knowledge, and attempted to be shipped by them ; but were stopped by the Labour Agent because they had no recruiting License. Mr. Alhaj Massaquoi came to me and informed me that he had these Labourers and that they were willing to go ; but the Labour Agent would not permit them as he had no license and asked me to permit him to ship them on my license. I gave him my consent to do so ; but did not recruit them nor ship them under the supervision of my local agents. The arrangements made with these boys by Mr. Massaquoi I knew nothing about whatever ; but he told me that he had recruited these boys for Libreville. I never dreamed that he did not tell the boys where they were going until subsequently some of the labourers who returned told me of what Mr. Massaquoi had done to them. They made a complaint to Attorney Cummings of this City, who is here also the headman named Hadago, and can be had by you if you would like to have them. I would like them to be called by you. Besides these there are several other persons who could be called to prove that I had nothing to do with the recruiting of these labourers ; but Mr. Alhaj Massaquoi did it, whose names I could not furnish you."

They returned in July 1929.

In January of 1930 following complaints to Libreville from the Secretary of State about failure of repatriation, 206 labourers arrived on a ship and no one seems to have known who they were, how long they had been away or where they had been.

TESTIMONY OF LABOURERS.

(a) Korgbe Kley, a headman for the Italian boat *Sardinia*, before the Commission April 23, 1930, testified to having met and talked with some of the men ; one of them Nagbe, an acquaintance, who had been spirited away to Libreville by Massaquoi, when they believed they were going to Accra. ¹

(b) At Gbanken, Wedabo Country, in May 1930, the American Commissioner met 14 of the labourers who had been in the shipment. Johnson Broh, second headman from the section related their experience thus :

" We were home in Wedabo, Gbanken, when a man, named Massaquoi, wrote a letter, sent it to us, saying wanted boys for Secondy, Lagos. So we went to Cape. Fourteen men from Wedabo from up bush, making a total of 145 at Cape Palmas. We were to go to Lagos and Secondy, two months, to load ships, then come home. Then we agreed. We always going to Lagos and Secondy and we know what happened there. So we are there. Ship comes. Four or five days time we no see Secondy. Went to Captain and say, ' When we going to get to Lagos ? ' Captain say, ' I no take you Lagos. '

" ' Where you taking us ? ' "

" ' I take you not to Lagos but to French Congo. It is not my order, but order from Massaquoi. '

" Boat have not any laborers, so we worked those gang, called down 2/6 for man, 4/- for headman. That our promise for steamer work. We spent 55 days in the ship from June 12 to August 6th. Then we went to French Congo when we were to go ashore.

" We say to Captain, ' You got to pay before ashore ? ' "

" Captain say, ' I got no pay for you. '

" We say, ' What we done ? Have we not done our duty all right ? You no pay us ? ' "

" Then he say, ' Everything is to Massaquoi. I got nothing to do with you but to bring to French Congo. '

" When we get to French Congo it was 6 in the evening. Then he started to send labourers ashore, put labourers in motor-car and send them to bush.

" Before we went we say, ' Why you send us bush ? We be sea men. '

" Captain say, ' This is our order. '

" They started to beat us and send us away. They divided us in groups of 10 to 20. Second promise was headman may return back. So when we done our duty, the Johnson and Friday and two old men and one young man wounded who died on same ship (was hurt at work on ship) went on ship to go to Monrovia. Before we get to Monrovia went to Captain and asked for pay and he say, ' Massaquoi going to pay you when you get to Monrovia. '

" When we got to Monrovia went to Massaquoi for pay.

" Massaquoi say, ' I got not money for you all. I give money to Vice President Yancy. '

" So when he say that we take matter to Government. Since we take matter to Government call Yancy, but we never heard judgment nor have we got our part yet. That is what I see."

¹ See Testimony of Korgbe Kley, A 197.

(c) Fine Country (Native name Debah), a headman for the gang on shore thus testified :

“ I left with boys in steamer, left in Johnson Broh's hand. I took some boys for shore. Place no good for them. Flogged them there. When flog labourers headman say, ' What this man done ? ' So treat me too. Say, we bought you from Government. Any labourers sick, refused to feed them. When they continue to work that is the time they feed you. When some of them was sick, Master say, ' let them stop home. Lock them up.

“ Two or three die when come back. Stay one year and three months. When we were coming back white man say, ' Each headman £20.0.0 ; each labourer £13.0.0 for one year, three months.' Never got it. When we come back we take order for pay to Vice President Yancy.

“ He say, ' All right. You receive pay.'

Then he say, ' Wait. Go to Massaquoi tomorrow. He will pay you.'

“ When we went to Massaquoi no meet him. Massaquoi went to Europe. Out of 140 fifteen die. Those who dead have no pay. I have no pay. Nobody ever had any pay. ”

B. On May 30th, 1929, there were landed at Monrovia from the German steamer *Warrega* 47 Grebo boys recruited from Cape Palmas.¹

These boys attempted to see Mr. Alhaj Massaquoi to collect their pay. On failure to see him they appealed to Attorney Sie Brownell of native Grebo parentage, who attempted to get them repatriated and paid. They asserted that Mr. Massaquoi had recruited them for work in the Gold Coast, and on arrival in Libreville were allotted in groups to different masters and held there, under considerable hardship and illness, for one year and five months. The matter was first presented to the Labour Bureau and later to the Interior Department and the Department of Justice. At an investigation Mr. Massaquoi presented a copy of a telegram and letter to Copenhagen which he had sent severing his connection with the company. He did not at that time deny recruiting the labourers. On appeal to Copenhagen headquarters the Danish Consul, Mr. Anthony Barclay received £5.0.0 with which to purchase food for the men until they could be sent to their homes in Maryland County.²

The Company, however, stated that he, Mr. Massaquoi, had received £600.0.0 from Libreville for which no accounting had been made.

The boys were returned to Cape Palmas.

Notwithstanding the confusion of detail the Commission feels confident that the labourers were told that they were going to work on the Gold Coast and were sent instead to Libreville where they would not have consented to go ; that Mr. Massaquoi was responsible for this recruiting of these labourers under the false impression ; and that they were actually shipped by Mr. Yancy who holds the sole recruiting license for the county.

Whether recruited by Mr. Massaquoi or Mr. Yancy is less important to the Commission than the fact of the deliberate false recruitment.

It is equally evident that other labourers were recruited for Libreville and that they have made similar complaints.

(a) At Soloken four returned labourers from Libreville were interviewed by the Commissioner. They were Jalateh, Nebo, Grando Klah and Weze. They remained in Libreville two years and seven months. Through Nebo the story of the boys is told :

“ Governor Yancy in 1926 told we sea people may come and go to Secondy. When Yancy told them to go to Secondy ship them right through to French Congo. Went to Captain two days after Cape Palmas, ' Where you take us go ? '

“ Captain say, ' Your Governor Yancy say take you to French Congo. I no take you to Secondy.'

“ As Captain say this to me, I cannot fly ; I jump in water I die. I will go wherever Captain want to carry me. When we begin to get to French Congo the French put we in jail and fed we to make we strong for work. Then loose from jail. Say, ' I feel you strong man now ; must go to work.'

“ So when they took you do work paid you. \$4.00 in French money for one month. Say we no want French money. No use in our country.

“ Massa say, ' All Right. Give you \$2.00 and other will remain to buy your tobacco.'

“ Then go do work. After one year want to go home, July.

“ ' No ! ' say, ' Governor Yancy say you must remain two year before you return back.' Because of that because he say he want to come home lose four weeks and make we labour. When we go work flog them. When boy sick, massa say, ' You come work ; no sick.'

¹ See Testimony N. H. Sie Brownell before Commission in Monrovia, April 22, 1930. A 182. See also D. Twe Testimony.

² See Testimony Anthony Barclay, Danish Consul, before Commission, April 23, 1930. A 215.

"Cutting logs, loading train and bring from bush, 140 men. Forty died ; one hundred returned back. Give rice same as home first year ; second year poor chop. Cassava ground put in leaf made we sick. If anyone have sick belly go to doctor, come back home—die. Worked two year, seven month. Then Master gave we paper for pay to Woodin, labourer £22.0.0, headman £25.0.0. When get back to Cape meet Yancy to beach. Yancy say, 'Are you them went French Congo ? You can't leave me without going to Woodin for pay, if you do I will put you in jail.'

"Yancy went to Woodin and say, 'Give me money and I will pay them.'

"After Yancy met me on street ; say, 'What town you from ?'

"I say, 'From King Jeh's town.'

"Yancy say, 'King Jeh report me to Monrovia.'

"Nobody got any money.

"I say, 'This is all the same thing you do all time. You don't want us people to have anything.'

"After that Yancy call me up and give me £1.0.0. To big men 10/- ; some 6/- ; some 5/-."

(b) At Newaken in the Barrabo Section the Commission interviewed the headman, Freeman, and 13 labourers returned from Libreville, who had been sent under the belief that they were going to the Gold Coast. These men were :

Name	Town
Sam	Nanisuke
Best Man	"
Sea Breeze	"
Takwee	"
John	"
Moses	"
Johnson	Tika
Africa	Nanisuke
Joseph	Tika
Sea Breeze No. 2	"
Friday	Nanisuke
Ben	"
Charlie	Cavalla
Freeman (headman)	Doboce

This testimony was given through Freeman and corroborated by each :

"We were told that there was work for us on the Gold Coast. We went to Cape Palmas and 140 of us were sent to Libreville. Hard labour with logs and in rain all day and sometimes all night, and feeding on cassava make plenty sick and die. French people gave them \$2.00 monthly in French money, balance to be sent to Cape Palmas. Went to Supt. Yancy, but have no pay yet."

Two circumstances observed by the Commissioners gave strength to the version as reported by the men :

(a) An order for men intended for Libreville but not so stated was sent up country on a letterhead of the firm of Elder Dempster Ltd. and signed by "J. B. Wilson, Manager, for the Cape Palmas Recruiting Agent."

"ELDER DEMPSTER AND COMPANY, LIMITED.

Cape Palmas

Liberia

14, August, 1928

"This is to certify that Mr. Alfred W. Collins has been requested to bring from one (1) up to (300) three hundred Boys for the Gold Coast these boys is to be at the Cape soon as the headman can get them down. By so doing this shall your order as headman over the Gang of Boys for the Gold Coast.

For the Cape Palmas Recruiting Co.

(Signed) J. B. WILSON,
Manager.

Approved :

Allen Yancy, Jr."

It was ascertained by the Commission that "J. B. Wilson" was Messrs. Elder Dempster and Company's Chief Clerk. His use of the firm's letter paper was quite unauthorized. In his spare time he was employed by Vice President Yancy. This letter is misleading in two

respects, and in all probability is meant to be. Firstly : it gives the impression that the British shipping firms at Cape Palmas are closely associated with the Cape Palmas Recruiting Company whereas their only interest apparently in the shipment of boys down the coast is purely a business one viz : their feeding and equipment and advances made to them. Secondly : it probably gives to those up country whom it may concern assurance that the boys are ready for the Gold Coast as stated and not for Fernando Po. It was asserted that Mr. Yancy employed other clerks in Cape Palmas shipping offices in the same way.

(b) The following letter was located in the files of the Customs Office at Cape Palmas :

“ Office of the Recruiting Agent
Maryland County

4th, December 1928.

“ Allen N. Yancy
Cape Palmas
Liberia

The Collector of Customs,
Port of Harper, Cape Palmas.

Dear Sir :

By the voucher you will please permit Messrs. The Cavalla River Company, Limited, to ship 100 Boys from this country to the British Colony by the S. S. *Sierra Nevada* now due. Please note that all legal fees will be met by this office and paid over to you.

I have the honour to be, Sir
Your obedient Servant

(Signed) J. Samuel Brooks

For Allen N. Yancy

Recruiting Agent for Maryland
County.

Attached to this letter was a list of boys checked by the Customs on December 6th, 1928, read as follows :

“ *List of Recruited Boys for Libreville per S.S. Sierra-Nevada, etc.*”

It may be noted that in this instance the covering letter is signed by Superintendent Brooks, then of Maryland County, now of Bassa, for the Vice President, who was the Recruiting Agent.

Attention might be given in passing to an apparent attempt at the protection of such labourers in the Statutes of Liberia, not only disregarded by the Recruiters but condoned by the Customs Officials, the Labour Bureau, County Superintendents, as well. ¹

The Fernando Po Agreements.

The question of Liberian labour for use in the Spanish Island of Fernando Po, as well as in the Portuguese Islands of Principe and St. Thomas extends back many years. Popular dissatisfaction with the informal relations which were gradually impoverishing the country of its labour, the extravagant mortality from sleeping-sickness and other diseases, the irresponsibility of masters and reported excesses of cruelty ; the permanent expatriation of Liberian subjects led at first to legislative prohibition against exportation to these Islands. The protests of the Islanders through the Spanish Government that the stoppage of men reacted disastrously upon their agricultural programme prompted the Liberian Government to reconsider the matter and eventually to enter upon a formal agreement in 1914 with the King of Spain.

The Agreement, however, attempted to insure the labourers against the common abuses and provided for—(a) a Liberian Consul at Fernando Po who should exercise official oversight ; (b) a regulated clearance of labourers through a Labour Bureau ; (c) recruiting in permissible Liberian ports under Spanish Recruiting Agents who should be supervised by the Spanish

¹ Section 1344. “ *Consul at Port of Landing.* — A consul shall be appointed at the ports to which labourers are shipped, whose duty it shall be, in addition to the ordinary consular duties, to receive all labourers of whatever class arriving from Liberia ; to have proper and lawful articles of agreement executed by persons desiring to employ such labourers ; to see that the agreements entered into between such labourers and their employers are honestly and faithfully fulfilled ; to secure to such labourers every right, privilege and immunity guaranteed by the laws of the Government under which they reside and by treaty between such Government and the Republic of Liberia ; to see that they are promptly and fully paid for their services and returned to the Liberian port from which they shipped. ”

Consul at Monrovia ; (d) selecting of four recruiting agents by Liberia ; (e) agriculturalists of Fernando Po to come to Monrovia to make the arrangements with them ; (f) provision of copies of the labourers' contracts to the Liberian Customs, Secretary of State, the Liberian Consul and the Liberian Consul General at Fernando Po—each statement containing the name, county, town, district, tribe, chief and period of beginning and ending of contract, and to be presented to the Labour Agent 3 days before the sailing of the ship ; (g) a maximum period of two years and minimum of one year from date of arrival in Fernando Po ; refusal of labourers to persons or firms not holding the dual authority of the Governor of Fernando Po and Liberian authorities ; (h) refusal of labourers for determined farms, or insolvent farmers ; (i) guarantee of good treatment ; (j) prohibition of extension of contract beyond period indicated ; (k) proper payment of wages in English money, one-half in Fernando Po, one-half through the Spanish Consul on return to Liberia ; (l) recovery of wages of labourers who die in the island ; (m) termination of contract by either party on six months' notice.

Under this convention several thousand were recruited and shipped. Records in the office of the Secretary of State indicate that between 1919 and 1926 a total of 4,268 had been so recruited.¹

Averaging 600 a year the total number from 1914 to 1927, the period of termination of the Convention, would be at least 7,268. Transportation was paid by the Spanish Government, and the headmoney required by the Government for each labourer constituted an important source of revenue. In addition 2/- for each labourer regularly contracted was paid by the Master and 4/- for repatriation by the boy.

With the termination of the Convention in 1927 the Liberian Government, before agreeing to renewal, sought a preferential tariff on its produce, principally coffee, in Spain. Meanwhile, however, with the Fernando Po farms again in serious need of labour, two representatives of the private Interests of the Island, Edward Baticon and Emanuel Gonezrosa came to arrange for 3,000 boys. In the face of the seriousness of their plight, the manifest disinclination of a sufficiently large number of boys to go there voluntarily, and the necessity, at least as late as 1925, of resorting to force in Sinoe County,² they were prepared to pay a liberal bonus for boys. Mr. Samuel A. Ross, who had been interested in these shipments, was sought as the principal party to a new contract. The result was a private agreement between the Sindicato Agrícola de Guinea and a group of Liberian citizens, referred to as Recruiting Agents, and represented by Mr. Samuel A. Ross. The group of Liberian citizens entering the contract were as follows :

Thomas E. C. Pelham,
Robert W. Draper,
E. G. W. King,
J. C. Johnson,
M. A. Bracewell,
C. L. Cooper.

The first two named are sons-in-law of Mr. Ross, the third, a brother of the President, and two of the others female clerks.

Under the indenture of agreement the Syndicate promised to pay the Recruiting Agents for 3,000 labourers £9.0.0 each, provide transportation, a bonus of £1,000.0.0 for each 1,500 boys, and to cause a Spanish steamer to call at the ports of Greenville and Harper to receive the boys. The Recruiting Agents were to pay from the £9.0.0 (about \$45.00) the following: headmoney, \$4.00 ; taxes, \$2.50 ; advances (an arbitrary sum cited in the testimony as being sometimes between 2 and 6 shillings and on one occasion £1.0.0) and food, an amount of rice issued as a rule through the trading stores, and depending upon the arrival of the steamer after the delivery of the boys in the port. At times they remained only one day, at other times as long as one week.³

Just prior to the arrival of the two Spanish representatives Mr. D. Twe, accompanied the President on a trip to the Kroo Coast.⁴

“ At the Kroo Coast, we went to Sasstown, where we were met by Messrs. Yancy and Ross. Mr. Ross said to me, this year I am going to make some money. I asked him in what way. He said I am going to do so by shipping some boys to Fernando Po. Mr.

¹ See statement of “ Boys Recruited and Paid Off for the Spanish Possession of Fernando Po, 1919-1927. ” Document.

² Reference to Sinoe incident.

³ Reference is made to the Sinoe shipments in which the men were required to bring an excess supply of rice which was sold, on the departure of the steamer and the money appropriated. With the cost of native food considerably less than 1/- per day it is improbable that total expenditure for food exceeded 7/- out of the £9.0.0 for each labourer.

⁴ See Testimony of D. Twe before Commission in Monrovia, April 16.

Ross said that the Spanish needed 3,000 boys but that the President told him to share the number with Mr. Yancy. I then pointed out to Mr. Ross that that part of the country was depopulated. The conversation ended there.¹ ”

The agreement went into effect April 2, 1928.

Mr. Yancy states that during the same year Mr. Ross appointed him his agent in Cape Palmas and “ allowed him out of his contract to recruit and ship 1,500 labourers. ”² ”

Although a group of 230 had been sent by Mr. Ross on Sept. 2, 1927, the shipment under the new agreements from Sinoe were as follows :

Ship	Date	Labourers
<i>Isla de Panay</i>	August 1, 1928	71
<i>Montevideo</i>	Sept. 1, 1928	115
<i>Isla de Panay</i>	Oct. 2, 1928	124
<i>Montevideo</i>	Oct. 31, 1928	90
<i>Isla de Panay</i>	Dec. 31, 1928	128
<i>Montevideo</i>	Jan. 4, 1929	231

The Cape Palmas shipments under the new agreements began after the taking out of a special recruiting license by Mr. Yancy in the fall. Between 1928 and 1930, *i.e.* to Dec. 31, 1929, a total of 2,431³ boys had been shipped : 1,426 from Sinoe, and 1,005 from Cape Palmas. ⁴

Mr. Ross died suddenly in November 1929.

The total of 1,005 for Cape Palmas, where Mr. Yancy is sole recruiting agent, as given by the State Department from records on file for the period ending December 31st, 1929, is just 205 more than the figure given by Mr. Yancy to the Commissioners in June of 1930 as the total sent by him under the contract.

The record of shipments to Fernando Po for 1929 alone, as drawn from the shipping agencies, is as follows :

Ship	Date	No. Labourers
<i>Montevideo</i>	Jan. 5	231
<i>Isla de Panay</i>	Feb. 2	87
<i>Montevideo</i>	March 4	220
<i>Isla de Panay</i>	April 2	68
<i>Montevideo</i>	May 7	68
<i>Isla de Panay</i>	June 2	121
<i>Montevideo</i>	Sept. 1	103
<i>Legaspi</i>	Nov. 1	68
<i>Isla de Panay</i>	Dec. 3	23
		<u>989</u>

During the same year 22 returned from Fernando Po.

Further, that there have been shipments during 1930 is suggested by the following news item carried in a local paper edited privately by the official Labour Agent of Maryland County.

“ On the 3rd inst. (March-April issue) the following ships arrived outward bound : the S.S. *Wagogo* (German) for deck hands ; and the S.S. *Gelazpi* (Spanish) taking recruited labourers to Fernando Po.”

While the arrangement under Government supervision was regarded as a serious economic error, involving hazards of discomfort, death from disease, encouragement to slave methods, the private recruiting with such liberal sums paid for each labourer must certainly prove worse. Apart from the recruiting to be treated further :

(a) The method of recruiting the natives sent away was observed to be careless and irregular.

1. Lists were made out, apparently merely to give the semblance of legality. The names of the tribes and chiefs, required after each labourer's name, were frequently wrong or omitted entirely.

¹ Testimony of D. Twe, A 62.

² See Memorandum to Commission by Vice President Allen N. Yancy.

³ The number, 2,431 for the period may or may not have represented the total shipments.

⁴ Reference to records in Department of State provided by Secretary of State to Commission on request and headed : “ Statement of Boys Recruited and Paid Off for the Spanish Possession of Fernando Po—From 1928-30. ” (To April 26, 1930 a total of 366 boys had been paid off.)

2. There is no effective check to determine whether the labourers sent away at a period are the ones returned and, using, as is the custom, such nicknames (instead of native country names) as Tin Cup, Book-Don't Lie, Black Man's Trouble, John No. 1, John No. 2, John No. 3, etc., it would be extremely difficult to identify the men, either for repatriation or pay.

3. Lists required three days before the sailing of steamers were frequently given to the Customs at the moment of departure.

4. The Labour Agent is not permitted to check the persons; he may only check the lists as submitted by the Recruiting Agent.

5. The Customs officials are not permitted to check the men or inquire into the methods of their exportation.

6. Names were in instances added to the typed list in pencil or ink, and on board ship, when, as not infrequently happened, labourers sent from Monrovia (a prohibited port of exportation) were met on the steamer by the deputy of the Recruiting Agent, added to the list and continued on their way to Fernando Po.

(b) The Recruiting Agent insisted upon receiving the money and paying the boys without the supervision of the Labour Bureau or any other Government agency, as is done in the case of deck hands and as is required by law. Coincident with this fact is the complaint, fairly general among the returned labourers, that they did not receive the amounts due to them, as the second half of their pay in Liberia.

(c) Boys are shipped from prohibited areas.

(d) Public officials, messengers and soldiers are used systematically and mandatorily to assist in the recruiting of these labourers.

(e) The interests of the boys cannot be effectively safeguarded in the island to which they are sent.

(f) The Republic profits from this draft upon its labour and internal development only to the extent of the headmoney received.

(g) There appears no effective means of recovering the wages of labourers, who die in the Island, for their families.

(h) There is at present a considerable indebtedness to the Government from these headmonies which have not been paid, although they represent less than one-twelfth of the total amount received from these boys.

(i) A monopoly has been established by one individual on recruiting and not even Gold Coast labourers may be secured without passing through him.

(j) No private citizen without the implied authority of a high Government office could command such a monopoly unrestricted, or with impunity employ the channels of Government so completely to his private ends. The arbitrariness of recruiting agents' fees may be observed in the increased rates charged to shipping concerns for labour desired in the British Colonies. In 1924 the Recruiting Agent's fee was 7/9, in 1927 it was increased to £1.10.0; and in 1930 to this £1.10.0 were added headmoney 16/8, tax on recruiting agent 10/5, poll tax 4/2, and 10/5 for an affidavit—all paid to the Recruiting Agent, who disbursed portions of this to the Customs.¹

STATEMENTS CONCERNING RECRUITING POLICY.

During the period of about two months of observation in Maryland County by the League of Nations and the American Commissioners, there were three statements submitted deserving of attention because they are at variance with the general trend of the testimony regarding these shipments. One of these was Speaker Bellor of the Barrapo Section referred to earlier in this report. He stated that the unpleasantness following the Wedabo Beach incident "was not Fernando Po palava, but road palava."

A second was a statement by Mr. Alfred M. Wodebo Collins, for five years an agent and recruiting manager for the Cape Palmas Recruiting Company; and a third was a statement by Vice President Yancy, the recruiting agent.

¹ Complaints heard from natives receive corroboration in an official report to the President, May, 1930, that recruiting fees of £3.0.0 are charged independent native passengers to the coast, and that fees for all deck hands from Grand Cess and other ports are collected and turned to private use, being shared with petty local officials.

Mr. Collins described himself as a native young man of mixed half Cavalla and Webbo parentage, educated at Cuttington Collegiate and Divinity School.

“ . . . I have been with my people at home, and whilst there, having heard repeating rumours that Mr. Yancy (of this City) has been forcing labourers to go to Fernando Po against their will and consent and thereby been dealing with Slave Trade. Knowing conditions of affairs in connection with this problem and mode of procedure in recruiting and shipment of labour from this country to foreign ports as I do, and having been in touch with the said Mr. Yancy, I felt that I should not rest until I shall have explained to Your Honourable Body the mode of procedure adopted by the Cape Palmas Recruiting Company of which management I have been for five consecutive years. Further, I felt it a bounden duty also an obligation due an innocent man to make to you an expression regarding the rumoured allegations above mentioned.

“ To verify my statement, I had to send for some of my own Native Recruiters who assisted in performing this special service, namely :

Paramount Chief	Doboyu of the Tuo Tribe
”	”
”	Barnie of the Nyao Tribe
”	”
”	Bloh of the Yedewodobo Tribe
”	”
”	Sie of the Plibo Tribe
Garswar	Charlie, alias Bassa-Man.

who are my living witnesses today to prove to you that not a single labourer was forcibly recruited nor shipped.

“ And further, I wish to say that I love my people very dearly, and am very much interested in them and have always taken position for them, and during the whole period of my five years' service in controlling the recruiting business of this Company on the behalf of Mr. Yancy, he has never yet on a single occasion compelled, forced nor used violent measures on any labour or labourers to be shipped to a British, French or Spanish Coast for service. Further, I could quote you if desired, copies of many of my instructions from Mr. Yancy (as in some instances in shipment of labour he was away either to Monrovia, Kuno Kudi, or Rubber Plantation at Yancyville, Gbdadeke Section). When they would be shipped under my sole control Mr. Yancy gave me definite and strict instructions regarding this special point, that when labourers were recruited and brought in, to poll them and ascertain if they are willing to go to the place (Fernando Po) where they were to be sent ; in many instances, he himself would poll them and ask if they were willing to go, and it is only under and upon their own will and consent that they have been sent. Further, I even used to converse with them in our own vernacular and they used to say to me (sometime at their lodging places or in the boat going on board) that we will be glad to land at Fernando Po because the Government has not other work for us to do here except Motor Road work ; and Firestone payment is too small because they pay us one shilling a day and out of that daily shilling, you have to get your daily bread and in course of a month when payment is made, you do not realized what you have earned during that month and then to economize out of that shilling we live on a very poor chop ; but at Fernando Po, we are supplied with sufficient foodstuff enough for even to sell some if you care to, and besides you get your pay with a “ Draw Back ’ reserved for you until your time is out to come home, the only trouble with us here in our country is when we are ready to go to Fernando Po, we have no money to bear our own passage fares except we wait until some of Chiefs notify us to say, that Mr. Yancy say whosoever wishes to go to Fernando Po must come down to the Cape Palmas at a certain given time then we select our own headmen and come down along with him to the Cape, and this is the same trouble with the Gedebo people who always run to the British Coast, Tabou natives to the French Coast, so we also will go to the Spanish Coast. My reason for speaking with them in this manner is because in one or two instances labourers coming down for shipment, have expressed unwillingness to go growing out of ill feeling, sometimes very anxious to go, but the Medical Officer disqualifying them and we refuse them the opportunity of going. There are few examples that I have also tried to collect out of the many, and have also brought those few down here to verify my statement whom I could also bring before you (if desired) Namely :

Chambra Gyдика, Chibeo Hne, Kwia of Kie-Yiidibo.

“ I wish to say further, that no enlisted soldier or officer of the Liberian Frontier Force nor any enrolled member of the Constabulary force of this Country or even through this Republic, has ever been deputized, requested or used to assist in recruiting labour by this Company nor even employed directly or indirectly in shipment of labour.

“ I must express here frankly that it is very wise and courteous on the behalf of your principals to deputize you to face these allegations (although may have applied for) but so that when you shall have made your report, satisfaction may be arrive at as to the veracity of these reports and how.

"In conclusion, I have to say that of course I am not working at present, and whilst I was in the interior with my people as explained from the onset, I was just about packing my effects to leave the country and to either go to Fernando Po or South Africa, because there is no work here sufficiently to employ us and with my poor relatives who cannot read and write, things are very hard for them, and from your personal judgment don't you think that they should be glad if you were to say 'look here, I am willing to send you on to some foreign port to work and return home when your time is out'—Why certainly, if you were to even offer to carry me to Europe or America, I will agree with you now. You just speak and you will find my effects right at your lodging tomorrow morning. These are the underlying reasons why today if one was to cry out for labour for foreign parts, natives will overplus your limited number, and even civilized people would also join if they were permitted. Where is the space of 'Compulsory' and 'Forcibility' against their will could located?"¹

Three of the chiefs referred to did not appear to verify the statements. The other two appeared and disputed them.

In the later questioning of Mr. Collins he was decidedly confused on the method of recruitment, variously explaining that (a) notice was given to the chief up country that a Spanish steamer would arrive on a certain date and they would let the boys know; (b) that the District Commissioner gets the boys for them; (c) that no one connected with the Recruiting Company goes up country and that the boys come down voluntarily to ask for shipment and learn when the ship will come in, then return to prepare for the journey and (d) that they always make it a rule to ask the boys before they go aboard the ship if they are going voluntarily or not.

Question. — How do you get boys?

Collins. — We give notice. I have myself.

Question. — Who gives the chief orders to get boys and how do you know the chief has boys to send?

Collins. — You see, you cannot engage anybody unless you see the District Commissioner.

Question. — Who gives orders to the District Commissioner?

Collins. — We send news, information to the chiefs.

Question. — How do you know what boys, what chiefs?

Collins. — It is known that anybody who wants to go to foreign parts can do so.

Question. — But you spoke of the District Commissioner?

Collins. — Boys go and tell the District Commissioner.

Question. — Then all you must do, when you want boys is to tell the D. C. that a ship will be in?

Collins. — Yes—no. Not at all—the people send down to us, and then we tell them ship will be here.

Question. — How many come to find out if the D. C. is telling the truth about the ship?

Collins. — Oh, six.

Question. — Then the boys go back and what happens?

Collins. — They bring boys.

Question. — Do they recruit the boys, then?

Collins. — They bring them. When the boys come I register them, names, town, etc. and then I ask them if they want to go to Fernando Po.

The third statement in explanation was given by Mr. Yancy.

"When I returned from Monrovia, with an appointment from Mr. Ross, as his Agent at this end of the Republic, to ensure fair and voluntary recruitment and shipment of labourers from here to Fernando Po, before appointing any sub-recruiting agents to handle the affair, I asked the several chiefs of the surrounding tribes to meet me. I also for my and their safety asked the Superintendent of the County and several leading citizens of the community, officials and (un)official to be present to hear what I would say to these chiefs. When we met, I told them, that I had been asked by Mr. Ross to recruit and ship 1,500 labourers to Fernando Po, and that I would be sending out recruiting agents; but before doing this, I have called them to inform them of it, as it was not obligatory on them to go, that only such of them as desired to permit their people to go might do so and not otherwise. They said they heard what I had said. Some of them

¹ Letter addressed to the Honourables, The International Commission of Inquiry, by Alfred M. Wodebo Collins, Cape Palmas, May 26, 1930.

agreed to permit their boys to go and others said they would not allow their boys to go to Fernando Po, while yet others said they would consider the matter and inform me of their decision.

"I further informed the Chiefs, that if there were any doubts in their minds as to the treatment these labourers would receive at Fernando Po they might take the Spanish ship and go to Fernando Po themselves, at my expense and decide if there was any material danger or objection. Several of them did so, and returned and voluntarily furnished labourers who willingly sent to the Island of Fernando Po.

"When the Recruiting Agents have gone out to recruit and have brought in labourers, I have polled them and ascertained if they were willing to go, and in each case have only permitted such labourers to be shipped as have shown by word and action their willingness to go and on no occasion has the Liberian Frontier Force or any portion of it, or any official messenger to the Government been employed or used by me in recruiting labourers and shipping them to Fernando Po. The Liberian Frontier Force is only permitted to be moved in the Counties by the Superintendent, and for Government purposes.

"There are Native Chieftains from each town here whom I am prepared to bring and place before you to disprove any allegation of slavery that may have been alleged or expressed, and if you will permit it, I now stand ready to produce them."

In course of further questioning Mr. Yancy stated that he wished to bring in certain chiefs, whose names he could not at that moment recall, who had gone to Fernando Po at his invitation and expense to satisfy themselves about the condition of their boys.

"I explained to them that it would be good to see for themselves what sort of work their boys were doing down there. On their return they reported to me that they were satisfied, and some of the chiefs themselves brought some more boys themselves and gave them to me for recruitment."¹

The chiefs referred to were not brought to the Commissioners by Mr. Yancy but the testimony of several of them was secured in their villages.

TESTIMONY OF CHIEF HOTO OF MANOHLU.

"Now after I got to Cape Palmas, Mr. Yancy called me and said why did my boys object to go to Fernando Po, and that Fernando Po was an altogether good place, they were not fighting war down there. To satisfy myself, he suggested that he pay my passage and I go down and see what the work the boys were doing there was like. It was not my will and pleasure to do this. I went down there through the same process of forcing. I went down there, and was not at all satisfied with the condition of the boys at Fernando Po. The Spanish people would not allow us to see the boys. On that occasion we were two chiefs sent down by Mr. Yancy to see our boys. Only Dobliah happened to see two of his accidentally one day, and when they were asked about the treatment, his tale was that of woe. He stopped with a Liberian down there. The name of the Liberian Consul at this time was one Mr. Johns. He did not give us any help.

"On my return I told Mr. Yancy that I did not like the idea of my boys going to Fernando Po, because they were not being treated at all good down there, but he would not listen to me. When I came back, he gave me £2. But I was not satisfied and still I am not satisfied with the whole Fernando Po business."²

The method by which this chief was presented at Cape Palmas before receiving this invitation to go to Fernando Po on a visit of inspection, is told in another section of this report, but should be repeated here :

"Soldiers came here and caught me and carried me to the prison. When the soldiers came here they ran through the town and the boys all ran off, but the soldiers ran after them and caught them by force. They were weeping and crying, but Commissioner paid no attention to their cry. Commissioner Prowd improvised a prison in my own town, he used that house (pointing to a house in the town) for his prison house, for the time being. Then he marched us all off.

"My hands were tied behind my back and I was carried to prison this way. This happened last year. The boys were at Cape Palmas for about a week and then the Spanish boat came and they were sent to Fernando Po. During the time we were waiting the arrival of the ship, there was no food given us."

¹ Stenographic Record of Interview with Vice President Allen N. Yancy, Cape Palmas, May 30, 1930.

² See Testimony of Chief Hoto of Manohlu, May 28. 369-370.

TRANSHIPMENT OF LABOUR.

Legislation prohibiting shipment of labour from Montserrado, Cape Mount and Bassa Counties was intended as an internal economic measure in the interest of the farmers of these areas who would be seriously handicapped if the labour so necessary were sent away. Evasion of the law by private citizens as well as public officials, even though not criminally punishable, appears to the Commission of even more serious consequences in reckless indifference to the economic welfare of the State.

There is evidence that for a period "recruiting" was fairly widespread as a means of immediate income, giving somewhat tragic point to the assertion of one statesman made in seriousness, that labour is the country's principal exploitable commodity. Boys were promised agreeable work at better pay than the standard rate of a shilling a day; sometimes picked up, unemployed, on the Monrovia waterfront, sometimes brought down from the more interior sections; sometimes lured away from the Firestone plantation, sometimes made eager for adventure with a 5 or 6 shilling advance on their promise. It is conceivable that under the necessity for such work out of the country, some governmental bureau should have been devised to regulate this movement of labour and insure its return with some profitable increment to the country. Inasmuch as all deliberate legislation on the matter condemns it, it seems unlikely that private citizens and public officials should engage upon it with such zest unless (a) they were convinced on principle that the policy was sound and good and worth evading law to have done; or (b) that it was personally profitable. Mrs. Mary Ellen Bloomeyer¹ mentioned by the Hon. P. F. Simpson² as a woman who kept boys for Mr. Ross and Mr. Yancy testified that the rate for boys was £1.0.0 for "civilized" persons for each boy recruited, and 5 shillings for natives. She severed relations with Postmaster General Ross when she discovered that he was giving her merely the native rate of pay for boys.³

David Ross, an adopted son of the late Samuel Ross, testified that he and a young man referred to as Peabody, carried gin, tobacco and rice to No. 7 Firestone plantation to attract boys for Mr. Ross; that he induced a number to come down to Monrovia but when they learned that they were scheduled for Fernando Po, some of them escaped. For the 4 shillings given, one native policeman sent his brother to Mr. Ross.

Considerable evidence was presented to the Commission in Monrovia of forced shipments of boys from Monrovia to Cape Palmas for transshipment to Fernando Po.

(a) On the 24th of October, 1929, some 24 Kroo boys were placed in a surf boat to be carried alongside a ship. They were to go first to Cape Palmas then to Fernando Po. On the report to the Secretary of State that the boys were being forced into the boat, either in the presence of, or by the direction of the Hon. P. F. Simpson, member of the House of Representatives, the boys were ordered ashore. The Secretary of State ordered the men lined up and questioned about their wishes. Some wanted to go and some did not. A few days later 24 boys were sent to the Cape. Two of the boys who escaped from the first shipment testified before the Commission. Quotation is made from the testimony of Hurley:⁴

"I was coming from Sinkor. My brother is Kolikai. I met a man who told me he wanted someone to go to Cape Palmas to work. I said all right, if it is Cape Palmas I am willing to go. The man said, 'You all must come here and stay until it is time to go to Cape Palmas.' While we were with him he fed us. He said that while he is feeding us we were not to go about in the street. Whilst we were with this man, we heard that we were going to Fernando Po and not to Cape Palmas, so I declined going. Some evening I would take a walk on the road. Mr. Yancy objected to my doing so, because, he says, as soon as the boat comes he wants us to go on board. My brother Kilikai when he came home one evening was caught, flogged and shut up in the water closet. Then we said to ourselves, if you all are doing all this to us here in Monrovia, when we get down the coast you will do worse than that."

Of many depositions the following salient points are selected: Mr. J. G. Johnson⁵, a policeman, saw the men being forced into the boat by the Hon. Simpson⁶, who in turn testified that he had merely been asked as a personal favor to see that the boys were turned over to the Captain of the boat and that there was no forcing. Mr. D. Twe⁷, who reported

¹ Testimony of Mrs. Mary Ellen Bloomeyer before the Commission at Monrovia, April 17. A.120-125.

² Testimony of Hon. P. F. Simpson, Member of the House of Representatives, R. L. April 17. A.112-114.

³ Testimony of David W. Ross before the Commission at Monrovia, April 23. A. 206-213.

⁴ Testimony of Hurley before the Commission, Monrovia, April 16th. A.68.

⁵ Testimony of J. G. Johnson, April 16. A.69, A.91.

⁶ Testimony of Hon. P. F. Simpson, April 17. A.112-114.

⁷ Testimony of Mr. D. Twe, April 16. A.64.

the incident to the Secretary of State, produced two of the boys who had been in the first lot. Mr. Jesse Benson ¹ upon whose representation Mr. Twe reported the case, in company with him, to the Secretary of State, before the Commission testified that he had not seen Mr. Twe or the boys until everything was over.

Mr. W. D. Stubblefield ², Chief of Police, testified that as Police Magistrate he had heard the case on the demand of the Secretary of State and that eight of them had declined going but that "seeing they had received certain advances which they had used, and did not have to refund, decided to go". He gave orders that those who wanted to go should get passports from the Secretary of State to go where they pleased. ³

"The next day I ordered them to report to me, but only two came. On the whole, out of the 24 men, 16 said they wanted to go, while 8 said they had declined going but would go seeing they were unable to refund the moneys that already had been advanced to them." ⁴

Mrs. Mary Ellen Bloomeyer testified ⁴ that she kept the boys but had no other thought but that they were for Fernando Po.

The incident happens to have received attention because it was an interrupted sailing. Whatever the responsibility of the persons mentioned the fact seems clear that the laws were being evaded and the boys were more or less "pawns" in this transaction.

(b) Mr. T. J. R. Faulkner testified that boys were recruited from the interior and sent to Sinoe for reshipment by Mr. Ross and this was corroborated by other witnesses.

(c) On February 3rd, 1930, a group of boys was sent from Monrovia by Col. T. Elwood Davis, Aide-de-Camp to President King. Testimony to this effect was given by Mr. J. G. Handsford. Colonel Davis explained that the boys came down and wanted to go to Fernando Po, because wages were too small at Firestone's and there was an unemployment crisis. He happened to mention the matter to the Recruiting Agent since he was the only one who could send them. They stayed one month worrying him about work and he finally arranged with the Dutch Company for their passage to Fernando Po. He offered further that there were 20 or more boys in the town at present who had like desires and was permitted to introduce them. A group of about 8 boys appeared some days later accompanied by a man who had been a washerman at Fernando Po, and, without deliberately impugning criminal motives, the testimony proved interesting, largely as evidence of their unsophisticated availability for any sort of arrangement.

Question. — What did you come to Monrovia for?

Boys. — We want work.

Question. — What work?

Boys. — Any work.

Question. — You want work here in Monrovia or outside?

Boys. — Any work,—anywhere.

Question. — What kind of work can you do? (Boys do not understand.)

What work you do before?

Boys. — No work before.

Question. — You no come to town before?

Boys. — No, sir.

Question. — Did you find anyone to give you work before? (Boys do not understand.)

Who you find to give you work?

Boys. — At the waterside.

Question. — Do you come up here every morning?

Boys. — No, sir.

Question. — You no ask people up here for work?

Boys. — No, sir.

¹ Testimony of Mr. Jesse Benson, April 17. A. 89, 90.

² Testimony of Mr. W. D. Stubblefield, Chief of Police, Monrovia, April 17. A. 117-119.

³ Passports are required only for persons leaving the country and not passengers between Liberian ports.

⁴ Testimony of Mrs. Mary Ellen Bloomeyer, April 17.

Others persons testifying before the Commission concerning this forced shipment of 24 boys from Monrovia for Fernando Po, not mentioned in the text were:

(a) Faulkner, T. J. R., April 14;
(b) Page, W. B., Postmaster, Monrovia, April 16;
(c) Kpalukpolo (Kpessi), April 16;
(d) Robert, native boy, April 16;
(e) Morris, G. D., April 17;
(f) Henson, J. L., Senior Tally Officer, Customs.

Question. — How do you do when you look for work ?

Boys. — (Through interpreter) I ask for work, and if they say I can go, I go ; if they send to Cape Palmas, I go. Wherever they say to work I go there to work.

Question. — Is there any other place beside Cape Palmas you want to go to ?

Boys. — No, sir, I come here four weeks ago.

Question. — You say you never worked before, have you never done any kind of work at all ?

Boys. — We have done no kind of work before ; we men no sabe work.

Question. — You want to go on a ship ?

Boys. — Yes, sir.

Question. — Suppose ship take you and put you somewhere else, you want to work there ?

Boys. — Yes, sir.

Question. — Nobody here tell you to go on ship and work somewhere else ?

Boys. — Yes, sir, but I no sabe the man.

Question. — Where is he ?

Boys. — No sabe.

Question. — Where do you expect to work then ?

Boys. — Any place they send me, I go work.

Question. — Anybody ever tell you about Fernando Po ?

Boys. — No, sir, but we sabe there ; we want to go there.

Question. — Did you ever hear any boys talk about Fernando Po ?

Boys. — (Interpreter speaking for himself) Yes, sir, I been there.

Question. — When you been there ?

Interpreter. — I work for Company.

Question. — You *all* want to go to Fernando Po ?

Boys. — Yes, sir.

Question. — How you boys want to go there if you never heard of it ? How you want to go there if this is so ?

Interpreter. — I sabe, I washman there ; wash clothes. I washman for Fernando Po.

Question. — Any of the rest of the boys been to Fernando Po ?

Boys. — No, sir.¹

PAY FOR THE REPATRIATED LABOURERS.

The rate of pay offered labourers in Fernando Po is £1.10.0 a month and food. One-half of this amount is given, in pesetas, in the Island. The other half is withheld for payment on return to Liberia. The complaint of the returned men who have come to the attention of the Commission, almost without exception, has been that their money was short, and occasionally that they received none at all. An effort to test the truth of the complaint led the Commission to request Mr. P. C. Parker, Spanish Vice Consul, although a Liberian, to explain the method of payment of boys.²

“ Each boy ”, he stated, “ earns 30/- per month or 1/- per day, and they are paid half their monthly wages in the Island, and the other half when they return here.”

No deductions are made in his office. Asked about the books kept and whether lists are kept of the boys returning and the amounts paid, he said there were no records of payments kept at all. He could not undertake to make out any such lists. “ The Spanish Government is a free Government and does not keep such books.” A pay sheet is sent with the boys and is usually returned to Fernando Po when the money is paid.

“ As Vice Consul I do not keep such records here. The Spanish Government has enough confidence in me. The Spanish Consul who is a new man could not supply them either. The Spanish Government does not bother with a lot of books.”

¹ Testimony of boys sent by Col. Davis, April 25.

² Testimony of P. C. Parker before the Commission as Vice Consul to Spain, April 17.

If a man dies the fact is reported to the Liberian Consul at Fernando Po and to the Liberian Secretary of State direct, and moneys due to such persons are sent to the Liberian State Department for payment to the deceased man's family. He could not supply any information on the point. He had nothing to do with paying advances to the boys before leaving for Fernando Po. That, he explained, was for the recruiting agents. He knew nothing about boys being shipped from Monrovia to Cape Palmas for Fernando Po. On the question if his appointment in Monrovia was mainly for the purpose of controlling payments of labourers returning from Fernando Po, he said :

“ Surely not ! I attend to bills of health and other matters. I represent Spain. Since last year or the year before there has been a new contract with Spain. I think it is for 3,000 labourers, but I am not an official of the Liberian Government. All my Government cares about is the 3,000 labourers.”

Asked about the boy reported to have received only £1.10.0 for two years' work, he said the details were not known to him.

Returning boys bearing slips for payment were rarely able to read and were accustomed to go promptly for payment, retaining no slips upon which a check could be made. In Cape Palmas the Recruiting Agent makes the payment. Only in one case was the Commission able to see the slip for payment before it was presented. This was in the case of Kuia, referred to earlier in this report, who had been in the Island 14 months and brought a slip calling for £1.12.3. It was mentioned otherwise in sessions that when boys change masters in the Island, or when masters are in any way changed, only the last one is responsible for his pay and only for that portion of time which he remained with him.

In the case of deck labourers and Gold Coast workers payment is usually made through the Labour Bureau, and although in their case alleged customs irregularities appear to reduce their earnings after a period of service, there is kept some official record of the pay-transaction.

Some of the complaints are given :

Grebo, who had lived with T. J. R. Faulkner remained in Fernando Po several years, estimated in money at about \$700.00. When he presented his slips he received £5.4.2.¹

The Hon. Too Wesley, a former Vice President, was asked :

“ Of the men who came back from Fernando Po after two years, would you say that they had brought back enough money to counterbalance the loss of labour ? ”

He answered that they definitely had not.²

Superintendent Brewer of Maryland County added to this observation that almost the entire advantage rested in their remaining home.³

Samuel Togba, who was sent as a representative of the Sass Town Chief to the Commission in Monrovia, complained that of the 500 or more boys who had been sent away through the agency of one Robert Bro, a Recruiting Agent for the Maryland County Recruiting Company, those who returned had little to show for their two years of service and to demonstrate gave the particular case of his brother, who spent his entire amount received on his return in the purchase of 20 heads of tobacco and one cloth.⁴

Without records of payments in Monrovia and in the absence of any supervision or control by the government in Cape Palmas it is impossible to ascertain the extent of the shortages of the men complained of, or any explanation of them.

The returned labourers from Libreville had not even the advantage of former Government control, and boys have roamed the streets for days vainly trying to learn who was expected to pay them.

One witness, a headman for 140 boys who went to the Congo (under the impression that they were going to Seccondy), testified that they received \$2.00 a week in French money while there and were told that they would be paid by the Recruiting Agent the other half on their return. They got no money although they had been back 6 months.⁵

On still another occasion returned men after spending several days in the town trying to collect their wages were finally assembled and the headman given £1.0.0, the big boys 10/- and small ones 5/- and told to go on home. They did.

A European physician living in Cape Palmas complained to E. & H. Nissen, headquarters in Copenhagen, about the pay of three boys, Joh Barzor ; Charlie Gleio ; and Nijema Kroo,

¹ Testimony of T. J. R. Faulkner, April 14.

² Testimony of Hon. H. Too Wesley, former Vice President, June 12, 474-477.

³ Testimony of Hon. George T. Brewer, June 12.

⁴ Testimony of Samuel Togba, Aug. 1, 1930.

⁵ Testimony of Freeman of Dobokey at Tarke, June 2, 1930.

who formerly had been with him and of whom, he says, he regards himself as guardian. One died in Libreville, but no pay was received by his relatives. The two who returned after 18 months had been told that there was no further money for them. During the full period of their labour in Libreville they had received 600 francs or about £5.0.0.

SOME CONSEQUENCES OF THE PRACTICE.

Although all labourers to Fernando Po have not been forced, it is quite clear that force has been relied upon for numbers; that the blind eagerness for private profit has carried the traffic to a point scarcely distinguishable from slavery; and that only by help of the instruments and offices of Government could the traffic have reached such tragic effectiveness. A great deal could be said of the danger, everywhere evident, to the wholesome economic development of the country, the deserted villages, neglected farms, "hungry time". At least an important element of the native population, which is without doubt the strength of the country, cannot look but with restless, harried dissatisfaction upon the general abuses of the machinery by which they are ruled. They give evidence in their complaints, of the weakening of a faith in law and order and civilization which could easily be fostered. They neglect not only their farms, but the art expressions which come out of a contented existence in certain other colonies. They have not only been deserting their towns for the deeper security of the bush, but deserting the country.

"I cry to my brother, 'I want to go to and ask the French people to take us because of our great trouble!'"

And again :

"If the Commission had not come we would be gone. We would leave the country and go anywhere."¹

The Commissioners are convinced that this condition of the natives is both unnecessary and dangerously unwise. And this opinion seems to be shared, interestingly enough, by Liberians who have held office and against whom the Commission has heard no complaints either of greed or dishonesty.

¹ Garraway testimony.

FORCED AND COMPULSORY LABOUR.

TERMS OF REFERENCE.

(d) To what extent compulsory labour exists as a factor in the social and industrial economy of the State, either for public or private purposes, and, if it does exist, in what manner it has been recruited and employed whether for public or private purposes.

(f) Whether the labour employed for private purposes on privately owned or leased plantations is recruited by voluntary enlistments or is forcibly impressed for this service by the Liberian Government or by its authority.

(g) Whether the Liberian Government has at any time given sanction or approval to the recruiting of labour with the aid and assistance of the Liberian Frontier Force, or other persons holding official positions or in Government employ, or private individuals have been implicated in such recruiting with or without Government's approval.

The Anti-Slavery Convention, while regarding forced or compulsory labour as fully within its purview, did less in defining than in describing the field. Because of the varied policies with regard to such labour, adopted by independent States and Dependencies and mandated territories, it appears that the problem has not been so much one of what shall be considered a prohibited status, as of the conditions which make measures of forced labour necessary; how much of it can be allowed; and how rapidly the necessity for it can be diminished.

Much of the discussion has centered in the International Labour Office, and, recognizing the need for establishing a standpoint from which to view it, a definition was tentatively formed in 1929, although it has not been, as in the case of slavery, internationally accepted.

“ All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty for its non-performance and for which the worker does not offer himself voluntarily.”

Herein it would appear that no distinction is made between “ forced ” and “ compulsory ” labour. The difference is recognised in discussions as merely one of degree.

Significantly, nothing is mentioned as to how and from where that labour is obtained or recruited, nor to what extent there is a danger of its degenerating into a condition indistinguishable from slavery.

Colonies and Dependencies in tropical Africa, striving to develop their natural resources, and recognising that this can be done only with the assistance of indigenous native effort efficiently guided, are thus faced with the problem of proper balance between the need of these resources and the welfare of the peoples upon whom they must depend. As a result, policies have varied with the States and Dependencies involved. Even within the same administration opinions have differed in proportion to the extent of knowledge possessed of tribal customs.

Throughout recent discussions on forced labour in the more advanced administrations in tropical Africa, certain principles are outstanding, based upon the view that an important ultimate effect of forced labour is to discourage voluntary effort, destroying the incentive to ownership, thus defeating its real aim; and, quite apart from the rights of natives to freedom from external and arbitrary exactions in which their own welfare is secondary, administrations are now giving attention to the nature of the work itself for which compulsion seems to be required, the question of when compulsion is justified, and the measure of it which is justifiable.

And while it is realized that in tropical African States and Dependencies where advanced and backward cultures are in contact there is a certain educative advantage in compulsory labour; it is, at the same time, recognised that these ends are defeated and may degenerate into conditions analogous to slavery, if unguided by strict policies of just and considerate treatment. Important among these policies and principles are the following:

(a) The work should be of a public character in which general community benefit can be recognised.

(b) It must be essential. (Some views have limited occasions for the use of compulsion only to sudden crises and emergencies.)

(c) There should be a stipulated period during the year in which such work is wholly inadmissible, such as the agricultural months.

(d) It must not involve the native workers' travelling long distances to work, or having to remain away from their homes for a long period.

(e) Attention must be given to the proper housing and feeding of the workers.

(f) The use of women and children should be discouraged, except upon that work which is designated according to custom as women's work.

(g) Where recruiting is done through native chiefs there must be strict circum-spection in the supervision of it.

(h) The labour in all cases must be paid.

(i) Fines must be strictly accounted for.

It will be convenient to consider the subject under the two headings of : Forced Labour for Public Purposes and Forced Labour for Private Enterprise.

A. FORCED LABOUR FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES.

1. Road Construction :

- (a) No Pay for Labour ;
- (b) Tools and Food ;
- (c) Road Quotas ;
- (d) Road Fines ;
- (e) Ill-treatment of Labourers ;
- (f) Intimidation and Extortion.

2. Public Works : Buildings.

3. Portorage.

1. Road Construction.

This has reference almost entirely to the construction of motor roads of general public utility, and not to pathways of which of course there is a network throughout the country. As in other parts of tropical Africa, these pathways are maintained according to immemorial custom by unpaid village labour of both sexes at the instigation of the chiefs in whose districts they are, if they are cared for at all. The division between these two classes is distinct.

In most Tropical African States and Dependencies forced labour is permissible for purposes of public works, mainly road construction, if other labour is not available. The period is never more than three months in the year, often only one, and the rate of payment is usually a little below the market rate, or is dependent upon the state of the treasury. During the agricultural months all road work ceases.

In Liberia compulsory labour has apparently been made use of since the Constitution of the Republic, more especially in recent years for road construction works. According to the Secretary of Public Works,¹ the Government has had under consideration since 1920 the construction of motor roads running northward into the hinterland from the principal town or port of each of the five counties. The road leading out of Monrovia towards Careyburg was commenced in 1920 by the War Department Labour Company, composed of 50 men and a sergeant, but the major road programme as such was not begun till 1923, when the President discussed the matter with the chiefs at the Suehn Conference. More recently, apparently about 1926, the road labour organization was taken over by the Public Works Department.

The Commission has given considerable attention to the road programme itself, with the idea of studying it in relation to the principle of necessity, in the various aspects of its execution. The Government objective, as explained by the President and other officials, has been :

(a) To recover the loss of produce and revenue vital to the Liberian market by diverting the course of the market from the British and French border which has been due to lack of routes of transportation to Liberian ports ;

(b) To save, for the native, the border through customs duties which he is averse to paying ;

(c) To provide a network of roads, through the more populous and developed areas, thus facilitating the transportation of raw materials ; and

(d) To eliminate, eventually, the necessity for head portorage.

¹ See letter June 9th, 1930—" Govt. Road Plan and method of executing it ".

The main road programme appears to have been evolved ahead of any preparatory survey of the country, or of its population or resources, and set into operation without expert road engineers. These, moreover, seem to be the very problems met with in its actual execution, as testified by the Secretary of Public Works.

1. "From points of view of topography of numbers, it is difficult to evolve a satisfactory or equitable distribution of public duties; various expedients have been suggested and all not yet tried out . . . Because of the unequal distribution of population in certain strategic centres along the roads, the Department has had to resort to the expedient of building labour camps in those regions. This was the only means by which the Department felt our national objectives mentioned above could be realized. In some measure this has entailed hardship, both to labourers and Department employees and has created some wrong impressions as to our methods, especially due to the fact that some men have to work the road a long distance from their homes. The situation has been a very intricate one to face, but after taking everything into consideration, the Department concluded that, in the face of the aversion of our uncivilized citizens to taxes, and in virtue of the agreement arrived at among themselves to supply labour rather than pay a tax, the only means of leading the roads through centres sparsely populated was to carry the men to those regions."¹

The construction of roads throughout the country must, of course, sooner or later be essential. Under the guidance of expert surveyors these roads might be so projected, and their construction so aligned, as to coincide with subsequent possible railway routes, thus saving at some future time enormous expense on railway cuttings and approaches. To have evolved such a highly pretentious roading scheme and put it into execution without the assistance of either surveyors or engineers, appears to us to have been a great waste of money and labour. If it were completed, it is doubtful if it would save anything for the native, but might certainly secure the payment of diverted funds which should find their way into the Government exchequer at the Liberian ports. It does not appear that the roads projected and under construction, as observed by the Commissioners, at any rate in Maryland, would pass "through the more populous and developed areas". The Webbo-Barrobo-Flebo road in Maryland at all events seems to supply little else than access to a temporary military station. In walking from its road-head construction works to Webbo, a matter of from ten to twelve miles, only one village, that of Wadaki, was observed, and nothing in the shape of a labour camp. The reference of the Secretary of Public Works to the "aversion of our uncivilized citizens to taxes" seems somewhat unfortunate. At the Suehn Conference the chiefs could scarcely do less than agree to provide labour for the construction of the roads since the President said the roads must be built. The purport of the universally reiterated complaints of the chiefs and people is not that they object to taxes but to the fact that in addition to finding the men they have to pay for their food, pay for their tools, pay numerous fines and are subjected to ill-treatment; all in the face of no remuneration whatever.

The system of roads, as contemplated, is as follows :

County Jurisdiction or Zone.

Grand Cape Mount County.

- (a) Robertsport-Bendu ;
- (b) Bendu-Kange ;
- (c) Karnga-Dah ;
- (d) Dah-Cobolia-Jene Barclay.

Montserrat County.

- (a) Monrovia-Kakata ;
- (b) Brewerville-Suehn ;
- (c) Millsburg-Suehn ;
- (d) Virginia-Brewerville ;
- (e) Clayashland-Suehn ;
- (f) Brewerville-Senjeh-Gorjeh-Kongba ;
- (g) Kongba-Dah ;
- (h) White Plains-Mt. Coffee-Doble Island ;
- (i) Kakata-Hartford.

Grand Bassa County.

- (a) Buchanan-Gio ;
- (b) Harlansville-Timbo-River Cess ;
- (c) Hartford-Gbanga ;
- (d) Hartford-Kakata.

¹ See memorandum of Secretary of Public Works Morris to the Commission.

Sinoe County :

- (a) Greenville-Lexington ;
- (b) Greenville-Blue Barrer-Plahn.

Maryland County (not listed in the Memorandum of Secretary of Public Works, but observed by the Commissioners to be) :

- (a) Harper-Flebo-Gbolobo (constructed) ;
- (b) Flebo-Barrobo-Webbo (under construction) ;
- (c) Puduke-Sodulo (constructed, but abandoned).

Hinterland Jurisdiction.

District Number I :

- (a) Suehn-Belle Yella-Gbaling-Zorzor-Ziggida ;
- (b) Ziggida-Sodulo-Kolahun.

District Number II :

- (a) Kakata-Gbanga-Sanoquelle ;
- (b) Gbanga-Garmu-St. John on the Frontier ;
- (c) Mount Coffee-Naama ;
- (d) Gbanga-Kpai.

District Number III :

- (a) Sanoquelle-Borphey ;
- (b) Borphey-Kpabli-Sarwulor-Gblor-Gio ;
- (c) Gbazon or Tappehbli-Kpai.

District Number IV :

- (a) Tawhlor-Gbazon-Tchien-Tuglor ;
- (b) Plahn-Tchien ;
- (c) Gbazon-Plahn.

District Number V :

- (a) Webbo-Gleyo-Tuglor.

The full scheme contemplates the projecting of roads over several hundred miles, through uneven and difficult African country.

Although during the period of the Commission's hearings in Liberia the road programme was suspended,¹ a road gang was observed at work on the Webbo-Barrobo-Flebo road by the League of Nations Commissioner, who inspected ten to twelve miles of road completed. The gang was composed of about 400 labourers, approximately half of whom gave the appearance of being minors. The outstanding points noted during this visit of inspection were the youth of the labourers, 200 or more being probably below the age of 16 ; their general appearance of discouragement and resignation, the outcry and complaints about the scarceness of food, the primitive character of the tools and appliances, the straightness of the road, its switchback character and the truly enormous amount of earth shifted in cuttings, which it seemed would have been quite unnecessary if a previous survey had been carried out ; other points were the meagreness of the ditching on either side, and the absence of levelling on moderate slopes. Everything to do with this road, its slow rate of progress, the absence of population upon it, its apparent irrelevance to stated policy and the discontent of the labour employed upon it, all tended to give the impression that its existence was not really essential to the economic development of the country and its people, and was being built without regard to either means or consequences. Amongst the consequences unfortunately have been wasteful expenditure of money and labour and callous exploitation of the native, inevitably resulting in loss of faith in the good offices and good judgment of the Government.

Road making in the Montserrado area should not prove an extremely difficult matter owing to the prevalence of hard red laterite. Once the overlying earth is cleared away a surface remains which requires comparatively little subsequent attention if the ditching on either side is adequate to prevent undue wash. But in Maryland, where the road programme has been enforced without consideration for the worker perhaps more than anywhere else in the country, roading is less easy, and, from observations made by the Commission, becomes more difficult as one leaves the coast. The hard surface mentioned above is for the most part non-existent in, say, the Webbo-Barrobo area, soft red earth prevailing, consequently when made the road is likely to be a "dry season road"—one that requires a great deal of upkeep, constant cleaning and in many parts is impassable during the wet season, at any rate,

¹ This fact was stated as regrettable by the President, who wished the Commissioners to see how contentedly the men worked.

for heavy car traffic. Miles of such road have already been constructed in Maryland and lost in the bush. The Webbo-Barrobo road mentioned above now being constructed, the whole length of which was traversed by the League of Nations Member of the Commission, requires so many culverts, owing to the lack of intelligent survey, several being necessary within a distance of a few hundred yards, that before these are likely to be constructed and cars can pass along it, the road will have reverted. It is already overgrown with grass within a mile of the working party.

If a skilled road surveyor had in the first instance been employed and the route laid out adequately, and if a competent engineer had been placed in charge of the construction, infinite trouble would have been avoided and probably four times the length of road would now have been available. Moreover, much of the discontent so widespread amongst the people would have been avoided, and the thousands of natives employed on the work during the last ten years would have been freed to grow food and produce, and play their part in the general commercial development of the region. Considering the brief period of attempted control over the tribes of the interior; their lack of full appreciation of the principles and necessities of taxation; the unfamiliarity of the officials with the topography and life of the interior and the undeveloped state of markets; the impression becomes strong that the plan must have been crystallized more as an external or administrative programme than as a measure of internal economy.

The situation required an abrupt readjustment on the part of the natives to bring them to an acceptance of the road plan as one of advantage and convenience to themselves, when the matter was presented by the President to the native chiefs in 1923 at the Suehn Conference, and in other meetings with the chiefs or special tours in districts No. 1 and 2. With the settled decision that there must be roads, they were presented with the alternatives of unpaid labour or a road tax for defraying the costs of construction and maintenance. Still not fully adjusted to the hut tax, they looked with concern upon the prospect of a further imposition.

2. "The Department has discovered (a fact which the Commissioners can easily detect for themselves by putting the relevant questions to any aboriginal) that the natives are reluctant to pay tax for road construction. It was for this reason that the Government adopted the alternative of proposing the supplying of free labour instead of paying tax¹." Paramount Chief Dardo of Kakata who had received a commission from the President to chieftancy from speaker, observed almost naïvely before the Commissioners at Kakata :

3. "If you help someone to become big and you give him order he will take it. Therefore, I cannot refuse order from the President."

The chief, however, stated that in agreeing to the roads he was influenced by the statement "with the road what you could walk in two days the car can take you in one hour".

Unfortunately for the ultimate success of this extensive road plan, all road work had before 1923 become extremely unpopular with the natives, owing to the construction being in the hands of the War Department, and no doubt to the driving power of its fifty uniformed men and one sergeant. According to the testimony of native chiefs examined by the Commission and of men who had been employed on the work during that period, the unpopularity was not materially diminished after the work was taken over by the Public Works Department in 1926. Today it seems to have become almost the chief grievance in some parts of the country and a very serious one.

Both policy and practice appear to vary according to sections.

4. The sections near Monrovia (Montserrado County) are under the supervision of the Director of Public Works, while in all other sections the work is under the supervision of the County Superintendents.

Secretary Morris. — The Superintendents are expected to obtain labourers from the native chiefs, and may divide them into working gangs, some working from the coast interiorwards while others work downwards.

Question. — What relations have the District Commissioners to the Superintendents?

Secretary Morris. — If in the hinterland jurisdiction, they direct the getting of the labourers. Strictly speaking the Superintendents have no jurisdiction over the hinterland.

Question. — So when labourers come down from the hinterland jurisdiction, it is not in accordance with the policy of your Department?

Secretary Morris. — In 1929, it was decided to pool labour for the road, and perhaps the Superintendents were following that idea; but the Department has since abandoned that idea as it was found to work hardship.

¹ From Memorandum of Secretary of Public Works to the Commission, page 2.

Question. — Who plans the road work, your Department ?

Secretary Morris. — In a general way, but closely, it is done by the Superintendents.

Question. — How close does the Department come in actually laying the road ?

Secretary Morris. — With respect to Maryland County, the Department has left that matter with the Superintendent, who co-operated with the Firestone Company in the laying of the road. Firestone constructed the bridges for the Government. The Department has not furnished an engineer, but local surveyors have been from time to time obtained by the Superintendent. The Department only advises from where the roads are to be laid out, and the actual laying is left to the Superintendent.¹

Except on the more recent stages of the road-building where the assistance of Firestone engineers in building culverts and bridges has been secured, the laying out of the road was in the hands of officials, well intentioned enough, perhaps, but unskilled in road building.² An inevitable result has been wasteful expenditure of labour and money. This fact has been noted by the natives themselves, and the recognition of it has not improved their feeling about the requisitioning of their labour.

The method of laying out the route at the road head in the Monrovia Section as explained to the Commission by Momolu Gray, an experienced native road overseer, is in point. Referring to the necessity for soldiers supplied for his protection when threatened by certain residents for arbitrarily establishing a sort of "right of eminent domain" through their property, he stated that the actual laying out of the route was in his hands.

5. *Question.* — Who makes the survey ?

Answer. — Myself and a native man.

Question. — You do not use a surveyor ?

Answer. — No, we do that ourselves by means of a horn ! The site is selected and one of us would start at the starting-point while the other with the horn would locate the track into the bush. After going a certain distance, he would blow the horn and I would follow out my line until I get to him, and then he will proceed further, and so on.

Between sections the number of labourers required, the length of time spent on roads, the fines for delinquencies as well as the method of imposing and collecting them varies considerably. This in itself reflected a weak and often ineffectual central supervision and control over policies of superintendents and commissioners outside Montserrado County. The uncertainty of jurisdiction over boundaries crossed by the roads, the apparent infrequency of inspection and the slackness in regard to registration and records, could easily wreck the most definite of central road programmes. It is significant in this same connection that the treatment of natives varies according to sections and appears to become more oppressive the greater the distance from Monrovia.

The onus of force is most often upon the paramount chiefs who "agreed" to furnish labour rather than pay the special road tax. Their responsibility is, in turn, relayed to the town chiefs who must produce the men. These "boys" have to be fed but it is impossible to carry a fortnight's food. When funds are available in his village treasury, each boy receives two or three shillings with which to buy food. If the work continues for a month as in Bassa County some of them receive six or seven shillings, but actually the large majority of them take all they can carry and hope for the best. Sometimes small supplies are sent to them, but for much of the time they complain that they go hungry. They assert that they are not allowed to leave the work nor to go and forage for themselves afterwards ; they are herded in some nearby village at night or in a roadside camp, sometimes as many as 400.

The town chiefs complain that their troubles are not ended when they have supplied these boys with food or money to buy it. They have to find them hoes or spades, pickaxes and baskets, etc., if not available in the village, and the task of squeezing the people is a thankless one. Every man carries a cutlass, but the other tools have to be bought or borrowed. The generality of complaints leaves little doubt that the assumption of the Government that the natives can simply bring these tools is not only too sanguine but in reality is a hardship. Even having the tools the town chief's difficulties are not over. The gang arrives late at the work some Monday morning and is fined by the road overseer from two to twelve shillings each boy, in some cases £1, and the Paramount Chief receives a bill for the amount by a road

¹ Testimony of Secretary Morris before the Commission in Monrovia July 21.

² In conversation Vice President Yancy said : " I have no idea of surveying, but as County Superintendent I had to do the layout of the roads and do the best I could under the circumstances. "

messenger if the boys on the road have not got the money. Then he comes down with a heavy hand on the Town Chief for payment in money or kind. Additional fines may be imposed apparently for trivial things, until the villagers eventually become overburdened with debt and have to sell their farm stock or produce ; or they may obtain credit from a local trader who takes care never to release them from the debt, or they may resort to pawning.

The bitterest complaint of the natives is that, with this necessity for working on the roads, providing their food and tools, exposure to ill-treatment and fines, they get no pay. They appear to feel that they have work enough of their own to clear their farms, plant their rice, harvest it, and protect it from the birds. They assert that they are obliged to grow much more food stuffs than they require for themselves, because of the necessity for supplying monthly rice and palm oil to the District Commissioner as well as to the military posts.

To prepare rice means considerable labour for their women. When the rice crop is ripe it has to be harvested ear by ear, tied into convenient small bundles, carried to the village, and hung to the rafters of the living house that it may dry. When required for use each bundle is placed in a wooden mortar and pounded till the grain is separated from the straw and chaff. It then has to be pounded in another mortar till the husking process is complete. If the District Commissioner's supply is a day or two late they are fined, and the chiefs are liable to be imprisoned in the station guard-room until the money is paid. Since the men have been obliged to work on the roads the villagers find that they have not sufficient labour on their rice fields and other farms to grow the augmented food supply needed for both town consumption and road workers, and the time spent in carrying the food to these workers still further reduces the necessary labour on the farms.

The objective of the road scheme was a highway, following old trails through villages between two determined points. Apparently, responsibility for guiding it through the country to its terminal point trailed off once the points were decided upon, and an almost straight road up and down dale eventuated. A result of the actual programme in operation in many sections has been to drive the natives from the towns along the route if there were any deeper into the bush, abandoning their old setting to escape the new opportunities for exploitation and demands upon their food and funds by the procession of officials and soldiers passing through. Rather than be under the constant pressure of fines and punishment of various sorts, they have preferred to grow less food stuffs or try and leave the country. Not many years ago, it has been authoritatively stated by persons acquainted with native life, and by natives themselves, that it was not uncommon for sections to have as many as four rice crops in their stores. The incentive to this activity appears to be gone. Their deserted towns bear silent testimony to the truth of their statements. Between Kakata and Ganta, for example, by actual count there are 49 deserted villages. The ends, it must be said, are almost entirely defeated by the means employed to accomplish them.

The testimony of natives and their chiefs, as quoted later in this section, will throw further light upon the actual operation of the road programme and its effects upon the morale of the native population. Even without additional facts the Commission is of opinion that the ambitious road programme of the Department of Public Works should be postponed or curtailed until a reorganisation of the Department has been carried out and some effective administration of the interior has been put into operation.

(a) NO PAY FOR LABOUR.

In the general reference to the road programme in Liberia it has been pointed out that, as in other tropical countries, resort has been made to forced labour for what is conceived as essential public work. The question as to whether or not the labour is forced seems less debatable in Liberia than that of the essentiality of the programme as devised. The emphasis by the Government upon the "giving of consent by the chiefs" is thus, in the view of the Commission, misplaced. It seems to have obscured the inherent danger of abuse, and the necessity for the humane and just handling of the labour so impressed. The most satisfactory as well as profitable arrangement is one in which there is mutual economic advantage. The obligations of trusteeship are ignored where no attention is given to these vital requisites.

The present concern of civilized governments is to prevent forced labour from degenerating into conditions analogous to slavery—a real danger here—and this concern is expressed in what practically amounts to recognised principles for regulating the use of forced labour. One of the foremost of these requirements is that the labour should be paid. Although

the weekly imposts of labour keep several thousands of natives on the road in successive gangs for nine months of the year, there is no pay for road labourers on any of the roads in the country.¹

The feeling of labourers and town chiefs is that, to meet the fines which exposure to the road programme makes inevitable, as well as the need of money for tools and for food in "hungry time", *i.e.*, when the season's rice supply is exhausted, they should receive some sort of compensation. This question of pay is made more acute by the necessity, at the same time, of providing food for all the Government stations and barracks in their midst. In the view of the natives, under the circumstances, and in a very real sense not to be ignored, they have contributed more to the building of the roads than the Government itself, and instead of receiving pay have really paid.

The following copies of testimony before the Commission will illustrate this and other points.

6. *A Chief from the Kakata Section before the Commission.*

<p>No pay.</p> <p>Monthly rice supplies.</p>	<p>rice</p>	<p>"All what the people saying that is all the palaver going on here; just a few things left and I will explain to you. Ever since they started the road from Monrovia to here we have not got one cent. Every month if we don't find Government rice they fine us. The whole country of native people, all are slaves now, we don't know where to go now. When they punish you hard and say pay and you trying to go to another section, when you cross one creek they catch you and bring you back . . . We are working for the Government and pay month rice. You plant the rice, build the kitchen, dry the rice, and then you cannot eat it. That is what got us hard up now. Sometime the President he does not give us one thing. What we are now? They say Liberian not slaves, but we are slaves now."</p>
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On one or two occasions a present of money has been given to the chiefs by the President. At one time \$1,000.00 was so distributed.

7. *A Chief before the Commission.*

<p>Soldiers</p> <p>No help from Paramount Chiefs.</p>	<p>from</p>	<p>"All these labourers, all these people they have brought them. The old people borne them, but what going on here we don't know. On account of this same road. When the road started from Monrovia come here nobody did it but the labourers and not one cent we got. They got soldiers to put over them. If they give them food the soldiers take it and eat it before them. If you don't pay they tie you. The same Kakata you see here the labourers built it without one cent. We go to the big people and Paramount Chiefs and complain: they do nothing. If they stand behind them we don't know. We give the soldiers palm oil and rice; if you don't they make you do it."</p>
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8. *A Town Chief before the Commission.*

<p>Compulsion and fines.</p> <p>Labour quotas</p>	<p>"We must give 20 labourers. If you do not agree, they fine you. My two children, I pawned them. I was sub-chief once, but they broke me, and now I am town chief. When the President came here, he said no sub-chiefs or station masters. When you send your labourers on the road they let them pay fifty cents if they are late, and then work. If they do not work, they catch them, throw them down, and the whip they get is their pay. The only money they get for their work is whip. They call for rice, and you don't give them, they flog you. No time for us to do our work. If you do not send the boys on the road they fine you; they tie you with a long stick on your back. If you do not get money you have to take your son and pawn him to get money to pay and then you fight hard to get the money to redeem the child.</p> <p>"Formerly we were only four men in my town, we are now six. Sometimes I send three, sometimes they ask for two, I send two. Sometimes they ask for five. Where must I get them? We have been here every day. We send labourers. One time President came here. The people say the punishment too much for us. All this building you see here, the people</p>
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¹ A paid force of about 150 men is used on finishing stages of road work in the Monrovia area. This force was originally under the War Department. When the Department of Public Works was created a portion of the men formed the nucleus of a new labour force which at one time had a strength of 250, while the others became a part of the expanding Frontier Force. They are to be distinguished from other workers by a type of uniform.]

<p>Ill-treatment,</p> <p>Harrassing by soldiers.</p> <p>Maltreatment of women.</p> <p>President said no fines.</p> <p>Fear of the after.</p>	<p>build it. When they send the labourers if you send two to cut palm nuts to make chop for the boys, and they count them and they are short, they fine you. Where are we to get them ? But we are compelled to bring them. Sometimes we ourselves work on the road. When the road come and we send labourers the soldiers and messengers are behind us with sticks. If you do not run, they put sticks between your legs and throw you down, and if you break anything, they make you pay. This is the palaver we brought here. We are nothing but slaves now, and this house here, our women worked on it. When they were working on the house, the soldiers and messengers were pricking them with sticks from behind. If their husbands happened over there and asked them why they do that, they beat them. It is only two weeks since we stopped working on the road. How we can manage to do our own work ? Then the President came and said they must fine anybody again. The Paramount Chief one time fined us, and we took the report to Monrovia. They turned us around, and up till today we have not heard anything, and the money we paid is lost. Right now they are thinking of us since we seen these white people here. The whole section say the white people are for us. But soon you all go, we will work on the road again. What I said I was afraid of is because soon as you turn your back, they will light fire on me."</p>
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9. *A Chief before the Commission.*

<p>No pay.</p> <p>No food.</p> <p>Work for nothing.</p> <p>The gentleman who knows book.</p> <p>Only the Paramount Chief making money.</p> <p>The D. C.'s acquisitiveness.</p> <p>Fines.</p> <p>Exodus.</p>	<p>" I am town chief. They punish us too much. On this road construction work ever since the road started we have paid for the work. The Government does not pay us one cent. We have to feed all the labourers ourselves and in addition have to supply Kakata station with rice. When the town chiefs are called here the Government gives them no food. The rice belongs to the Government, they say. All this work is done by us for nothing. We have to buy our own tools and buckets and pots for the men to take on the road. Each village has to be taxed 5/- to buy the things. The villages are not all in one place ; some are far away. Many of the men have to travel a long way to work. If a man is late he is whipped, and often fined 50 cents for the day. We see nothing good here ; all is bad. If you see a nice house it belongs to some gentleman who knows book. If you know anyone who is making money it is the Paramount Chief or Sub-chief. Small boys are made messengers and if you lay your hands on them you are put in jail. We work on the road, we cut bush and send labourers to Firestone, and have to do our own farming in addition, besides having to send rice to the stations and elsewhere every month. We are dying in this section. To make matters worse the District Commissioner has taken land belonging to me, and my goats, chickens, and cows because they were on the land, which now belongs to him. He just came and said the place belonged to him. He has put his ducks on the water we drink from. I have no farm now and have to buy cassada from some one else. I bought \$7.00 worth of stumps to plant, but the D. C. send men who took them all away to plant his farm with. I complained to the D. C. but he only said ' If you don't like living here, go somewhere else.' He fines people for the smallest things. One day he said my people had killed a chicken of his and he made me pay for it. One of my boys found a pig belonging to him dead in the bush. He made me pay £1.10/- apparently on the pretext that the boy had killed it and sent the boy to work on the road. Most of my people have gone away now, because there is nothing to eat."</p>
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10. *A Witness from Deh Section before the Commission.*

<p>Road palaver.</p> <p>Pay for chop.</p> <p>Complaints to the Secretary of the Interior</p>	<p>" The road palaver wants to make us fly. From my town I send two boys every week on the road and give them 7/- a week. I feed the boys, the Paramount Chief, and the District Commissioner. Whenever one of the boys is sick, the late Foley Massali would send and have him changed and would collect 4/- from me. If I have not the money to pay, they would catch me and carry me on the road myself and make me pay a fine. Well, Mr. Commissioner, if you have boys on the road working for nothing, and one of them is ill will you have to pay money for that ? Now when Foley Massali did all this to us and we told him that we were coming to report the matter to the Secretary of the Interior, he said, ' All right, if you go, I will take some of the fine money to bear my expense to go before the Secretary.' We brought the matter to the Secretary but did not meet him in office, but the Secretary's clerk gave us a letter and told us to carry</p>
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Fined. it to the Paramount Chief. I said, ' No. I want to see the Secretary himself.' The clerk said, ' All right, wait for the Secretary, but he will tell you the same thing.' Sure enough when the Secretary came he told us the same thing. When we returned to the Paramount Chief's court, we met a long chain ready to tie us with. The Paramount Chief then put a fine on us. We have to work on the road. Hungry is in our country."

11. *A Witness before the Commission at Kakata, April 30, 1930.*

Road palaver " Plenty news here and if I tell you all it will take two weeks, but I will tell you some. The work we are doing here the punishment we are seeing here on the road. Ever since the road started from Monrovia to come here, we went to start the road in Monrovia. Each town chief sent four labourers. If you don't they catch you. If you send some, they fine you for the balance. They do not pay us. They fine us 12/6 for each labourer short. We have nothing to pay with. We have been doing that ever since until this time. These camps from here to Kakata we built it. The women daub the houses. One soldier had my wife here two months. Again this year I have no place to stick one cassada stick. Firestone got the place, cut the bush, and burn it up. The same thing going on here, they catch us, lock us up in jail here, what we do we don't know. We slept there till four o'clock next day, when we come here they say all must send 5 hampers rice and 10/-. This year we will have no rice because Firestone have taken our land.

No pay. " We want to go somewhere else to stay now. This work here we do it— if we don't they beat us with that whip. When we tell the Paramount Chief he said what he can do. All the little children you see the Vai people got, when they fine us we pawn them to the Vai people to get the money.

Soldier has wife. " We got nothing when Firestone took our land. I took work to Mr. Porter of Firestone to report, he said, ' Not time yet.' Every time I go he says no time."

In jail.

Fined.

We pawn our children.

Firestone.

12. *A Witness before the Commission at Kakata, on April 30, 1930.*

Faulkner. " This time President had council here we build the house. First time President and Faulkner joined. Faulkner said they are doing the native people too much and he wanted to be President, and all the people wanted Faulkner to be President. After that we do not know what they are doing—they all say we stand behind Faulkner, so they will rule us hard.

Porterage. The labourers and women built this house. The Paramount Chief's messenger when they bring them here, they lay in the bush, and if you go in the bush to walk they catch you and tie you and beat you so you cannot look yourself again. Sometimes the officers and District Commissioners passing, if you don't give them labourers to tote their loads, they catch the town chief and beat him. Here is the whip. That is all the pay we get for the work we do. (Whip handed to Commissioners). Our labourers brought it to show you. They were beating him and he took it. You see Monrovia clean today—the labourers work it. We native people are not satisfied. Sometimes we go for one week. The chiefs are not behind us. When we tell them they beat us too. Where the Commissioner is now is the place I was staying. One day Secretary Morris took me and tied me tight, with my hands to my knees and packed cassada up my hands to my face. He told me he wanted me to be road commissioner; the first Paramount Chief said no. We don't know if white people open Firestone, but the piece of ground we had Firestone took it and we have no place to work now. On account of the road we have no time to make cassada farm; they say we must be here to do Government work. The District Commissioner told us to remove the signs from our farms and plant in his own farm. Formerly people used to go to Fernando Po. They brought note to the Paramount Chief and he sent them."

The whip.

Chiefs not behind us.

Firestone.

Fernando Po.

(b) TOOLS AND FOOD.

For the first four or five years of the road programme the government provided no tools. The men were required to bring their own, or use sticks and improvised baskets made of leaves. More recently certain special tools have been purchased. Although no record seems to be available of the number of tools, an estimate by a road overseer placed the number around 800 for tools of all sorts on the Careysburg road, probably including those of the unformed labour force. It is expected that the labourer will bring his own cutlass and country

hoe ; if not he is fined. On the Monrovia-Careysburg Road, one of the best in the country, a steam-roller has been added to the equipment on that section on which stands the President's country house. On the continuation of the road to the Firestone Plantations the Company co-operated with the Government in supplying tools for the workers with the idea of getting the best possible communicating road between its plantations and Monrovia. This applies also to portions of the Harper to Gbolobo road in Maryland County.

Complaints are frequent in the testimony before the Commission, that although the natives received neither pay nor food they had actually to spend money to purchase tools, food, etc. This is felt specially keenly by town chiefs, who are most frequently made responsible for the tools as well as the men, and who assert that often they had to pawn their children to pay their debts. These complaints were heard from Gbe Section, Teh Section, Boporo, Brewersville, Kakata, Bassa, and Harper to Gbolobo in Maryland County.

13. *A Headman from Teh Section before the Commission, Monrovia.*

" I am headman on the road. When I am ready to go every week I have to feed myself. If I do not carry a hoe, 1/- they fine me 1/-. I have to pay all this. I have four brothers, they fine them \$3.00 and 3/- each . . . One time they ask me to bring money for them to buy pots to cook our chop on the road, and all the boys each paid 1/- for the pots. They bought the pots, and since then we have not seen the pots because they did not give them to us."

14. *A Road Worker before the Commission, Monrovia.*

" When they order us on the road and we have no cutlasses. We carry our own hoe and axe. If you do not carry axe and the axe cost 5/- they fine you 5/6, then you bring another 5/- to buy the axe. If the bill hook cost 1/- they fine you 1/- after which you bring another 1/- to buy the bill hook. If the hoe cost 2/- they fine you 2/- after which you bring 2/- to buy a new hoe."

15. *A Road Worker from the Boporo road before the Commission.*

" Every week when the men are ready to go on the road I have to give them one cutlass each, one axe and one hoe. If I don't give them these things they fine them sometimes 2/- each. When they are ready to go on the road we have to give them 2/- each for food. When they divide the road they give the boys time to finish the work ; if you do not finish it in that time you have to pay £10. When we asked the Paramount Chief to stop that he said they have to do it to finish the road quick. Sometimes if some of my people are sick and cannot go they are fined. If you don't go you pay 12/6d each week. If you send your boy and he does not go, they send and arrest the town chief and put him on the road. When they go and arrest you the chief gives orders that they must tie you and they do so before they carry you to the Paramount Chief. If you do not pay they won't untie you until you pay, and you have to pawn your child or wife."

16. *A Road Worker before the Commission (from Gordie).*

" We have to buy hoe, axe and cutlass ; otherwise we are fined. I am headman to send boys from Gordie to Boporo road. There are 12 men in the town. All the fine they fine us is £11.5.2."

Day after day while depositions were being given upon the subject of road work the Commissioners listened, sometimes for hours, to the same complaints reiterated by the road labourers. Of these grievances an outstanding one, invariably associated with non-payment, was the scarcity of food and having to provide it themselves. Want of consideration for the natives on the part of the road staff and the chiefs seemed to be the basis of all the complaints. The ultimate necessity for the roads they well recognized. Many speakers during the Kakata meeting stated that they were perfectly willing to construct them if payment was made and the treatment less harsh.

The Commission is confident that under better and more considerate treatment of the native the palaver would tend to straighten itself. Under normal conditions in a rich food country such as Liberia, if the natives were allowed time and unhampered opportunity to grow their produce and make their own use of it, road construction parties would be rationed by their own people as a matter of course. ¹

¹ See also pp. 52-53 for further information on the food question.

(c) ROAD QUOTAS.

The selection of drafts of labour from village communities without creating discontent is always a matter of considerable difficulty. It is, in fact, a universal problem—one which the tropical African administrator has always to deal with. He alone by conscientious work and travel can lessen the reflected difficulties continually arising from it, by acquiring for himself a personal knowledge of all the chiefs and villages in his district. Native habits, customs and occupations vary astonishingly. Some people live in large tribal communities and a numerical census is comparatively easy while in other places family groups of houses are scattered broadcast. So that to make a hard and fast regulation that a certain proportion of men in every village shall be drawn upon as the village quota for road work or any other labour is not feasible. In Liberia the lack of census returns, the lack of interest on the part of the District Commissioners and the self-interest of the chiefs makes an equitable arrangement difficult. Three to five persons are presumed to occupy one hut, but there has not been a hut assessment for seven years. Any estimate of the number of men available, therefore, is scarcely more than guess work on the part of the Government. A complicating factor has been the springing up of so-called "half-towns" where small groups or families separate from the larger towns and establish villages of eight or ten huts at a distance or near by the original settlement. It is left to the judgment of the Paramount Chief or Speaker to decide which towns are big and which "half-towns", except, however, when it is known that the chief has been partial by permitting a big town to send too few men. In practice considerable difficulty and discontent arises on the part of the natives, and this was frequently reflected in the complaints of chiefs before the Commission.

17. *A Chief before the Commission.*

"When the time comes for the road we send 250 men for one week at a time. They change every week. They tax us 250 men on the road. They work from Monday to Saturday and then we send another 250. Some town have given 50 labourers, and some 100. They stay one week to rest before going on the road again. Any time we send the labourers those who remain in the village send chop. If it is hungry time I send money. But most all the time I send chop.

"When we send labourers on the road the town chief is responsible to buy tools to give them. The thing with us now is that if the town chief has not the money to buy tools, where can he get it? We try to make money by selling kernels, etc., but when it is time to give tools we have to give it."

The set of men in the second week's draft are not necessarily the same as the first. Perhaps half of them are replaced, and again in the third draft there may be only a few who were in the first. In most places the quota is so arranged that the men in the first draft may not have to go on the road work again for about a month, so that in eight working months each man should have done about two months' work. The easy working of the arrangement depends upon there being sufficient men in the village. If the quota is too large the men may have to turn out every other week and do four months work in the year. If the construction works are far from their villages the men will waste time and energy in travel every week-end, if it is a weekly scheme; hence a more practical arrangement is to work for a month on end as in Bassa County; but in this case difficulty of food supply is somewhat enhanced. In Liberia much of the discontent is due to the quota being too large. As the District Commissioner possesses no safe means of estimating the right quota from each village he increases his demands for more until he is far beyond the limit often without knowing it. The villagers then become loaded with fines, have no time to devote to cultivation, and thus are unable to find the money to free themselves.

18. *A town Chief before the Commission at Kakata.*

"Some of the towns have only three houses, some have five; when you report to these big officials they say we did not tell anybody to build five houses and call it a town. Some towns have 30 houses, they collect six labourers from them and six from the 5 hut towns. When you get three labourers from each town, the smaller towns have to hire other men to work; at the end of the week they ask you the three hut town for more labourers, but you cannot get the men. I am the one they ask to catch the men and if I cannot catch I report and they give me orders to catch the chiefs of the towns and make them pay. The time we were here I was sub-chief. I used to get messengers to carry messages from the Paramount Chief, and when they cannot get the men I send to tell the Paramount Chief, and he would send for me to arrest the men and send them to him."

"What I see I want to tell, because you all will walk through the country I do not want to make any mistake. What they did not do to me, I won't say. I stay at Bangah. One barrack between us and the Belleyalla people. When all Government people go, that is where they stop . . . When you born your own children and they get big, they work for the Government . . . Today Capt. Grant is on the road with Jimmie Miller. He send word to me to put 50 labourers on the road. When I have no time to collect all that much they give me soldiers to help collect the labourers. Once again, District Commissioner Garnett's clerk came to the barracks. He sent messengers to me and asked for 100 labourers to be ready for the next day. I told him I could not get all the labourers the next day. I asked Miller to tell the clerk to give me three days. He said all right. Then he said how many I get I can put them on the road. When the road from Boporo reach to this man both of us gave the clerk boys.

"The monthly rice both of us gave his 120 hampers, and then he sent to tell us how much labourers we must send to him. I do not know if he will stop there. That is why I collect the men to come into the town. When the clerk came he asked for labourers. My town and this other man's town gave 20 labourers. He said we must bring the balance. I told him that was all I got. He said I was compelled to get the labourers. All the Liberian people going out they send word all over the section for labourers. When they send their messengers what I get I give them. He told us to take off our clothes. I refused. Once again the time we were in Kakata we clean the road. The labourers we sent they put them on top of the kitchen and when they take them down they put rope on their waists . . . So we say let us go down at No. 1 District."

A witness from Gordie testified that of 12 men in his town two were sent weekly. A witness from Benganow with twenty men in town sent four. A headman, from Baimeh, told the Commission that he had six boys and men in his town, three of whom could work. Each week he sent one of the three while the other three old ones stayed at home to feed them. A witness from Teh Section had 12 men in town and sent 2 weekly to the road. Of the 12 men three were too old to work.

20. *A Town Chief from Bongatown sends three men to the road.*

Question. — How many men in your town ?

Saugba. — We had only four. We are now six. Sometimes I cannot send three. Sometimes they ask for two. Sometimes they ask for five. Where must I get them ?

Within the Maryland County jurisdiction a general principle of selection appears to prevail, but there have been observations of frequent arbitrariness in the settling of quotas. Mr. Allen N. Yancy was in charge of the roads until 1927 when he became Vice President and was succeeded in his Superintendency by Mr. James S. Brooks, apparently a weak administrator and concerning whom the natives frequently remarked "Mr. Brooks is Mr. Yancy."

The volume of unpaid labour drawn from the total native population is indicated by the fact that from District No. 5 alone, 1,085 men are expected for road work. This figure gives also some indication of the considerable amount of money it might be possible to draw from the whole of Liberia in the shape of fines for absence, lateness, loss of tools and other alleged delinquencies.

The native population is drawn upon not only for roads, but for the Firestone Plantations, Fernando Po, Libreville and elsewhere. In general the smaller towns along the coast are required to send 20 to 60 men and the larger towns as many as 100. Towns along the beach, most of which were visited by the Commissioners, are required to provide the following quotas : Najao 30, Garraway 20, Nihwie 10, Fishtown 20, Wedabo Beach town 20, Middletown 10, Rocktown 20, Pudukeh 10, Bigtown 20, Half Graway 10, Whole Graway 20, Yaakeh 10, Grand Cavalla 30, Picanini Cess 20. All of these, a total of 240 labourers weekly, are required for the Harper-to-Gbolobo Road. And while many other towns within the county zone contributed to the total unpaid labour force, it is interesting to note that this stretch of road of about 25 miles, demanding at least 240 boys weekly for nine months of the year, has been under construction for nine years and is not yet completed. The heavy drafts for private farms are made responsible for an important part of this situation. Again, these quotas are reported in certain instances to have been increased as punishment for refusal to allow men to be taken to Fernando Po.

21. *A Chief from Kunewe Section before the Commission.*

"Then he (Mr. Yancy) said, 'Since you refuse to go to Fernando Po, you will have to supply me with 60 boys for the road instead of the 20 as before. If you do not do this, you will see what will happen to you. If I were to do anything to you, no one will do anything to me. Therefore he put me and my people in a house at the Cape as prisoners, and we were there awaiting for the arrival of the Spanish steamer so that he could send us on to Fernando Po. But I told him too that he could go ahead and do anything he liked with me, and that God would come at some future date and help me. But the men in the interior are my people, and they go to Fernando Po.'"

In certain instances noted by the Commissioners, chiefs have paid fairly large sums to be released from the road obligation, and in other instances have been required to pay considerable sums to have their men released from the roads during the farming season, when the road work is expected to close down. One Paramount Chief, for example, testified that for 5 years he paid £60.0.0 to Vice President Yancy and the sixth year £80.0.0 to have his men released for their farm work.

(d) ROAD FINES.

Few of the complaints registered at the Kakata meeting, or during the Commissioner's stay in Maryland County and District No. 5, omitted to record resentment over the frequency of fines and the excesses to which these were carried. Tardiness, absence, insufficient quotas, lack of tools, uncompleted tasks, gave occasion for fines. These could be seen clearly enough as measures of control and regulation but for the fact that neither these workers nor their town chiefs have any resources to draw upon in payment of the fines justly or unjustly imposed, save their village funds and goods.

They tried to make clear their position by comparing themselves now with times not so far past, when they possessed little herds of cattle and goats, sheep and chickens and their wants were reasonably supplied. Now, they assert, most of them have nothing, not even chickens. Their chickens and live-stock are required by soldiers, messengers and officials whom they dare not refuse. They feel little inclination to possess a visible surplus and not infrequently they are disposed to reduce their possessions to the bare requirements of existence. Of money they now have almost none. Most of it, they say, has gone in fines, road fines chiefly, and in the continuous demands to defray the cost of food and tools for the road work.

Receiving no pay for all the work they are obliged to perform, and having no time or very little in the year to devote to themselves, they naturally can make no money, and great hardship is entailed. Moreover, their women cannot help them as they did previously when they had time on their hands. Owing to the increasing and apparently exorbitant monthly demands for rice, palm oil etc., for the D.C. or the military camps, their women have to be hard at work all day pounding and husking rice or making palm oil. The village resources become gradually depleted and they themselves become disheartened. At all events, if accounts before the Commission are to be in any way relied upon, the Government exchequer derives no benefit whatever from these fines. The practice permits of infinite abuse and requires further and deliberate investigation through the Department of Internal Revenue. Without question, fines are levied. And yet the Secretary of Public Works asserts that these do not come officially into the Department, but rather, if such occur, they go to the Paramount Chiefs.

22. *Question.* — How much discretionary power has the road overseer ?

Secretary Morris. — He is instructed to report the shortages of men to the Chiefs who may be on the road or to their headmen. In 1926 when there were no chiefs on the road, he sent his messengers to the chiefs with a list of the shortages. Before the chiefs came on the road themselves, the overseers used to count the shortages and report their findings to the chiefs for the collection of the fines, but since the chiefs themselves are on the road, this matter is left to them.

Question. — So they fine themselves ?

Secretary Morris. — No, the Chief fines the town headman for not supplying the boys.

Question. — And reports it to your Department ?

Secretary Morris. — So far as I know, the Chiefs fine the men and eat the money up themselves ¹.

As frequently as not, however, the Chiefs themselves have complained about these fines. It appears quite possible, therefore, that the Department of Public Works is unaware of the procedure on fines, since the road overseer, who is directly in charge testified before the Commission that he personally collected these fines and brought them to the Department.

23. *Question.* — There are a lot of complaints about people being fined and whipped. The Commission wants to know—Do you make them pay fines or the chief ?

Momolu Gray. — By order of the Secretary when labourers are short I report to the Chiefs and they fine.

¹ See Testimony of Secretary Morris before the Commission, Monrovia, July 21, 1930.

Question. — We want to know next—this money that comes from the fine, who does it go to?

Momolu Gray. — To the Department of the Interior, Secretary of the Interior, then to the Public Works.

Question. — Are the fines for not coming to work?

Momolu Gray. — Yes.

Question. — Tell the Commission if a man is due Monday and comes Tuesday what happens.

Momolu Gray. — At first 4/- then it was cut down to 2/-.

Question. — Who receives the money from fines of Chiefs and brings it to the Department?

Momolu Gray. — I, sir,—sometimes the D.C.

Question. — Do you set the fines?

Momolu Gray. — Yes. Sometimes I only take delinquents¹.

(e) ILL-TREATMENT OF LABOURERS.

It has been pointed out that, whereas there have been occasions for impressing labour in the development of many of the African Dependencies and Colonies, a foremost and inviolable principle, as justifying in any sense its use, has been the considerate and humane treatment of this labour. The reiterated complaints of labourers before the Commission, both in its formal sessions in Monrovia, and in parts of the interior, have convinced the Commissioners, after allowance for the exaggerated importance frequently given to personal feelings of grievance, that their statements have some validity. And although the testimony which is here cited is largely given in their own words, or those of their own interpreters, with occasional evidences of their misunderstanding of policies and the larger events happening around them, they knew well enough when they were ill-treated. At Kakata they exhibited the whips and sticks and scars, and in a mood, not of rebellion or vindictiveness, but of despair and appeal.

It has been observed that these complaints, despite the character of the punishment, are more vehement when there is a feeling of the injustice of the punishment. And often it occurred that whether there was a fine of one shilling or one pound for an alleged offence, their sense of the injustice of the imposition of the fine took importance over the amount of it.

The complaints of ill-treatment, for example, almost invariably appear in combination with the statement of lack of pay, and it is not improbable that there would have occurred no such desperation as brought many of them before the Commission, if, even without pay, they had received considerate treatment.

All road officials and the President of Liberia himself have expressed the view that the workers were well treated, contented, and even happy.

<p>Cheerful work.</p> <p>No orders for flogging.</p> <p>Singing all day.</p>	<p>“ You would be surprised to see how readily and cheeringly they sing when working. One would hardly believe they were unpaid. There is in general no flogging or punishing, but for the chiefs fining these very people of theirs for not furnishing the labourers. In fact, the Liberian has very great feeling for flogging on his body. So if their own men happen to take a stick and strike one of them they consider that as flogging. When I was Secretary of the Interior there was no orders for flogging. The people would sing all day.”²</p>
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The President observed before the Commission that he had personally inspected the Kakata road under construction several times weekly, and would ask the men if they had any complaints to make and was told that they had none.³ Much apparently escaped the attention of all but the junior officials of the Government.

Momolu Gray, one of the best known of the overseers, testified before the Commission that labourers are not ill-treated by beating, and that they are made to work only by “ apportioning so many labourers to a particular work and fining them if the task is not complete ”.

The following few extracts are taken more or less at random from the testimony of a hundred or more witnesses. They are not selected as illustrating the worst conditions of treatment, but they each contain interesting detail.

¹ See Testimony of Momolu Gray before the Commission in Monrovia, July 17, 1930.

² Testimony of Secretary Morris before the Commission at Monrovia.

³ See Statement of His Excellency the President of Liberia before the Commission, Monrovia.

MONTSERRADO AREA.

25. *A Town Chief before the Commission at Kakata said :*

<p>Fines.</p> <p>" 25 "</p> <p>No tools.</p> <p>No pay.</p>	<p>" My father was a big chief. He left property and money for me, but all is now gone on account of fines. I have suffered on the road as much as the men. I am the chief, but they put me on the road work, nevertheless, and give me ' 25 '. When you catch the head of a snake the remaining part of the body is caught also ; so when they beat me on the road you know what happens to the labourers. We cannot refuse Government order, but when boys are sent on the road we have to buy tools, pay fines and get ' 25 ' as well. That cannot please anybody. We should be quite willing to work on the road if we had not to buy tools. And if we were paid something for expenses. But when the fines are heavy on me I have to pawn children to pay them." ¹</p>
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26. *A Witness before the Commission at Kakata.*

<p>Food.</p> <p>Burning of town.</p> <p>Fine.</p> <p>Flogging.</p>	<p>" We are working in the country, they are beating us, we tote loads and they make us give them rice. If they ask for drink and we have no drink to give them, they make us pay for the drink. When we cook the food if no meat or we put a small piece of meat they say it is not enough, we must pay something. We were there and our town got burnt ; we went out carrying loads and when we were away our town got burnt. They went and told the District Commissioner. He came and did not say anything but caught our father and fined him £10, on the pretence that the bridge over the creek near the town was out of repair. Then he called for 25 labourers and we caught 24. It remained one. My brother said you all wait till the man comes. Then they caught my brother and flogged him until blood come out of his ear. All the boys saw that,—I told them we must come to Monrovia to work, because if we are going to work and they flog us at the same time we will go somewhere else."</p>
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27. *A Witness before the Commission at Kakata.*

<p>Ill-treatment of women.</p> <p>Toting hammocks.</p> <p>Labour.</p> <p>" Slaves ".</p> <p>Soldiers.</p>	<p>" We come from Gbilie's place. He collects us as labourers. We work for him, he beats us. The few women we got when the soldiers come, the house we build at Sanoya, they take the women by force and make them daub the house. They put sticks between their legs. When they catch labourers, they make us work. You see my head, it is clean through toting hammock. They flog us with whips. Look at the mark on my skin. When we tote loads, they beat us until we get where we are going. No food to eat. We feed ourselves. When they collect the labourers and we come to walk on the road, they cannot feed us. We are slaves now. We are men, we used to be people in our homes, now we are nobody . . . We do not do farm work because the Chief humbug us too much. When the soldiers come they tie us. We do not know what to do now. What can we do ? "</p>
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After giving some bland testimony on the first day of the Kakata meeting arranged by the Commission, the Paramount Chief of Kakata retired as if he felt he had done all that could be required of him, leaving the impression that he had advised his people not to talk, but as they were determined to do so he would come with them. On the second day, however, reports of the outspokenness of the people decided him to return to the baraza and he did so, evidently with a feeling that the men were speaking too freely, thus endangering his own position. He said :

<p>The President.</p>	<p>28. " We are native people ; if you tell any man in Monrovia he is President we are his children. If he gives any man commission, the word he tells that man if he disregards it they will put him in jail. What they tell him he takes if God helps him they don't fine him till his time is finished, alright. I have been in Government work, I have never found</p>
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¹ To give " 25 " usually means that the delinquent is thrown down on the ground face downwards and given literally 25 lashes, but in Liberia the phrase is used lightly, and merely means that the person has received a beating. " Flogging " seems to mean, beating or driving with a stick or otherwise ill-treating, not flogging in a literal sense.

I am Paramount Chief.

They must not blow over me.

trouble; anything the President tells me, I do it. You ask who is the Paramount Chief of Kakata. I say me. All what going on I have told you. I won't lie and all what I told you is what happened. Yesterday I told you I will send for all my people for them to talk—I have not stopped anybody to talk. They must not blow over me. I am Paramount Chief, but these people did not make me, the President made me. If I do anything and they tell the President he says I have done wrong I take that. I am Paramount Chief here. Any man wants to talk here, what is his mind he must talk. If they blow over me, when I go to Monrovia and report you will say the Paramount Chief do wrong. The book I have the President gave it to me. I did not steal it. I go by the President's order."

Despite the warning words of the Paramount Chiefs, his town Chiefs and people continued with unabated vehemence to place their complaints before the Commissioners.

29. *A Witness before the Commission at Kakata.*

The whip is our pay.

Discontent.

"Every work they give us to do, the whip is our pay. In our country we are there as slaves. . . . We are not going up again because they flog us. Our own rice they put on our backs and call it Government loads. We are country people. We do not do our own work. We work to give them chop. . . . If we go back Jimmie Miller will put us up the kitchen and set fire under. To put a man up there like that and if we fight they say we fight the President. Sometimes some little boys go up there and flog us, and we want to fight—but we remember. Just now you go to Jimmie Miller. He has 68 labourers in the village."

"Our own rice they put on our backs" refers to the firm belief, of the natives, that a considerable portion of the rice they supply to the military and civil stations every month is sent down to the coast or elsewhere for sale or private use.¹ Testimony before the Commission would seem to support this belief.

"Put us up the kitchen and set fire under" refers, of course, to the form of punishment described under the section "Public Works: Building" in which the person is strung up to the rafters of a hut and literally smoked.

Occasionally in testimony before the Commission mention is made of being "put on the sticks." This refers to a form of safe keeping adopted in prisons and station guard rooms, and sometimes by chiefs in their villages. It consists of fixing the prisoner's legs between two heavy sticks so that he is unable to stand up, as in the old "stocks" at one time common in Europe, or one leg through a hole in a log which he is just able to lift if he wishes to move about. It may also refer to a diabolical invention in the shape of two short sticks joined with string and placed crosswise on the shin. The shrinking of the string by wetting it causes intense pain.

30. *A Town Chief before the Commission at Kakata.*

They punish us.

Fines.

"All I have to say is that the Government work here they punish us for it. We all stay in this section and not rich. . . . When we are working the Paramount Chief's messenger sent to take us. One time they want to catch me, and they tore my clothes. They tied me. When I came they send me on the road to work. I had to pay a man to work for me, as my arm was paining me. I paid the man four dollars. The Paramount Chief made six dollars fine and they put rope on my waist. I paid the six dollars before they left me. Then they made me work."

31. *A Witness before the Commission at Kakata.*

Work to eat.

Fines.

"We are slaves in our section, on account of this same Government road. We are all small boys. Our big brothers are not rich, and if you do not work you cannot eat. The road work the President opened here, when we are working we do not get any pay. They just beat us. They stop us from doing our own work, just Government work. We work hungry and they fine us. Then we have to send rice. It is now seven years."

¹ See testimony by Blackett and others in Sinoe incident.

32. *A Chief from Boporo before the Commission at Kakata.*

Sticks for tools. " This work has become hard for us. When we go on the road to work, we have to use sticks to dig the ground with. The President says we must open the road. We are getting no money. The only pay we get is beating. In our section since we began to work on the road, they have collected from us three hundred seventeen dollars (\$317.00), over three years.

" Question. — Who took this money from you ?

" Chief. — Sciaffa Washington, District Commissioner, He is now in the Deh Senjah Section."

33. *A Witness before the Commission, Kakata.*

No pay and no food. " We are poor people, we have not got anything. The Government is our father, and when they bring some job in country and ask us to work job, they ought to make us satisfied to do the work, to pay us and feed us. The Government does not do anything like that . . . We are poor people and we must feed people who go on the road. We cannot help it. We have to do it. After we feed the boys on the road, sometimes they say how they don't come about six o'clock, if they are late they fine them—the same money we get for our food they take it. If the boys say they won't give their food money they catch them and whip them. If they are sick and don't go on the road for two weeks they catch us for not sending boys on the road and fine us and we have to find our children and pay the fine. If they receive the money from us, the little money we make on our farms, they must allow us to eat our own rice . . . When I send my people on the road they beat them and they become sick and when they cannot go on the road they fine them."

Fines and no food.

Road fines.

Extortion.

34. *A Town Chief before the Commission July 22, 1930.*

Road trouble. " When the road started, Secretary Morris put us all together and said we must make the road. We could not have refused because we have no backbone. But we asked them if we worked the road, what about the tax ? They said that if we worked the road we will not have to pay tax until the road is finished. Not a year after we got on the road, we were called upon to pay tax. We are made to pay tax on every house we build. Now we work the road, but are not paid for it. We are not fed. If they were to feed our boys on the road we would be satisfied, but every time we send boys on the road we have to give them food. Our Paramount Chief is not here, but I wish he was here for me to ask him a question. I want to find out from him as to whether he has been paid any money for the road and if so what he has done with it. He went to the Kakata Council, we were caught near John Lewis Morris's farm for coming late. Hence we have come to tell you all, because when you shall have left these shores, and we are sent on the road again, the trouble we will see will be worse than what we have already seen."

Remission of tax.

No food for road workers.

The fear of the after.

In giving their testimony, chiefs frequently stated that they had been told that while they worked on the road they would not have to pay taxes of any sort. It is possible that, as in other testimony given, there may have been confusion here on the part of natives or District Commissioners between hut and road tax.

35. *A Chief Before the Commission, Monrovia, July 22nd, 1930.*

Road palaver first. " The native people knew nothing about road palaver until the civilized people had made a plan about it. After making this plan they called us. We came. They said to us that we must clean the road. I said my children are left. They said I must give them two boys. I said if I give you two boys then I must sleep alone in my town ? They said I must give the two boys. I asked them of what benefit will our working on the road be to us ? They said we must clean the road for nothing. Will you pay us ?

Orders after-wards.

No pay, no food.	They said, 'No'.—'Well, how must we eat?' They said we must feed ourselves, and then they said to us, if you continue to talk we will put you in chains just now. I furnished the two boys and had to give them 12/-2/- each for food. I said to them, look at my head—gray. I am unable to work. They said to me, 'You are an old man, we respect you, but if you continue to talk like that you will lay down on the ground just now. The soldiers would take the boys' food away from them and when the boys go and cut palm cabbage one of them was caught and beaten. Today that boy is dead from that beating.'
Bring food money.	
Died after beating.	

The testimony of a Bassa Chief shows how the road programme came to the native in the Bassa Section.

36. *A Chief before the Commission, Monrovia.*

"This road matter is giving us trouble. Since the road started they put all of us together. They said, 'Well, you Bassa people, this country belongs to us all. This work that has come it is good for us all, so all must join together and help the government.' We said, 'In what way must we help the Government?' They said, 'By giving us boys to work on the road.' We asked, 'Are you going to pay?' They said, 'No,—'If the boys are not fed, how they be able to pay taxes?' They said, 'Whilst working the road they will not be required to pay taxes.' Then they showed us the portion of the work we are to do, and said to us, 'When you reach this point with the road, you will be relieved from road work.' But while yet working on the road, we are required to pay taxes. We have to give each of our boys 6/- for chop. If they are late coming on the road, they are caught at Morris farm and their money taken from them. If the boys' food is out and they run away home for chop, they are overtaken by messengers. All this is giving us a lot of trouble."

Maryland Area.

37. *A Chief before the Commission.*

Road fines.	"My boys are caught and carried on the road to work, and if any of them happens to be sick, I am fined. If I have not the money right at hand, I am tied, laid on the ground and flogged severely. After he finish beating me, the number of days he remains in town I have to feed him with what he calls for. Since Superintendent Smith came we have not made roads. That is, since January of this year."
Beating.	

All road work ceases about Christmas time, which is the beginning of what may be termed the agricultural months, when the natives all hope to be free to plant their rice and other crops.

38. *A Chief before the Commission.*

No pay.	"About the road matter, this is another place where we see much trouble. We get no pay, no food, and then we are forced to bring our own tools. When our little boys are going on the road and they happen to bring their own food, the soldiers take it all away from them and then beat them on the top of it. If a boy is sick and cannot work he is fined £1. It is very hard to get this £1 to pay because we are not working for money here."
No food.	
Fines.	

Frequently it happened that recruitment for Fernando Po in this area was in competition with recruitment for the neighbouring road construction and on these occasions neither chiefs nor people knew for which the boys were being taken.

39. *A Chief before the Commission.*

Fernando Po.	"The thing I forgot to tell you about was when we were having all the Fernando Po trouble, and the men could not prevail with Mr. Yancy, the women said they would try. They went and implored him to leave their husbands and brothers and children alone, but he drove them away, saying, if they dared come and see him again on the matter he would send them also to Fernando Po."
Women's appeal.	

Cruelties of
Commissioner.

Fine.

“ He sent Commissioner Frederick Prowd, who is his right hand man, to my village, and when he could not get enough boys he caught me and had me tied up, my hands tied and my feet tied, and started to carry me to Cape Palmas, with a stick passed through my hands and feet like an animal is carried. Mr. Prowd is a very bad man indeed. When he does this sort of thing and the men begs for pardon he releases him on payment of £3. We are nothing but slaves, and I hope a better time is coming.”

The Commissioners were impressed throughout with the attitude of the natives who appeared before them to give testimony. Their grievances were undoubtedly of long accumulation, pointedly stated but without malice. Many of their assertions could be corroborated in their major details. All of them were conscious of the probability of creating a false impression of disloyalty by their complaints and prefaced them carefully with this precaution. It was clear enough that what they wanted was merely a chance to escape a situation which bore heavily upon them and against which they felt that they had no effective redress. The state of mind of some of them is indicated in the remark of one chief :

40. “ They have told us that if we talk our towns will be burned. I have thought about this much and now I say, ‘ Then let it be history for our children that the towns of the people of . . . were destroyed this day because they told their troubles.’ ”

Some of them were more complaisant and merely hoped for better times ; others evinced their resentment by neglecting their agricultural and the ordinary economic routine save that which was demanded ; still others sought quietly to abandon the country.

The situation holds, it seems, the seeds of much unnecessary governmental difficulty and its correction deserves first place in any recommendation looking to the welfare of the Republic.

In the country round about Barrobo military station in Maryland, there seems to be a definite order that natives are not to wear khaki clothing. If not an order from the District Commissioner, it must be an understanding between the District Commissioner’s messengers and the soldiers throughout District No. 5. In the testimony of chiefs and villagers before the Commission the subject was many times referred to. They described how both soldiers and messengers stopped persons on the pathways and robbed them of khaki jackets and shorts, saying that natives were forbidden to wear khaki clothes.

41. *A Sub-Chief before the Commission.*

The khaki terror.

“ When the soldiers come into the town they strip those who are wearing khaki of any description. If they put you in prison for this you have to pay five fowls and five bowls of rice to get out. In No. 5 District only soldiers are supposed to wear khaki—soldiers, messengers and others. Everything in khaki is supposed to be a soldier, hence the fear of khaki generally. All these trouble make life in No. 5 hinterland district now hardly worth living.”

According to the testimony of one of the Chiefs in District No. 5 there was an order forbidding the wearing of khaki clothing issued from the District Commissioner’s office.

42. “ Then D.C. Scott gave another order for the whole district that no one wear khaki. If anybody wear khaki, soldiers and messengers must take it from them and beat him. (Interpreter—I have had it happen to me.) I myself have had it taken off me twice in Rocktown and Harper by Yancy’s clerk. My father prevented my fighting for my clothes which were carried off. They said the order came from Monrovia from President King, that while the Frontier Force was wearing khaki nobody else must buy it. Boys returning to Monrovia with khaki suits costing £1, sold them for two or three shillings. Order only for District No. 5. People wear khaki in other districts. Here only Paramount Chief and Speaker may wear it.”

The explanation of the Central Government is that this order was issued to all stations because it was reported that persons not belonging to either service appeared in villages dressed in khaki and imposed upon the people.

As corroborating this to some extent it was reported to us by the Firestone management that on one occasion they lost a thousand men in one day. Two soldiers or at least men in khaki, came through the labour camps and arrested two men whom they marched off to

goodness knows where. As a matter of fact, it was soon after pay day. Whether the soldiers were real Frontier Force men or messengers or someone else in khaki we could not ascertain, but so great is the fear of khaki that the bare statement of the "soldiers" that they were coming back the next day to burn all the camps was sufficient to make 1,000 men return to their homes in the interior with several days' pay due to them.

No. 1 "Basket" punishment, so frequently mentioned in the deposition as a favourite punishment and amusement of the soldiers placed over the gangs of natives on road construction work was described by a native of Beabo on the Cavalla River in No. 5 District. He stated that a big round basket filled with earth and heavy stones was lifted up by four soldiers and placed upon the head of the luckless prisoner, who was then ordered to walk with it if he could. Sometimes he was told to turn round and round with it, and while doing this the heavy load was given an extra twist by some one or the man was clutched by one of the soldiers so that he could not turn with the basket. In this way necks have frequently been broken, he said, and men killed, but more often it caused injury to the neck resulting later in death.

This basket was pointed out to the League of Nations Commissioner on his way to visit the Webbo-Barrobo road at the village of Taibolu. It is a double woven container with curled edges, about two feet in diameter and about 15 inches deep with concave bottom.

43. *A Chief of Barrobo Section before the Commission.*

Basket No. 1. "If you miss one day, £1.0.0 and a basket called 'Basket No. 1,' so big, filled with dirt, that you can hardly move with it. Four men lift it on your head and you are made to carry it, soldiers beating you. There is also a 'Basket No. 2'."

44. *A Chief of Webbo Section before the Commission.*

No. 1 Basket. "The Commissioner has a wicked punishment for us. He fills a large basket with dirt and heavy stones and four or six men lift this up and put it on your head. When they put it on your head they make you walk for about 100 feet four times a day."

45. *A Sub-Chief of No. 5 District before the Commission.*

"We are made to work on the road. Absentees are fined heavily and if the fine is not paid it means of punishing us. It is this—a large basket is filled with earth and stones. Four men lift this up and put it on the boy's head and he is made to carry it some distance—many have been injured trying to carry this loaded basket."

46. *A Chief of Gyudu Section before the Commission.*

"When boys come back always complain of Basket No. 1, but chief has not energy enough to go to the District Commissioner and ask about this basket. The basket is on the road as punishment for anybody who displeases the man in charge. Has to be lifted up by four men and cannot possibly be carried far. It is hard for him to make complaint for he is afraid his life may be taken, therefore he doesn't care to make complaint of basket, because if messengers come to him and mistreat his people and he complains to the D.C. he never does anything but tells him a parable:

"If you had a gunner and you sent him into the woods to kill an elephant when he has killed the elephant would you tell him to carry the elephant back into the bush?"

The following further complaints are from chiefs who testified before the Commission whilst in Maryland and District No. 5.

Quota.	47. "My town has to supply 20 men to the Harper-Gbolobo road. You are in your country and you are asked to bring your own food and tools.
Soldiers.	Soldiers are sent by the Superintendent to work us on the road. Since the road started (1925) ten men have died after the beatings and bad treatment.
Deaths.	They are Du, Sie, Dumu, Tiah, Klah, Nemle, Kine, Hoto, Wleh, and Yodobah."

Road fines. 48. " This road we make, we no get pay, no chop, then the people who beat us, we give him chop. Then if you no go for road, you pay £1 fine. When you work for white man, he pay, but not this one, no pay. If one man die, they say I must bring other man for him place ; if I cannot get other man I will pay. There be plenty trouble for road. The soldiers beat us. Sometime for one man who no go for road, they make me pay £7. At other time again for 2 man they make me pay £10. They beat us on the road, and plenty people die for this. Since they been beat people for this road, 10 man done die. Myself, my brother die for road too, this be two year now. When they beat him he run for bush for 4 days, on the fifth, we see him for bush, he die."

Soldiers.
Fines.
Died in the bush.

Flogging. 49. " We go on the road to work for nothing, then when we go we are flogged, and when we get sick and cannot work, we are fined £1 for each per week. When we are in earnest in working the road, we are beaten so severely that some die from cruel licks. When a boy runs away from the cruelty of the soldiers and they come for him, sometime his father is taken along with him straight on to prison. There they ask us to feed them every month."

Beating.
Soldiers.

Frontier Force. 50. " The soldiers of the Frontier Force are behind the men on the road beating them. Last year sent boys on the road : one boy had fever. He was put in jail and the chief had to pay £3.0.0."

Ill-treatment by soldiers. 51. " When we go to the road, soldiers taking care of us, flogging you. Can't feed them, give them nothing but bad treatment. We do his own work (the official's) and his wife's work too instead of the road !"

Whilst at Harper, the Grebo Chiefs of the Cape Palmas area came in a body with 50 or more of their people to visit the Commission on May 15th, 1930. The following (slightly edited) was the testimony of one of them. Though general in character it is inserted here in full. The Hon. H. Too Wesley, a previous Vice President of the Republic, was asked to act on this occasion as interpreter, and in doing so very helpfully explained the feelings of dissatisfaction and disaffection which the chiefs were endeavouring to express to the Commission.

Ill-treatment of labourers. 52. " The first thing I wish to bring to the notice of the Commission is what happened during the time my men were building the Pdukekeh barracks. It was here that my men were most severely ill-treated by the soldiers who frequently beat them, sometimes with the butts of their rifles and obliged them to work with native bark rope round their waists. If they ran away the chief or head man in charge of them would be fined or else taken somewhere and tied up. When I complained about this to Mr. Yancy he said : ' If you don't do what the soldiers tell, I will send men to burn down your town.' This frightened us and we did our best to build the houses, but the boys had a bad time. They were told to build in a certain way new to them and if they failed to understand exactly they were flogged for it. Lt. Isaac Roberts was always there during the building operations and took his orders from Vice President Yancy. This was four years ago, when Mr. Yancy was Superintendent of Maryland County.

Threats from Mr. Yancy.

Arrest of Chief. " I am supplying each week 20 men from Fishtown for work on the road from Cape Palmas to Getetabo, and when a boy is missing soldiers are sent to his chief for the fine and the money is taken to Vice President Yancy. On one occasion ten men were missing and soldiers came to arrest the chief, my predecessor, who was sick and feeble, and we persuaded the soldiers that he was not fit to go, but we had to pay £13. This chief died the same year.

Fine for release.

Toting hammocks. " My town is on the Coast and we are told that only Commissioners are to ride in hammocks, yet every one who passes along the coast forces us

Women forced
to tote.

to supply them with hammock boys, and if they are not at once forthcoming he will try and catch the women to tote his hammock. If we refuse we may be made to smart for it later. My own wife recently was forced to act as hammock bearer.

“ Another thing I want to tell you. Of the 20 boys I supply each week for road construction, 10 are sent to the road, while the other ten have to go and work on Mr. Yancy’s farm. Then we cut bush and receive no pay.

Fernando Po
trouble.

“ Not so long ago the Vice President sent for us and told us that we must supply men for Fernando Po and we objected. After finding fault with the work on the road, he finally said that instead of 20 men we must supply him with 60 men for road work if we refused to find them for Fernando Po and they must all be from my towns only. He then locked us all up in one house telling us that on the arrival of the Spanish steamer he would send us all to Fernando Po. But fortunately for us the steamer did not stop here. If it had we should have been now in Fernando Po. We were imprisoned in that house for a month.

Borrowing
money for fines.

“ When we have not the money to pay our fines we sometimes have to go to a firm at Cape Palmas and get money or credit against our produce or we may have to sell our cattle or our fishing canoes to get the money. When the chief goes in to Cape Palmas there are no quarters arranged for him. He has to do the best he can. If he is called there to a council meeting and does not carry his own chop he will not drink water until he comes back. He must provide for himself, but when officials come here we have to provide for them. When Governor Yancy comes he compells us to kill our cows for him to eat. He never moves without an army of soldiers and men and they all have to be provided for. The women have to hurriedly beat rice, find palm oil and other things for all these people and not a sixpence as remuneration. If Governor Brooks comes he must receive the same treatment as Vice President Yancy.

“ I wish to endorse all my Senior Chief’s complaints about the bad treatment the boys receive on returning from the coast. All the cloth and small things they bring with them are either taken away from them in lieu of heavy charges put upon them by the Customs Officials, or they are obliged to pay these charges. (They usually bring cloth, handkerchiefs, etc., as presents for their women, something a little different from what obtainable here. On these things they have spent a considerable portion of their year’s earnings, and it is galling for them to have to return with nothing. This the customs clerks are of course aware of.)

53. *A Sub-Chief of No. 5 District before the Commission.*

“ District Commissioner Johnson of Webbo is a bad man. When he was troubling us for boys for Fernando Po, he sent soldiers here in the night and whoever came out was seized. Oh! the terror of that night. Ten boys were caught in that way, and marched off to Webbo. This happened in March last year. They were sent to Fernando Po and we have not heard anything of them since, but Chief Barney’s headman recently returned from the Island and he reported that condition of the boys down there was bad. He made a complaint to the Spanish authorities who dismissed him and sent him home. D.C. Johnson obtains the boys for Mr. Yancy. If the soldiers come in the day time and I were to refuse to supply boys they would beat me, tie me up and have me in prison. Chief Barney’s headman who had returned from Fernando Po volunteered the statement that when he was caught and they got to Webbo he asked the D.C. ‘ Why should a man be forced to work for himself ? ’ He was flogged and sent to prison for 4 months and three weeks, and had eventually to pay £6 to get out.”

(f) INTIMIDATION AND EXTORTION.

The ample testimony in this report, and a great deal more in possession of the Commission, seems to us clear proof that the Government’s native policy has been and still is one of intimidation and suppression. The disquieting point in connection with the matter is that the chiefs, through whose influence any form of beneficial government must be organised, are just as liable to be arrested at a moment’s notice, tied up or treated with intolerable indignity, and dragged off to the District Commissioner, where they may be held in the guard room,

beaten, or thrown ignominiously into prison, or they may be threatened with death at the hands of soldiers in the bush as in the case of Chief Broh, who, after returning from Monrovia where he had laid a complaint before the President, was told by the Superintendent at Harper :

54. " You are now in my hands, let President King come and deliver you out. President King rules in Monrovia and I rule here. If I deliver you to the soldiers and they kill you on the road and when I am asked I will simply say that you took sick and died and there the matter will end."

The contact between natives and irresponsible Government officials has provided opportunity for shameful excess of abuse and exploitation. Chiefs have been abased in the presence of their people, fined, flogged, and subjected to torture.

55. An instance came to the notice of the Commission in which a chief on the Maryland Coast was flogged by soldiers who came to catch 20 men from his town. For sport whilst waiting for the number to be made up these soldiers amused themselves by collecting one by one the hairs of the chief's long moustache, and by frightening him with threats to burn his town, a catastrophe which had actually happened to him in 1916.

A Chief, even a Paramount Chief, may frequently receive such letters as the following from the " Government Road Time Keeper," a junior official who has of course no authority to threaten chiefs with detention :

56. " Sir,

" As Government time keeper I writing you asking you to have your men from your town here on the Government Road on Monday morning 6 o'clock or else Chief will be held here and you be send for by the Superintendent Maryland County to give an account of their delay and those that are here be kept until they come. You must see that they start Saturday so that to enable them to be on the spot Monday morning. The required number is 15 boys.

Yours in haste,

Henry D. BAKER

Government Road Time Keeper."

57. A chief when returning from a meeting with the Commission was stopped on the road by a clerk from the office of the District Commissioner, and asked why he was out of his section. On learning the reason he was lectured upon making complaints to foreigners and was threatened with jail if he did not pay £1.0.0 on the spot, the full amount of cash he was carrying. Needless to say, the clerk had no authority to impose a fine and would not be expected to report it.

58. On another occasion the Superintendent of Maryland County sent word to a Paramount Chief in No. 5 District that he must bring all hut taxes to him in Harper. At the same time the District Commissioner at Webbo demanded of the Chief that he bring them to Webbo. Still another Commissioner for the Kroo Coast demanded that they be brought to Garroway so that he could take them to Cape Palmas. Perplexed the Paramount Chief called together his sub-chiefs and fifteen of them went to Harper to inquire of the Superintendent just where the taxes would be delivered. When they had assembled and presented the problem, the Superintendent pondered a while, according to the testimony, and then said ; " All chiefs from Barrobo arise and stand on one foot." The chiefs obeyed. Then the Superintendent after lecturing them, fined them each £5 and allowed them to put down the other foot and return home.

Nor are the chiefs merely humiliated by officials and debased by soldiers, messengers and Commissioners, but are sometimes grossly imposed upon and robbed. The land question, as mentioned in this report, is an instance of this and a source of frequent abuse. It provides an additional wedge in the control over the chiefs in offering immunity from public " utility " programmes or as punishment for reluctance to provide men for both public and private purposes. The thoughtless and not infrequently criminal extortion practised seldom benefits the Republic although it is exacted in the name of the Government. One example is here cited :

59. In 1921 a question arose over land between the Fishtown and Garroway people. The Superintendent constituted a Committee to investigate and the limits of the land in dispute were established. The decision favoured the Fishtown people, and the Garroway people appealed. They were told by the Superintendent that if they wanted it changed they would have to bring £40.0.0. Then a second £40.0.0 was requested to effect the deal. They did not get their land. Another £9.0.0 was demanded. All was paid. Then Commissioner Mars was sent down to investigate. He asked first for £10.0.0 for chop and got it. Then for a cow which he also got. He decided that the first marking must be adhered to and went home.

The Superintendent then asked for £40.0.0 more and promised them the land ; later he asked for £71.0.0 as advance for a surveyor. They borrowed the money from Messrs. Overbeck and on demand furnished 40 boys to help in the surveying. The Superintendent promised to visit but needed £10.0.0 to entertain his strangers while he was away. He got the money but did not come. Meanwhile the Fishtown people paid £12.0.0 and again £80.0.0 to counteract similar amounts given by the Garroway people, \$400 for a survey of land and £90.0.0 for the land occupied by the Nihwie people. Pitted against each other the two tribes finally came to blows, each suspecting the other of direct designs. Seven captives were taken by one side. The Superintendent, in turn, caught seven chiefs from the other side. He demanded £100.0.0 but £70.0.0 was all they could find. While this side was looking for the other £30.0.0 their town (47 huts) was burned and five persons burned to death. Then the Superintendent sent a Committee to learn on which side the fighting started. The Committee's expenses had to be paid. Of the chiefs taken three were sent to the barracks and the people fined £150.0.0 for their release. They had been able at the time of the interview (June, 1930) to collect only £8.0.0 of this £150.0.0. The two other chiefs are in prison in Harper under curious sentence, as Chief Too reports the matter :

“ They say they are going to hang them. They say after the lawyer finish pleading they will hang them.”

The total amount paid, according to the accounts of the Garroway people, was £505.0.0, from the Fishtown people £207.0.0 and from the Nihwie people £223.0.0. This particular land question, nevertheless, remains still unsettled and open to further exploitation.

Even the white missionary is not exempt from this humiliation and intimidation, as the following testimony, corroborated by a number of people on the spot, shows.

<p>Tax payment trouble.</p> <p>White missionary confined in guard room.</p> <p>Heavy fine.</p> <p>Death of missionary.</p>	<p>60. In No. 5 Section in District Commissioner Scott's time, a paramount chief is said to have paid over his tax contribution to the D.C.'s clerk, who on being asked for the money repudiated the payment. According to the chief's account, he was then obliged by the D.C. to send to his people for more money, he himself being held in the guard room. Instead of sending the money again, they sent a letter written by a white missionary, Rev. F. A. Noah, corroborating their chief and explaining the people's point of view. On the receipt of this letter the D.C. sent soldiers to arrest the Rev. Noah. The soldiers not only arrested him with the utmost indignity, but tied him up with native bark rope and marched him, together with a town chief and mission boys, to the station and locked them all together in the guard room. The Paramount Chief on seeing this begged the D.C. to release the white man. The Chief was told that if the palaver was to be dropped and the missionary released the D.C. must receive £100. Eventually, it is reported the amount was paid, half by the missionary's people and half by the chief's people, and the missionary was allowed to return to his mission station, but died a week afterwards.</p>
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2. Public Works : Buildings.

In French and British Dependencies, the Belgian Congo, and elsewhere, it is permissible to employ compulsory labour for the building of houses and offices for Government officials, and for carrying out their annual repair and any other similar work that may be needed. It is paid for at a definite specified figure, generally slightly below the usual market labour rate.

In Liberia it would seem that large gangs of natives, supplied by the chiefs at the orders of the County Superintendents and District Commissioners, are employed to build and maintain the civil administrator's quarters and also the military barracks, the soldiers in the latter case acting merely as labour hustlers, taking no part in the building operations themselves. This would seem to indicate that the men were to some extent out of hand, or that opportunities for exploitation of the natives would be otherwise missed.

The whole of Barrobo barracks in No. 5 District Maryland, a considerable collection of houses and soldiers' quarters which was visited by the American Commissioner, were built, according to our information, by compulsory unpaid native male and female labour. These barracks are entered by an elevated causeway of great width and length, multiplying the volume of labour required.

61. "Sir, Captain Isaac Whistnant, L.F.F., has conferred with me on his order for building the military barracks at Barrobo, District No. Five, for effecting the re-organisation plan of the Frontier Force, instead of Putu, District Number Four.

"I enclose you under separate covers, letters ordering the Paramount Chief of Barrobo as well as adjoining sections to furnish you with (130) one hundred thirty labourers in all for the work. A copy of the said order is attached hereto. You may send the letters to the Chiefs concerned."¹

Moreover, it appears that a large staff of native labour is maintained at the barracks to carry out the annual repairs as well as station work throughout the year. After these barracks were completed, the following correspondence passed between the Officer Commanding and District Commissioner of No. 5 District :

62. "Subject : Labourers :

"Sir, since the labourers working at Camp King were stopped in December, 1929, for the purpose of making their farms, and the time allowed for farming having expired since March 31, 1930 ; I am hereby requesting that the same allotment be given the Liberian Frontier Force here, as there is much to be done here in repairing before the heavy rains set in, and the road leading out from here is only just started.

"These and other things I would like to get far advanced before the heavy rains.

"Please let me hear from you on this subject by the bearer of this."²

"2. With respect to your request for the continuation of the allotment of labour furnished for the building of the Military Barracks on October 16, 1928, which was augmented on February 15, 1929, because of the necessity at that time for housing the men, I have the honour to inform you that as the building work has been completed and every man is now comfortably in his own house, I cannot with fitness order the continuation of labour to the Military Barracks.

"If, however, necessity arises from time to time for a limited number of labourers, say, about 15 to 20 for a definite piece of work which recruits and soldier-boys are not able to complete within a given time in which the specific work is needed, a request may be made to this Office in writing when the order in the usual form will be made to the chiefs by this Office."³

The building of the soldiers' barracks by outside compulsory labour in cases where the soldiers have no real military training, an elementary idea of discipline, are officered by men of not very extensive African experience, and where the location is far out of touch with headquarters, is in our opinion most inadvisable. Abuse of power under such circumstances is apt to be indulged in with impunity. Repeated evidence before the Commission showed that labourers were flogged and their women, who are required for special daubing work, grievously ill-treated during these operations. The work might well be carried out by the soldiers themselves as in other places. To find congenial work for the men in barracks is often a difficult problem, especially in the dry months.

At one chief's village in the Barrobo district the village women corroborated all that their men had been saying to the Commission, and volunteered the statement that when these barracks were being built two hundred women in relays were at work there for nine months.

"The soldiers", they said, in effect, "used us as their wives, we who had husbands and children at home. Our men could not protect us for the soldiers all had guns. We have a country custom, a law of adultery, that when a woman bears a child she must prove that her husband is the father of it. We who were at the barracks have not been able to do this and it has caused much trouble. It has been necessary for us to kill the children and we pray the Commission to put a stop to our having to go there."

Recently the natives have attempted to retaliate. During the building of these Frontier Force barracks at Barrobo, the soldiers made themselves so heartily disliked, raiding the villages for miles round for food, waylaying women and people on the pathways and robbing them, ill-treating the men on the building works, and appropriating women as they pleased, that professional poisoners took them in hand. As a result, we were informed three men died and seven others were incapacitated either seriously or permanently. The particular poison

¹ Paragraphs from letter of D. C. Johnson, Dist. No. 5, to Capt. J. C. Phillips, L.F.F., Oct. 16, 1928.

² Letter of Capt. I. Whistnant, Commanding Officer, Camp King, L.F.F., to District Commissioner, Dist. No. 5, May 25, 1930.

³ Extracts from letter of D. C. Johnson, Dist. No. 5, to the Commanding Officer of 3rd Battalion, L.F.F., Barrobo Section, District No. 5, May 28, 1930.

used in this case is called "Sallicoco"¹ which appears to be very well known in Liberia, though not so universally as "Sass Wood".

Frontier Force soldiers have invariably been used by the Government to coerce the labourers employed on special house building such as quarters for the District Commissioners and houses for the President. By permission of His Excellency, the League of Nations Member and the American Member spent a week at the big thatched house at Kakata. Colonel T. Elwood Davis, the President's A.D.C., stated that this house was planned and built by District Commissioner Carter and took five months to complete. A considerable plantation belonging to President King adjoined it, and in the vicinity was a similar plantation belonging to District Commissioner Carter. On the occasion of the Commission's visit several hundred natives and chiefs came to ventilate their grievances and to describe their treatment on road construction and building works. One of the Paramount Chiefs deposing stated :

63. " This house we are in was built by the people of this section. Of course, nobody refused. It was President's order. It was Government work. (Someone then remarked that " If you want to hear good, hear the people who worked on the house. The Paramount Chief is with the officers.")

Later the Paramount Chief withdrew and some of the workers testified. One said :

64. " They caught the men and the women, and brought them here to build this house. When they dug the earth for the walls here, there were always soldiers behind to make us work faster."

Another said :

65. " My woman worked on this house with many others. When the women climbed up the walls to do the daubing the soldiers pricked them with sticks from behind, and if the men went to protect them they were beaten."

A third said :

66. " When D.C. Carter came, we had no peace, either women or men. Some ran away into the bush, and the D.C. ordered a big stick to be tied to the back of each of us by a rope round waist and neck, so that it protruded above the head. This was to prevent our running into the bush. (One of these sticks was shown to the Commissioners. It was as thick as one's wrist and about five feet long.) Those who ran away were always caught and brought back, and in each case the chief had to pay a fine. They built a jail here also, and I was one of those put in it. At one time 19 town chiefs were locked up in it by D.C. Carter's orders."

A fourth corroborated and described how some of the workers incurred the special displeasure of the soldiers, who tied ropes round them and hauled them up to the beams above. Then they lighted fires beneath them into which they threw pepper. This punishment appears to be well known in Liberia, and modifications of it were frequently mentioned during depositions before the Commission. It is known as " putting in the kitchen " or " over the fire."

At Webbo in Maryland a chief who had come in from some distance to give his testimony, describing the arrest by some messengers of a young man in the chief's village, said :

67. " The young man said, ' Wait, and let me eat before I go.' But they refused, and two young men of the village said, ' Why not let him eat ? ' ' Alright,' the messengers said, ' We will blame you if he runs away.' When he went away to eat the messengers caught the two young men who had stood for the other man and took them to the station master (a type of official now abolished) who tied and put them over the smoke and made fire and put red pepper in the fire. While they were over the fire he fined them £3 before they could be taken down. Then the man whom the messengers had come to arrest was caught and fined £5 and had to pay it."

¹ It is possible that "Sallicoco" may be derived from some species of *Strophanthus*, since this plant is common in some West African forests. To administer "Sass Wood" a permit must be obtained from the Central Government at Monrovia, but it is illegal to use it on any but those who believe in the "ordeal".

3. Porterage.

The five counties form a coastal strip of country about 40 miles wide. No one is allowed to travel into the interior beyond the limits of this strip of country without a special pass from the President. Nothing could afford a better illustration of the policy of the "closed door" which appears to be so favoured in Liberia. An attempt is made by "Interior Regulations" to prevent natives from moving outside their section. With such a policy in force no produce could be expected to reach the Coast ports, or merchandise the interior. Porterage, therefore, for payment, whether commercial or private, is practically unknown in the country.

The number of carriers allowed for Government officials has recently been increased, and is now on a very liberal scale because it is the fashion as in many other parts of the West Coast for every official or prominent individual to be carried in a hammock, a survival, perhaps, of earlier days when chiefs were big men and never moved without a display of pomp and power. The toting of hammocks is a source of annoyance to chiefs and people; the former because they are liable to be called upon at a minute's notice for a number of men for hammock toting, and the latter because this work is particularly arduous, and never paid for, and the "boys" are ill-treated and driven on the road. They know that in other West African regions hammock men are invariably paid at a much higher rate than the ordinary porters. Moreover, Equatorial West African pathways, owing to the heavy rains, are often waterworn to such an extent as to be dangerous, and Liberian hinterland paths seem worse in this respect than elsewhere. To make matters worse, the chief has usually no guarantee that the person travelling with a hammock is an official and entitled to the men, but since practically the only persons moving about are officials and only officials are Americo-Liberians, he is obliged to find the men and not infrequently to make up the number with women. Travelling along the Kru Coast, the Commissioners learned at Fishtown that two men, apparently Americo-Liberians, had passed on the previous day stating that they were the Enquiry Commissioners and wanted hammock boys. The Chief demurred, but they caught and held two of his women and made themselves otherwise so objectionable that he found them the men "in order to get rid of them". Being on the coast, this sort of thing happened, the chief said, most frequently. We fear that with the continuance of the present policy of suppression it will be long before the road programme has any effect upon head porterage.

B. FORCED LABOUR FOR PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

1. Government and Private Farms.
2. Corporations and Companies.

Firestone Plantation Company.

A very wide distinction is everywhere drawn between forced labour for public purposes and forced labour for private employers, and the Slavery Convention accentuates this difference. Moreover, it seems universally agreed that the latter is not permissible. Almost all legislation on the subject of forced labour forbids it. In Liberia, however, it seems still to be freely made use of. Twenty years ago the subject was one of daily discussion in tropical African administrative circles, and not in Africa alone. Colonial policies in those days largely hinged upon ways and means of encouraging planting and other ventures, and of exploiting the native for the benefit of the employer, whose chief aim was to make money and leave the country with it. The administration found itself continually assailed with the cry, "Make the native work on our farms". Cases of abuse and ill-treatment accumulated to such an extent and the Government became so frequently involved that the whole policy had to be studied afresh and revised. Then came the realisation of the vital fact that Europeans could not themselves settle permanently in and colonize tropical Africa, even at considerable altitudes; nor could they succeed at all in any undertaking or the development of the interior, without the willing co-operation of the native population. First consideration was therefore given to the education and advancement of the aborigines, and the policy of Government assistance to the private employer was abandoned for good and all. The many thriving dependencies where previously were struggling "colonies" testify to the rectitude and permanency of this latter-day policy.

I. GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE FARMS.

There are apparently no Government farms or plantations now in the Republic. A year or two ago at the instance of President King an experimental farm was begun near Monrovia, but was shortly afterwards reported to be a failure. There were at least two similar ventures in other sections of the country, but these also were shortly abandoned.

On the other hand, it would appear from observations made by the Commission and from testimony brought before it, that most of the higher Government officials develop rice farms or plantations. The almost total absence of positions outside Government work undoubtedly serves to prompt many officials while in office to provide for themselves at least a town house or a "farm". And when these farms require an outlay for labour over several years before profitable results accrue, as in the case of rubber, which may take the place of coffee as a national staple, the temptation is strong to make use of unpaid and impressed labour in a manner indistinguishable, to the native at least, from Government work.

At Kakata, and during the sessions held by the Commission in Monrovia, such names as District Commissioner Carter, Secretary Morris, President King, Secretary Harris and other high officials were frequently mentioned as owning extensive plantations of rubber, coffee, and cocoa or rice and vegetable farms. Many of the men who came forward to give their experiences had worked on the farms owned by these gentlemen, and seemed to look upon it as Government work, and expected no pay.

In Maryland County a similar condition was found to exist; particularly in the neighbourhood of Cape Palmas. Government officials not only develop private farms with the use of unpaid native labour, but it often happened, it was said, that a considerable portion of the "boys" demanded for the public roads are parcelled out among these private farms. The names of Vice President Yancy, Rev. Cummings, Senator Macborough, Superintendent Brooks, Mrs. Yancy and certain road overseers have been most frequently mentioned as owners. The properties owned by Mr. Yancy seem to be numerous and extensive. Scores of natives have persistently testified before the Commission that they personally had worked on one or other of these farms, and the problem before the Commission has been how, with the labour supply so seriously depleted by incessant demands for road workers and Fernando Po "boys", these plantations are kept otherwise supplied with labourers.

If the following quotations taken from depositions explain the mystery, there would appear to be nothing to prevent any and all individuals of influence with Government officials from trying their hands at developing a farm, nor Government officials from commercializing the Government labour supply.

Montserrat County.

68. "Now they say we must cut government farm; the other day when they hear you all were coming they stopped us. They had soldiers over us. This was in the President's farm. We ourselves had to find the cassada sticks and give them to the Paramount Chief. The Paramount Chief takes them to the President's farm."

69. "Every week 250 men from this section here on this road. When they collect all that some go to the Secretary's farm; some to the President's farm; some to the Station Master's farm; and they tell us to bring some more."

70. "That big farm you see there, it belongs to the President. The labourers did that work.¹ We send 250 men on the road to work. When they go, they divide them; they don't send all on the road. Some of them go on the farms. Some go to David Carter's farm; some they send in the bush to cut palm nuts."

71. "They caught me, tied me, and brought me to the District Commissioner's place and told me to give 43 labourers. When they got the 43 labourers, the work they did for the D.C. you will see on his farm."

Maryland County.

72. "Now these men who go on the roads, they are used to private farms. They are sent to Vice President Yancy's farms. Out of the 12 men sent from this section, 6 of them went on the road, the other six on the private farm of Vice President Yancy."

73. "All type men who go to work on the road do not actually work on the roads. They work on private farms. When we go now, instead of working the Government road, they say, 'Some go to Yancy's farm, some go to Yancy's wife's farm.' All will tell you the same. Working his farm and his wife's farm too, without chop, no pay."

¹ "Shortly after the signing of the report the Commissioners learned the farm adjoining the house at Kakata at which the Commission stayed for several days and which was stated to belong to President King, was, in fact, not his personal property, but the property of the Government."

74. " We do his own work. And his wife's work instead of the road (*i.e.*, they work on Yancy's farm and his wife's farm). We don't do no other work but Yancy's and his wife's. There is no difference between the fines on the road and the fines for not working on the private farms. Men who run away from the native farm as for the failure to work on the road, will get the same fine."

75. " Some of the men go for farm ; some go for road. There is a regular division about this. That is, the same number that goes to work for farm must go for the road. After we get there the division is made. When Yancy come to our own country he divide the men into three parts : one-third to go to the road ; one-third to Yancy's farm, and the remaining third to Yancy's wife's farm. Those on Yancy's farm work on his private rubber farm or plantation. After all, when doing work, he give them nothing."

76. " When these men are called to go on the road, they do not go there, on the road, but to private farms. Some go to tote hammocks, some clean cassada, etc."

77. " Then when the labourers were done working the road he sent all to his farm (Yancy) at Philadelphia, and one at Konekre, cutting sticks, etc. while labourers there had to carry own food and if you give out you have to send back for more. This was done for one month, about a year after they had done working down there. Jeffrey Harris called the chiefs of Barrobo to Webbo. He told them that President King say must cut farm for Governor and this will be both military barracks and civil compound. Then the chiefs agree. Farm was cut. After cutting farm it was burned. Then he sent orders that each Paramount Chief must find rice to plant. This was about 100 men. Then the women of Webbo plant the farm. Sent order to the Chief of Barrobo that he must send boys to watch the birds. In pulling weeds out of rice some number of men, 100. In cutting rice, same number of men. When these labourers are going to Nyaaake to work on this government farm they took own food. When watching the birds from the corn planted on the government farm if the boys happened to pull one ear and eat it, fine £1. This lasted two years steady work of 100 men of Webbo. (Explanation : At the same time the Government farm was going on, the road from Harper to Plebo also was being worked.) When the Commissioner Jeffrey Harris came as Commissioner, he gave no time for the natives to work rice crops. Now these Station Masters in Barrobo then gave another order that the government farm should be cut at Station Master's. This made it two farms. In that year, Barrobo gave 300 men to the government."

78. " Then D.C. Harris sent for the Paramount Chief of Nyabo. When the P.C. reached him, then he said I want Liberian farm for the Government. The P.C. sent 40 men to work on the Government farm. Sometime in this work, when a stick fall on a boy and he die, and they carry cry to D.C. he says : Government work. When the farm was burned ordered chief to bring seed rice. After Jeffrey Harris came another commissioner, Allen N. Yancy. Mr. Allen say must cut Government farm. Start again."

79. " Many of my men have been forced to work on the private farms of government officials. They have been forced to work for Hon. Yancy's farm. The 20 men that I supply for road work, 10 men go on the road, the other 10 go on Mr. Yancy's farm."

80. " Many times when people are sent on the roads, they are divided and some of them sent on the farms. As a matter of fact, Mr. Yancy carries the men where he likes."

81. " Mr. Yancy's private farms are looking better than the Government road that we have been working. The labour for his farm is drawn from the labour supplied for the Government road work. Now apart from Mr. Yancy, there are many other Liberians who have farms and who take boys from the road at pleasure. The Rev. Cummings, Hon. McBorough ; Governor Brooks ; Mr. Smith and several others. I have personally worked both on Mr. Yancy's and McBorough's farms. We usually brush bush and clean up and plant. We who come from Garroway that time were 20 in number, and he took us all on the farm, where we stayed for a week working for him. We are not asked to state where we want to go, we are simply called and divided according to how Mr. Yancy likes it. Those of the boys that remain after the division can go elsewhere."

" All of us file to his house at the Cape Palmas, where he distributes us boys for Fernando Po, he makes them work on his farm until the arrival of the Spanish ship before he sends them on to Fernando Po."

82. " When the people are sent for road, they have to work on Mr. Yancy's farm, Mr. Brooks, and many of the Liberian people's farms. When the men leave here for road work, they go to the house of Mr. Yancy, and then we are divided, some to the farm and the remainder on the road."

In District No. 5, both chiefs and people frequently referred to farms developed by the District Commissioner, and seemed under the impression that they were farms ordered by the Government. When anything unusual such as injury to a worker happened while working on one of these farms, the injured one would always be consoled by the assertion that "It is Government work" (and therefore there was nobody to blame).

A frequent complaint of the natives in No. 5 District was that in addition to having a great deal of Government work on their hands, such as cultivating and preparing a large supply of rice for the District Commissioner and to the military barracks, they are obliged to do the work on the Government rice farms as well, and if a day late with their monthly supply they are fined. In such a doubtful condition of affairs the Government is again charged, and quite naturally, with abuses in which it does not actually participate as matters of state policy.

2. CORPORATIONS AND COMPANIES.

At present, as far as the Commission is aware, no companies or corporations either agricultural or mineral, with the exception of the Firestone Plantation Company, have any holdings or interest of any sort in the country other than the purely commercial and trading houses on the Coast. The policy of the "Closed Door" and fear of introducing the white man have hitherto effectually prevented exploitation of either land, minerals or produce, except as before stated in the case of the Firestone Rubber Company, Ltd., which is treated under a separate heading.

The Firestone Plantation Company.

The Firestone Plantation Company is the only large private enterprise in Liberia. It represents a vast and somewhat bold experiment in rubber growing, prompted in large part by the inconvenience to American rubber users of a virtual world monopoly held chiefly by British and Dutch controlled rubber growing interests. Search for areas suitable for large scale development in South and Central America having failed attention was eventually centred on Liberia, where an earlier experiment begun by the Liberian Rubber Corporation in 1907 had left the small Mt. Barclay Plantation of about 1,000 acres as a useful nucleus for study.

Moreover, the paternal relations of the American Government to the Republic since its founding through the efforts of the American Colonisation Society afforded an added reason for Liberia being chosen as the scene of the experiment. The impoverished condition of this small independent Negro State, its undeveloped resources, its burden of loans from which little public benefit had been derived and its struggles to prevent territorial aggression, all reflected themselves in the early days of the Company in safeguards required by the Government of the Republic against undue control over administrative affairs, on the one hand, and on the other, protection by the Company for the millions to be invested in a practically unreclaimable venture. These endeavours, however, to safeguard and protect acted more often as a handicap than otherwise and the existing state of political affairs provided opportunities for frequent irregularities and misunderstandings.

In the agreement as finally determined upon the Government conceded to the Company leasehold for a period of 99 years, upon one million acres of land, or any lesser area, to be selected from time to time during the period; exemption for the Company as such from taxation on all products of the plantation, working tools, improvements, leasehold interests, etc., except for a revenue tax specially provided for; the Emergency Relief Fund, and the vehicle tax; the rights to all timber cut provided it is not sold, in which event it should pay to the Government a specified royalty; the right to engage in any operation other than agricultural upon the land provided that in the case of mining or like operation it be subject to the existing laws of the Republic regulating mining concessions; the right to develop and use its own natural water and hydro-electric power; the right to construct and maintain power lines over any Government lands by way of conveying power between selected tracts and lines of communication for its own purposes, but not as common carriers; access to all ports and plots of land at ports upon favourable terms; protection and defence of the title, support and assistance in securing and maintaining an adequate labour supply.

The Company promised the Government to select and develop from year to year land suitable for rubber and other agricultural products in convenient and economically sound quantities; a minimum rental of 6 cents an acre in advance on land selected, and, after 6 years a revenue tax equivalent to one per centum of the value of all rubber and other commercial products shipped, calculated at the market rate on arrival in the United States;

the privilege to the Government of regulating and collecting taxes payable under the laws of the Republic, from employees of the Company up to the limit of the average number employed during the year. The Company agreed not to import labour unless the local supply is inadequate and then only such as are acceptable to the Liberian Government; and likewise, never to sell or transfer the rights of the agreement without the prior written consent of the Government. It conceded the right to the Government to construct all transportation and telegraph lines through any plantations paying only damages to the Company's property; and agreed to exclude and respect all tribal reserves as limited by the Government; and to turn over to the Government at the expiration or forfeiture of the contract all buildings and improvements not removed before expiration or cancellation. It offered to use its influence to secure a loan either from the United States or with the approval of the Secretary of State of the United States, from some other person or persons, not exceeding \$5,000,000 for public developments, the terms to be subject to the approval of the Liberian Legislature.

The precipitous character of the Company's pioneering operations in Liberia, the unfamiliarity of its employees with African conditions, the unsuitableness of equipment and outfit, and the inexperience in the control of primitive labour all created difficulties which it took many months to get in front of. Again, the apprehension of the Government over the possible weakening of its influence with the natives, and fear of involvement in financial obligations promoted the institution of measures which have proved the source of much difficulty both to the Company and to the Government, notably in the mutual "safeguard" provisions of the agreement.

These provisions may be stated thus :

On the part of the Company the suggestion of a loan which would remove old, throttling obligations and aid in the provision of those public improvements as the first step in creating a favourable environment for the investment of unreclaimable millions; arbitration of differences by a Committee of three, selected from the Liberian Government, the Company and a neutral party; and a guarantee against the granting to any other company of more favourable terms, in which case the benefits would accrue to the Company.

On the part of the Government there was required an agreement that no more than 1,500 white employees would be used; that any unpaid rent or defaulted area would revert to the Government; that the failure of operation over three consecutive years should extinguish rights to particular parcels of land; and that the Government should regulate the labour supply officially. The last of these safeguards appears to have become the point of inclusion under this Commission's terms of reference.

In 1912 there had been created a Labour Bureau, under the Interior Department whose purpose was to "regulate and supervise the labour situation, to procure labourers and to protect the rights of such labourers engaged by Liberians and foreigners within the Republic." It provided for witnessing all contracts between employers and employees, the creating of "Labour Agents", the encouraging of chiefs to furnish the necessary labourers for farming and other industrial enterprises, the keeping of accurate records of these transactions, safeguarding the wages, allowances and conditions of labour agreed upon, and enforcing payment of these wages from employers. It was recognised as early as 1912 that the authority so provided had inherent dangers, and Section XI of this Act states that "nothing in this act shall be construed to *compel* labourers to engage themselves to work under the provisions of the Act only".

This Bureau, altho created in 1912, was not made operative until 1926 when it was regarded by the Government as a means of regulating and keeping under control the labour supply from the interior upon which the new Firestone Plantations promised to make large demands. It provided for labour agents to be designated by the President, fees from each employer engaging a labourer, not deductable from wages, and fees to chiefs and headman for each labourer furnished to a labour agent.

With the signing of the agreement it became apparent that this was the instrument intended to be used as a safeguard to the Government, both in establishing and maintaining its control over the hinterland population which had not been hitherto exposed to any contact with modern industrial organization. In 1926, however, the Company, from its home office in Akron offered a "supplementary interpretation" of the article of agreement dealing with the labour supply. It stipulated that the Company may employ any labourers which it may recruit or who present themselves to the Company for employment, without the labourers being first required to obtain the permission of or be registered by the Government. It further

offered that the labour should be free to bargain for its terms and conditions of employment with the Company and sever its employment at its will and convenience.

“ We desire to point out to the Government,” this memorandum states, “ that the success of our development in Liberia is largely dependent upon the organization of a permanent and contented labour force. This can only be done through free and unrestricted employment and upon terms and conditions which are agreeable to the labourers themselves.”

The Company, however, offered that whenever the Government secured labour for it at its own request the Company would pay one cent to the Government, one-half cent to the Paramount Chief and one-half cent to the Chief for each day's work performed by each of the men so supplied. Whatever the effect of this interpretation it is evident that there developed, in course of the first years of operation numbers of occasions for misunderstanding and, similarly, numbers of instances of confusion, on the part of the natives, of Company work and Government requirement. During 1927 labourers were supplied to the Company through the Government bureau. This amounted to about 10 per cent of the labour supply, according to Mr. Ross, the Manager, the others coming voluntarily or through their own recruitment at first with the aid of native headmen and labourers, later with their own American staff. This was the period of launching of engineering plans, of construction and development work, which went along with the first clearing of land for planting. The arrangement continued about 4 months and was cancelled. However, following this, restriction was placed by the Government upon the number of labourers who might be employed, from each of the hinterland districts. This was intended as a precaution against too great disturbance of native life. For with the requirement for road labour and portage which was unpaid, the Company employment with pay might easily limit the numbers for the former. For example, in District No. 5 in November of 1928 when labourers were being sought by one Company recruiter the District Commissioner was actually enlisting labour for Fernando Po, the Government was building large barracks at Barrobo (Camp King) ; all the sections were planting their rice farms, being under the requirement to provide (90) hampers a week for the soldiers' food. Even with the necessity to earn some money to meet the shortage of the rice issue, they could not get permission from the District Commissioner to go to the plantation for work.

The most serious aspect of this new policy was the shifting of direct control of labour registration and the Company's recruiting efforts from the Labour Bureau to the remote and out-of-hand District Commissioners. These Commissioners required, and with Government approval, a fee of one-half cent per man per day, and this principle became the focus of one of the most serious complaints of the natives.

The Commissioner of District No. 1 stated : “ If we did not control the enlistment of men for work with Firestone, so many would go to the plantations that none would remain to carry on the Government requirements ”.

After receiving complaints from newly employed labour that many of their fellow-tribesmen on their way to work for the Company had been turned back by Interior officials while on their way through District No. 2, the General Manager of the Company wrote the Commissioner of that District on August 31, (1929) :

“ We are getting complaints from headmen bringing boys from Districts No. 1 and No. 2 that they are stopped by your orders when they reach Gbanga and the boys sent back. Before starting this year's development I was assured by the President and the Secretary of the Interior that we would have no difficulty in getting labour ; but at the very commencement of work we get these complaints.”

In December 1929, the District Commissioner of No. 4 sent word to the Company that there were 300 labourers who wanted to come to Firestone to work but that unless he received some money personally he would not give them permission and would send them to Fernando Po.

In Districts 4 and 5, particularly, the hinterland labour has been practically locked in and this labour in known instances offered to the highest bidder. If it were a matter of wages for the labourer the situation would not be regarded as so serious. The benefits, however, appear to accrue almost entirely to the interior officials.

There is evidence, in the statements of labourers and in the nature of the situation itself, that the labourers recruited thru government aid made no distinction between the Firestone work and other Government recruitment. They moreover drew a clear distinction between going to Firestone's of their own accord and going for the Government, or the District Commissioner. During the stay of the Commissioners at Kakata a group of 60 men was brought

into the compound. They were apparently new men who had been officially recruited in the interior and who with two exceptions had no knowledge either of the nature of the Company's work or its policies.

Question. — Where do you come from ?

Answer. — Sanoye.

Question. — What's your Paramount Chief's name ?

Answer. — Gbilie.

Question. — What is the name of the District Commissioner ?

Answer. — David Carter.

Question. — Who are these men ?

Answer. — They collect them from Naama, to go to Firestone to work.

Question. — Who collects them ?

Answer. — The Paramount Chief.

Question. — What did he tell them they were being collected for ?

Answer. — We are working for no money.

Question. — Do these men want to go ?

Answer. — No, they refuse to go.

Question. — Any of these men ever worked for Firestone before ?

Answer. — Yes, I worked myself.

(The Commissioners here asked all of these men who had worked for Firestone to come out, where they could be seen, and two men did so.)

Question. — Did they get pay ?

Answer. — When they go by themselves they pay them, but when they collect them, no pay.

Question. — Have you ever worked at Firestone before ?

Answer. — I went by myself and they paid me.

Question. — When the Paramount Chief sent you down, what did he tell you ?

Answer. — He said we must go to Firestone.

Question. — Did he give you any papers ?

Answer. — No, he just told us to go there and work."

In this case as in numbers of others it was apparent that, with no access to the labour by the Company's recruiters, and the restriction of movement between sections without the permission of the District Commissioners, there was no choice given to the labourer for selecting his work, or to the Company for selecting its workers.

Another headman testified as follows :

" When the road came we carry the road to another section. After we started there, they started beating us. The farm time has come and now they say we must go faster. They gave me 80 labourers to take to Firestone.

Question. — Did the men go ?

Answer. — No.

Question. — Why don't they want to go ?

Answer. — Because when we go, we cannot get any pay.

Question. — If they went by their own free will, will they get pay ?

Answer. — Yes . . . When we were coming down, they gave us 46 hampers of rice to bring down.

Question. — Where is the rice now ?

Answer. — With the D.C.

Question. — What is it for ?

Answer. — Government rice."

Another chief said :

" I have not sent men to Firestone from my section, but the District Commissioner taxed other sections to send men to Firestone."

Question. — Why did not the District Commissioner tax your section to send men to Firestone ?

Answer. — My time has not yet come.

Question. — Do the men like to go to Firestone ?

Answer. — They send them there for three months.

A former Firestone worker said :

“ The Commissioner goes and asks for labourers, they give him these labourers thinking they are for Government use, but the Commissioner sends them to Firestone. The District Commissioner sends messengers to the chief and tells him this is his time to get labourers.

Question. — Have you worked at Firestone ?

Answer. — Yes.

Question. — How much did they pay you for the month ?

Answer. — Sometimes I get \$4.00 in cash and \$2.00 in rice.

Question. — How did you go ?

Answer. — I volunteered.

Question. — What do you dislike about Firestone ?

Answer. — When I feel like going to Firestone I go.”

A chief of Sodokeh, in Maryland County, observed before the Commission :

“ We like to work for Mr. Firestone and any man who pays us for our labour. The reason we do not like to go to Firestone is if Mr. ——— (an official) hears you are on the Firestone he goes there and get the money you worked for.”

A chief of Barrake complained that of the 60 boys sent to Firestone's at the request of the Commissioner he got no benefit. The suggestion heard frequently of trading in labour and shifting it in the direction of the largest recruiter's bonus, appears in this statement by a Maryland County chief :

“ Commissioner Johnson call us to send labourers to Firestone then Supt. Yancy goes to Firestone and tell these boys that he got a book (letter) coming from English Colony, Accra, that they want boys. So they came with him to Cape Palmas and he sent them to the French Congo.”

Another chief of the Barrobo Section said :

“ We get order from D.C. to bring 300 men to Nyaake. When we get there D.C. took 200 for Firestone and 100 to motor road. . . . The 200 to Firestone were sent in care of Speaker W. ———. The arrangement between D.C. Scott and Firestone was that these 200 were to work for Barrobo taxes, because they had no money and it took so long to pay. When Chief took them signed, that the labourers were to remain three months. When the time expired, to surprise of the chiefs, when the men had worked, D.C. Scott and Supt. Yancy sent for taxes. These 200 men were to work for taxes, any amount over was to go to the chiefs plus the commission. Before the time appointed arrived Gov. Yancy went to Firestone and drew all the money. When the appointed time came the Paramount Chief and the Speaker went to the manager of Firestone to see if there was any surplus from money to pay taxes. When two chiefs got there they were told by manager that they had given them the money and they said they would meet the chiefs at Nyaake. So chiefs went to Nyaake to Scott and Yancy. So Chief went to Cape Palmas to see Yancy and he was told to go to Webbo that D.C. Scott had the money there. So they went to Nyaake, Webbo. Were told by Scott to go home to pay taxes.

Question. — Did he offer any explanation about the men working at Firestone's ?

Answer. — So when they got to D.C. he said, ‘ Firestone paid the boys and feed and rice cost money. They were dashed three shilling each, but the rest of the money went to pay for food. But the manager of Firestone's told them different.”

As early as 1927 the abuse of this arrangement was noted and an attempt made to correct it. A Division Superintendent on the Cavalla Plantation wrote to the Division Manager :

“ Division No. 6,

June 22, 1927.

“ This morning a palaver King from one of the chiefs of the Pond People came here and was about to depart with some 250 of my labour when I interfered, in as much as he had no papers or anything to authorize me to turn these people over to him. They are not Gov't boys but boys that were recruited individually and some have been here for six or seven months.

" After a conversation that lasted about 2 hours we came to an agreement that he is going to try to get his chief and all his boys to come here and make it their permanent home. In the mean time the boys are going to remain here and work as before.

" From this chief I learned that this is not an act of the Gov't but a scheme of Mr. . . . and the D.C. whereby they can extract a little more money from Firestone Co. either by demanding higher wages or by a cash settlement.

" I suggest that head money, or any kind of tax to be paid for labourers, be paid directly to the treasurer of the Liberian Gov't and that their representatives in this vicinity be informed of this if it meets with the approval of the management.

" Any suggestions on the handling of this situation will be greatly appreciated."

The frequent assertion of labourers that when they were recruited and sent they received no pay was a question which the Commissioners had considerable difficulty in understanding. The inspection of the payrolls of the Company, each sheet of which carries four counter signatures, the " Pay-offs" and rice issues which happened with regularity, together with the testimony of the officials, left no doubt that each labourer receives monthly his wages into his own hands. Hut taxes paid to the Government on the basis of labourers hired, the fees to Chiefs and the Government are not deducted from the labourers' pay. In the Cape Palmas Section some basis was found for this complaint in one arrangement adopted by the Company of letting out contracts for clearing, following the method of the middle Eastern rubber plantations. Labourers were secured by the contractors at least two of whom were influential members of Government, but the labourers were not paid. This occurred at a time when thousands were being employed and on their return to their villages they carried the impression that the Company did not pay. This arrangement was discontinued after a few months, when the complaints began to be heard.

With the official recruiter's fee and the opportunity to regulate the labour, an opportunity for abuse is presented, which could easily be carried out in the name of the Government. In some sections this has been done with great effectiveness, and a situation created in which the Company in order to get labour at all must meet many curious and difficult requirements of the District Commissioners. In the Cape Palmas area, in particular, the attractiveness of the bonus to recruiters for Fernando Po labourers of £10.0.0 per labourer must of necessity, place local developments at a considerable disadvantage.

As a further possible explanation of the difficulty of the labourers in understanding the pay question, which appears, more than anything else to reflect the first uncertain policy of the Company, there is the *task system*. As set by some of the sub-managers it was regarded as excessive. And although the General Manager, Mr. Ross, has attempted to set these by average accomplishment and little comment was heard by the Commissioners about this in the larger Du Section, the matter has been discussed in the lower Cavalla group, particularly in connection with one Section of that plantation. This section, incidentally draws upon tribes quite different, both in customs and working habits from those of the Du Division. Failure to accomplish the task as set, it was claimed, resulted in markings for only a portion of the day, and a number of complaints were registered on pay shortages at the end of the month.

The pay for labour began with the shilling a day in both sections and on the advice of officials in the Cavalla section who represented that they understood the labour, it was changed to £1.0.0 a month and food. The labourers interpreted this as a reduction in wages and complained.

" At Cape Palmas we started to do the same ; but the officials there told us that we could get much more success if we gave them 20 shillings a month, and two cups of rice a day. That we found not to be satisfactory, so we changed it. I gave them permission to stop as the request came from the boys themselves."

Recently the arrangement has been shifted again to accord with the basis of pay at the Du of 1/- a day for the days worked, and rice issues at the rate of 5 pints for one shilling. The rice is imported in large quantities and sold to them below the market rate. They may draw as much as they like but the average is 10 pints a week. Deductions are made for the rice issued and in numbers of cases this has been regarded by native labourers as deductions in pay. Occasionally one and sometimes two cups are given as a " Dash " for extra work.

¹ Testimony of D. Ross, Manager, Firestone Plantation, before the Commission.

The standard rate now for labourers on the plantation is 1/- a day ; for more careful types of common labour 1/6, and for native headmen and overseers from 4/- to 8/- per day, occasionally 10/-, depending upon skill and experience. This is the prevailing wage in Liberia and, in fact, in most places on the West Coast. The pay for work as deck hands on steamers, which is sporadic and limited, is somewhat larger and includes food. Few boys, other than those living on or near the coast have this opportunity. In the interior, among the Buzies, Gizies, Kpesssehs, Monahs, Gios, Bassas, Vheys, Golahs, Gbondis and Bellis, the opportunities for labour with pay are small, and at the beginning of the operations, it was necessary to pay the entire force at the end of each day to establish confidence in the intention of the Company. The annual message of the President for 1929 mentions \$1,024,050 paid on wages to Liberian labourers in 1928 and \$800,000 in 1929. The difference of 224,050 between the two years he lamented and made responsible, in part, for the depression which the merchants and others felt generally.

There is no evidence that the Company forcibly impresses labour or consciously employs labour which has been forcibly impressed. Contracts are no longer given out to independent contractors, and there is no contract arrangement between the Company and the labourers who are free to terminate their service at will. Of the men housed on the plantations there is no compulsion regarding the number of days they shall work during any given month. The number on the payroll of the Du group and the New Development was 9,077 on June 30, 1930. The average daily " out turn " was 5,627, or slightly above 60 per cent. In Maryland County, the number on the payroll of the Cavalla group was 1,316 with an average daily " out turn " of 811, approximately the same proportion.

During the first full extension of the operations of the company the peak of 18,000 labourers was reached. Areas were being cleared and this usually requires largest numbers ; road and building construction was under way. Approximately 55,000 acres, or about 85 square miles have been cleared for development up to the present, and the rate of opening of new areas depends upon the demands of the industry, the available labour supply and the economic balance of the country. Under no condition could the full 99 year maximum of acres be placed in cultivation simultaneously ; and once clearing is accomplished, the need for men is reduced to the requirement of planting, up-keep, and collecting of the latex, which is roughly one man to every 6 acres. Present operations require about 10,000 labourers, but during the past year the Company has reduced its force, including both native workers and Americans. One fact of possible significance in this connection is the extraordinary decline in the price of rubber, together with the increased production in other rubber growing areas. When operations were begun in 1925 the price of rubber had exceeded \$1.40 per pound. At present the price is sixteen cents. This is below normal production costs. While it is possible that no such arbitrary fluctuations in rubber prices can seriously affect the home company again, it is not so evident at present that the gigantic new acreage will yield either the profits or savings at first anticipated.

THE COMMISSION'S FINDINGS.

(a) *Whether slavery as defined in the Anti-Slavery Convention in fact exists in the Republic.*

The Commission finds that although classic slavery carrying the idea of slave markets and slave dealers no longer exists as such in the Republic of Liberia, slavery as defined by the (1926) Anti-Slavery Convention does exist in so far as inter- and intra-tribal domestic slavery exists. Pawning is also recognised in the social economy of the Republic.

(b) *Whether this system is participated in or encouraged by the Government of the Republic.*

The Commission finds that domestic slavery is discouraged by the Government in that any slave who appeals to the courts for release may be granted his freedom on a writ of *Habeas corpus* or upon direct proceedings against his master or owner. Evidence before the Commission showed that in some cases domestic slaves have obtained their freedom upon evidence of ill-treatment.

(c) *Whether and what leading citizens of the Country participate therein.*

The Commission finds that there has been no evidence that leading citizens of the country participate in domestic slavery, but there is evidence that some Americo-Liberians take natives as pawns, and in some instances have criminally abused the system for personal ends by taking women as pawns and using them to attract male labourers to their land.

- (d) *To what extent compulsory labour exists as a factor in the social and industrial economy of the State, either for public or private purposes, and, if it does exist, in what manner it has been recruited and employed whether for public or private purposes.*

The Commission finds that forced labour has been made use of in Liberia chiefly for motor road construction, for building civil compounds and military barracks, etc., and for portage. That this labour has been wastefully recruited and used, frequently under conditions involving systematic intimidation and ill-treatment on the part of Government officials, messengers and Frontier Force soldiers. That labour recruited by County Superintendents and District Commissioners for public purposes we find in many instances has been diverted to private use on the farms and plantations of high Government officials and private citizens. That none of this labour has been paid, though paid labour may exist on the plantations; on the other hand in Maryland some of it has been made to pay large sums to the plantation owners to be released from a term of unpaid and unfed labour.

- (e) *Whether shipment of contract labourers to Fernando Po under the terms of arrangement with Spain, or shipment of such labourers to the Congo or any other foreign parts is associated with slavery, and whether the method employed in recruiting such labourers carries any compulsion.*

The Commission finds that a large proportion of the contract labourers shipped to Fernando Po and French Gabun from the southern counties of Liberia have been recruited under conditions of criminal compulsion scarcely distinguishable from slave raiding and slave trading, and frequently by misrepresenting the destination.

- (f) *Whether the labour employed for private purposes on privately owned or leased plantations is recruited by voluntary enlistments or is forcibly impressed for this service by the Liberian Government or by its authority.*

The Commission finds that labour employed for private purposes on privately owned plantations has been impressed for this service on the authority of high Government officials. That there is no evidence that the Firestone Plantations Company consciously employs any but voluntary labour on its leased rubber plantations; but this, however, was not always the case when recruiting was subject to Government Regulations, over which the Company had little control. That all the Company's labourers are free to terminate their employment at will.

- (g) *Whether the Liberian Government has at any time given sanction or approval to the recruiting of labour with the aid and assistance of the Liberian Frontier Force or other persons holding official positions or in Government employ, or private individuals have been implicated in such recruiting with or without Government's approval.*

The Commission finds that Vice President Yancy and other high officials of the Liberian Government, as well as County Superintendents and District Commissioners have given their sanction for the compulsory recruitment of labour for road construction, for shipment abroad and other work, by the aid and assistance of the Liberian Frontier Force; and have condoned the utilisation of this force for purposes of physical compulsion on road construction, for the intimidation of villagers, for the humiliation and degradation of chiefs, for the imprisonment of inhabitants, and for the conveying of gangs of captured natives to the coast, there guarding them till the time of shipment.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Commission is strongly of opinion that the policy of the "closed door", which for so long seems to have been favoured by the Liberian Government, is not in the best interests of the Republic; that it is, in fact, at the root of the financial and other major difficulties in which the country is now involved. It impedes development by masking maladministration, discouraging research, delaying civilization and education, preventing competition and generally stifling commercial enterprise.

The enviable stage of financial independence at which some of the tropical African Dependencies and Colonies have arrived has only been reached by strenuous and eventful communal effort on the part of administration and people, and by full recognition of the now obvious fact that tropical Africa can never be developed, its agricultural, mineral, and other sources utilised, nor surplus Government funds be hoped for, without the willing co-operation

and assistance of the indigenous population. It is now becoming everywhere recognized by tropical African administrators that the first considerations towards financial competence must include provision for the civilization, education, and the gaining of the confidence of the native, not for his subjugation and exploitation.

Education now heads the list where enterprising development is to be considered. Schools are of the first importance, not merely for the purpose of teaching reading and writing, but for improving the native's sociological conditions; and specialist instructors invaluable for broadening his ideas, teaching him market values, and the use he can make of the innumerable economic products and raw materials around him. With such incentives, trade and peaceful intercommunication follow. The unsophisticated native learns something of the outside world, and his wants are increased. The missionary, school teacher, and the trader teach him what he may buy for money, and he then wants to learn what he can grow, what he should do, or where he should work to make some money, with the result that trade increases, the coast merchant flourishes, the revenues of Government expand, and money is forthcoming for more educational centres, for the construction of roads and transport facilities, the payment of salaries, and the institution of further methods of general development. A policy of suppression and seclusion for fear of competition, *i.e.*, the closed door, can only lead to a condition of delayed development, bankruptcy and final failure. The Commission thinks also that such a policy is bound to foster ill-treatment, extortion and coercion of the natives. Under such a policy, with no one to appeal to for hopeful redress, the native must continue his harried existence with a feeling that he is really and truly a slave.

In Liberia the man who has had the advantage of going to school and has learnt "book" or a little English is called a civilized person, as distinct from the native who is merely a peasant with no book learning. All, both hinterland native, coast dweller and Americo-Liberian, are officially designated as "citizens"—a singularly inappropriate anticipation. The "*civilized*" man in Liberia, in furtherance of the policy of seclusion, is encouraged to leave his native surroundings and either live in or near a Government station, or in "civilized" quarters allotted to him by the Government, so that he may have less chance of helping or advising the chiefs and the peasant natives, or of influencing them against the administration.

"Unless the Government through the Commissioners centralized them, the responsibility of them becoming dangerous to good administration is probable. The instances shown in many of the investigations indicate that the Government should in time take steps towards preventing any confusion in the end."¹

This is the exact opposite of the *policy now in vogue* in African colonies and dependencies. In the back blocks of the Belgian Congo the natives are encouraged to leave their hole and corner villages and take up locations along the main roads for the reason that by so doing they benefit by association with white men and traffic and markets on the road, and for other reasons, not because they already have some knowledge of such things and are therefore to be segregated for fear of breathing sedition. We believe that the sooner class distinction between civilized and uncivilized is broken, and the indigenous native allowed an equal status with the coast dweller, the better for all concerned. A chief or other hinterland native should be allowed to educate his children as he pleases.

A Paramount Chief in Maryland, after describing how he was penalised and fined £10 by his District Commissioner for daring to utilise the services of a boy who could read and write said to the Commissioners :

"The amount I have just referred to was paid in addition to the £10 for the writing of the letter. The District Commissioner told me that from that time onward no civilized man must be seen near me. He said we must have nothing to do with our children if we send them to school. They should not associate with us so that they may show us sense. What is the encouragement then for putting our children in school if they cannot show us how to deal with the Government? These are the things which please report when you go back to the nations in Europe that the natives in Liberia are suffering."

At the Anniversary Celebration of the Independence of the Liberian Republic at Monrovia, 1930, a Cabinet Minister of pure native stock but European experience, in an able speech, said :

"Our colonial experiences were only history to prepare us for greater things . . . What shall we do to better our own condition and the condition of these millions of our indigenous kinsfolk of whom God has made us trustees?"

¹ Report from Hon. J. J. Harris, Secretary of Interior, to His Excellency C. D. B. King, dated May 5th, 1930, dealing with conditions in Maryland.

For the Republic to have reached its eighty-fifth year of existence and to have survived the serious crises occurring during that long period, is a *great achievement*. It seems, however, to have been accomplished for the benefit of the coastal inhabitants, chiefly the Americo-Liberians and their inter-related descendants, at the expense of the indigenous peoples of the interior, without whose assistance any attempt to develop the potential wealth of the hinterland would be futile. In most other tropical African administrations the native hinterland community of tribes has received first consideration, but in Liberia instead of thoughtful attention they have been subjected, as we have already said, to gross exploitation and subjugation, a condition of things which cannot continue indefinitely. It must eventually result in a rude awakening, if a thorough reorganization of the Department of the Interior is not taken in hand without delay and the necessary reforms instituted.

According to Mr. Buell,¹ the *American State Department*, in a firm note dated April 4th, 1917, declared that the number of District Commissioners should be limited by agreement with the Financial Adviser, and that no official should be stationed in the interior whose appointment had not been agreed to by him. That the Liberian Government should also draw up a simple and effective plan for the administration of the interior in which native customary law should not be lost sight of; that taxes should be collected, so far as possible, through chiefs, and an equitable portion of such taxes applied to public work of direct benefit to the natives. The States Department insisted that "it will not be satisfied with promises alone, tangible and permanent results must follow".

However, *no permanent results* followed, apparently. In order to suppress the native, prevent his education, prevent him from realising his powers and his limitations, and prevent him from asserting himself in any way whatever, for the benefit of the dominant and colonising race, although originally the same African stock as themselves, a policy of gross intimidation and suppression has for years been systematically fostered and encouraged. Intimidation has apparently been and is the keyword of the Government's native policy.

Not only have the native village classes been intimidated and terrorised by a display of force, cruelty and suppression, but the chiefs themselves, men whom the people not so many years ago looked up to, were glad to serve, and relied upon for protection, harsh though it sometimes was; men who never moved without a retinue and barbaric display of pomp, have been so systematically humiliated, degraded and robbed of their power, that now they are mere go-betweens, paid by the Government to coerce and rob the people. The words development, social progress are unknown, servitude and slavery have taken their place.

During the loan negotiations with the Liberian Government, at Paris and in Washington following the World War, the *United States* again insisted upon reform in Liberia's native policy, and in the Loan Agreement of 1921 she went so far as to insist upon the appointment of American native Commissioners.

It is clear from the above that the present conditions of interior administration must have persisted for many years. From the body of this report it will be gathered that the results are today disastrous. The villagers have been intimidated by soldiers of the *Frontier Force*, and by messengers of the Paramount Chiefs and District Commissioners, to such an extent that they find themselves obliged to labour most of the year on road construction, private or Government farms, and other work so continuously, that they have no time to cultivate their own food supply. They have, in fact, to live a harried and half-starved existence or leave the country. Very large numbers have resorted to the latter alternative. On several occasions the Commissioners in their travels have passed through abandoned villages or seen the now overgrown sites of others. Some of these villages may of course have been abandoned in the ordinary way in favour of more fertile or less exhausted sites, or as the result of the death of the chief or other cause. In the present instances observed by the Commission, however, local history afforded a different explanation. Reports have repeatedly reached the Commissioners of villages by the score in other parts of the country unoccupied and falling into disrepair, and of gardens reverting to bush. The natives have no redress, and no one to whom they can ventilate their grievances. The Paramount Chiefs receive their commissions from the President and are therefore Government officials; the District Commissioners are harsh and unsympathetic towards the natives, who are not allowed to travel from one section to another, and cannot, therefore, take their complaints elsewhere. It is not surprising that they should migrate beyond the boundaries. As far back as 1922 the President, in his address to the Legislature, said: "*Our policy* is to encourage by every legitimate means the return of the populations that have fled the country". Today every one seems to agree that the conditions have become worse in recent years.

¹ Raymond L. Buell, *The Native Problem in Africa*, 1928.

Under the circumstances the present situation seems to demand a complete and *urgent reorganization* of the Government of the Interior if the future stability of the Republic is to be secured, or alternatively saved from failure. Before proposing any change, however, the existing organisation may first be referred to :

The Republic is divided first into a *coastal strip* 40 miles wide containing five maritime counties, each under a County Superintendent.¹ The remainder of the Republic is partitioned into five districts roughly corresponding with the hinterland of each of the five counties, and each is in charge of a District Commissioner. With the exception of the Vais, an unusually virile race of advanced tendencies living on the Sierra Leone Frontier, the many tribes of indigenous Bantu people in these five districts of the interior are more or less backward in the scale of general civilization, and have little or no chance of advancement by association with the coastal inhabitants. In fact, in accordance with the Government's policy of suppression they are prevented from moving out of their tribal sections, and the people in the counties are forbidden by Interior Regulations to move into the districts without special permission. Little wonder, then, that they carry their produce over the frontier instead of bringing it to the Coast.

The *first radical change* we recommend is the removal of the present five District Commissioners now stationed in the hinterland, as dishonest and corrupt officials, skilled only in devising means of intimidation for the purpose of extracting money from the natives and in creating opportunities for extorting more. In their place we suggest should be substituted a higher grade of official as District Commissioner or *District Administrator*. Under each would be assistant Commissioners, who might be selected from the Republic or from America. In course of time they might be eligible for the Senior posts. The Commissioner would have the status of county magistrate and be allowed to select a suitable central site for his station. He would encourage intercourse with the people of his District by every means in his power and by holding daily court for the hearings of cases referred to him by his assistants and others. In addition to an ample salary he would be allowed travelling and other allowances, and would be obliged to spend at least three months in the year travelling in his district. Similarly his assistants, each with Justice of Peace status, would be installed in their own stations at strategic points, would hold their own open courts for cases referred to them by Paramount Chiefs, encourage weekly markets, and be obliged to be in camp in their own sections or within the district for three months each year. Success must depend upon the character of the Senior Commissioner of each district, who must be honest, fair-minded and free from graft. He should, we think, be either European or American. The Senior Commissioner's assistants, as well as he himself, would be chosen from the successful candidates of some form of *Civil Service*, examinations for which might be held in Europe and America, and since the general standard required would be that of Europe or America it might be undesirable to admit as a candidate any youth or person who had not visited one or other continent. Candidates for the Senior Commissionerships, would, of course, be required to pass a much more exacting standard than the assistant class. That these officials should be men of high moral standard, and able to regain the lost confidence of the natives, is essential. To do this they would have to possess a previous knowledge of native affairs and have some groundings of routine *indirect administration* in the tropics. Their very first consideration would be to reinstate the Paramount Chiefs who have been so systematically humiliated and degraded, or at least the most worthy of them, in their old positions of local power and authority over town chiefs and people. Their next consideration would be to teach the chiefs how to exercise that power for good, to inculcate in them the principles of progressive town and country administration, discouraging bad customs and fostering the good. It would at the same time be the duty of the re-instated chiefs to co-operate to the best of their power with the District Commissioner in opening up and improving the shortest and best routes to the Coast, policing those routes, encouraging trade and the trader and free transport of raw materials and produce coastwards, as well as the safe entry of traders' merchandise. Salaries of the District Commissioners should be sufficiently high to attract the right class of applicant. Hitherto they have not been sufficient to remove the temptation to inflict fines to meet the regular expenses of maintaining their stations.

The Senior Commissioners would be responsible only to the central head of their department, and would have power to remove, or request the transfer of any of their assistants if necessary. They would not, except in cases of emergency, of which they alone would be able to judge the urgency, be able to call upon the Frontier Force for assistance or service of any sort, without central authority, and no Frontier Force soldier would be allowed to enter any village in his district without being accompanied by a non-commissioned or other officer,

¹ In this strip live the 8 or 10,000 Americo-Liberians, or rather their much inter-related descendants, mainly in Monrovia and other towns. All are of the administrative class, past, present or future. None are of the business class, or have any interest in commercial enterprise, but seem indeed in the majority of cases to have no occupation of any kind, unless perhaps some pseudo-legal occupation or specious Government job.

or sufficient authority to show that he is travelling on duty. As regards education in their district, this would be attended to by the Central Education Department, but funds would need to be available for class or other instruction in the utilisation of African economic products, etc. The Commissioner's clerk would have to be a competent accountant, able to keep the books and accounts of the station and the registration of all fines.

It would not be sufficient merely to institute charges in the interior. The coastal counties would of necessity have to follow suit, and in this connection it is further suggested for the consideration of the Government that a *rearrangement of the political divisions* of the country might be undertaken with great advantage, namely, that each of the five districts be incorporated with its nearby corresponding county, thus doing away altogether with the maritime strip, and its implied segregation from the natives of the interior. Each of the counties would then extend as Provinces from the coast to the limits of the hinterland, and their administration would be incorporated with that of the Senior Commissioners, who would then be Provincial Commissioners. They would in this case be responsible only to the President. This step would lead to much needed economy in many directions and tend, as no other arrangement could, to assist the development of the Republic's rich interior by encouraging inter-communication and trade, and by helping to bring about a better understanding between the coastal and interior populations. In point of size the county and district divisions are insignificant in comparison with administrative areas in other regions, and if the old divisions were retained, the Senior Commissioners suggested for the hinterland districts would probably find that the counties lying between themselves and the sea seriously restricted the Government's policy, if adopted, of opening up towards the coast.

The above is a brief indication of the policy which we suggest might be adopted by the Liberian Government in regard to the radical readjustment of the hinterland administration. If allowed to continue on the existing lines of humiliation of chiefs, intimidation, suppression, extortion and ill-treatment of the people, Liberia may discover that its place in the community of civilized nations is jeopardized.¹

As pointed out in the body of the Report, common or *classic slavery* is now no longer existent in Liberia, but such forms as domestic slavery and pawning are still common customs. So long as these forms of slavery are recognized as existing institutions in the social life of Liberia, so long will the stigma of slavery be attached to the Republic. It is urgently recommended that steps should at once be taken to make both forms illegal as a preliminary to total abolition.

The Commission cannot too strongly urge upon the Liberian Government attention to the question of the shipment of labourers to *Fernando Po*, and other places. Labour conditions in *Fernando Po* may have been greatly improved in recent years; indeed, we have reliable information that this is a fact. Nevertheless, we are in agreement that under conditions existing to-day in the Liberian hinterland, more especially the absence, as we think, of any efficient form of Government in that region, and consequent lack of guarantee that abuse of power both physical and official in regard to recruitment will not occur, we recommend that the organised shipment of labourers to *Fernando Po* and elsewhere should at once be discontinued. The Liberian Government would, we think, run the risk of incurring undesirable opprobrium if this were not done and the decree strictly enforced; for, in the minds of the majority of persons in the critical world, a commercialised labour traffic, such as that which has been carried on from Maryland and elsewhere, cannot be dissociated from conditions analogous to slave-raiding and slave-trading. This traffic has had the support of the highest officials of the Republic, and has been organised and conducted by Vice-President Yancy, who has utilised his subordinates to further it to his own advantage, he himself being the chief beneficiary. When it is realized that it is also attended by cruelty, widespread disorganisation of native social life and loss of Government prestige, the danger of its continuance is manifest.

Much of the ill-treatment of the people of the interior, the cessation of native village cultivation, the exodus from the country and the general discontent has, in our opinion, been the result of brigandage on the part of *Frontier Force soldiers*, who, from the accounts of the natives, are often unaccompanied by their officers, and, when accompanying them, the officers seem to encourage a general policy of intimidation. We recommend that the men of this force should be under much more efficient control than at present, and that the moral standard of the officers allowed to command at interior stations be raised; also, that on no account should the force employ native compulsory labour for building or other purposes as at present. Such

¹ Article 23 (b), *The Covenant of the League of Nations* :

"... Subject to and in accordance with the provisions of international conventions existing or hereafter to be agreed upon, the Members of the League undertake to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control."

labour should be done by the soldiers themselves as is usually the case in other places. On no account should the men be allowed to enter villages without their officers, unless they have with them some clear evidence, intelligible to the chief, that they are on duty ; and they should be rationed from their station, which is provided under direction of the District Commissioner with very ample supplies of rice and other foods by the surrounding native chiefs. Any reported intimidation of the people, or of interference with natives on the pathways or roads by Frontier Force soldiers or District messengers should be very severely dealt with. It is felt in this connection that steps should be taken to have the following deleted from Section 1082, "*Duty of the Frontier Force*," in Chapter XXXIX of the Statutes of the Republic of Liberia :

" In keeping roads open to trade and travel, and in enforcing such laws and regulations as are or that may hereafter be passed, relative to the aboriginal population . . . and in laying out a road from the interior to the Coast."

During the stay of the Commission in Maryland the League of Nations member had an opportunity of observing a large gang of labourers engaged on road construction work. He was impressed with the poor class of labour employed, the difficulties under which the men worked and their discontent. In face of the needlessness of much of the work accomplished and the general outcry against its continuance in Maryland, *it is recommended* that the ambitious road programme of the Department of Public Works should be curtailed, if not closed down entirely, except in Montserrado County, where it can be under more efficient supervision, until the natives have had time to recover from the effects of the abuses which have accompanied its execution, and some reorganization of the Department of the Interior has taken place.

We *recommend* that instead of hampering *immigration* from the United States the best types of educated Negro should be encouraged as tending to open educative links with American trade affairs.

The Commission cannot too strongly express its conviction that, as regards most officials, mere advice to greater efficiency and honesty will not be sufficient. The tolerance given to gross dishonesty in office, the general ignorance of the interior and its people ; the lack of means of education in the provinces and its total absence in the hinterland, except where a few missionaries are installed ; the powerful influence of family connections between the executive officers of the Government, few of whom have ever left the country ; and the general insularity of outlook, render futile any hope of improvement in the present conditions without the introduction of outside specialist assistance, the reduction of superfluous offices and other drastic internal provisions made.

SUMMARY OF SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The policy of the " Open Door."

Extension of education to all alike.

Native policy to be radically reconstructed.

Barrier between civilized and uncivilized to be broken.

Policy of suppression to be abandoned.

Humiliation and degradation of Chiefs to cease.

Re-establishment of tribal authority of Chiefs.

Complete reorganisation of administration of the interior.

Removal of present District Commissioners.

Substitution of European or American Commissioners with assistant Commissioners.

Institution of some form of Civil Service.

Rearrangement of the Political Divisions of the country.

Pawning and Domestic Slavery to be made illegal as preliminary to total abolition.

Shipment of labourers to Fernando Po to cease.

Road program to be curtailed.

Much stricter control of Frontier Force soldiers.

Reconsideration of duties of Frontier Force soldiers.

American immigration to be encouraged.

APPENDICES.

Appendix I.

A PROCLAMATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

WHEREAS, in consequence of representations having been made against the Government of the Republic of Liberia in relation to Slavery and Forced Labour, the President of the Republic of Liberia proposed the setting up of a Commission of Enquiry to investigate the alleged existence in Liberia of these social conditions, and in pursuance of said proposal and for the purpose of assuring an impartial enquiry and an authoritative report, did request the Secretariat of the League of Nations and the Government of the United States of America to nominate each a member to serve on the said Commission so proposed to be set up by the Government of Liberia ; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the Republic of Liberia by a JOINT RESOLUTION of the Senate and House of Representatives approved December 12, 1929, did confirm said action of the President of the Republic and did authorize him to take all proper steps to effectuate the object of the proposed Commission of Enquiry ; and

WHEREAS, in pursuance of the request made as aforesaid to the Secretariat of the League of Nations and to the Government of the United States of America certain nominations of members to serve on the Commission were made by the League of Nations and the Government of the United States of America, which nominations were accepted by the Government of the REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, that is to say :

Dr. CHARLES S. JOHNSON, on the part of the United States,
and

Dr. CUTHBERT CHRISTY, on the part of the League of Nations,

NOW THEREFORE, I, CHARLES DUNBAR BURGESS KING, President of the REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, do hereby proclaim and give notice to the people of Liberia and to all residents within the borders of the Republic that the Commission of Enquiry composed as follows :

On the part of the Republic of Liberia :

The Honorable ARTHUR BARCLAY,

On the part of the Government of the United States :

Dr. CHARLES S. JOHNSON,

On the part of the League of Nations :

Dr. CUTHBERT CHRISTY,

has this day been constituted and set up under the Chairmanship of the Representative of the League of Nations with full authority to enquire into all matters coming within the scope of the Terms of Reference furnished them in relation to the alleged existence in the Republic of Liberia of slavery as a factor in the social and industrial economy of the Republic, and of Forced Labour, otherwise than is sanctioned in the International Slavery Convention of 1926. To which end the said Commission of Enquiry by virtue of the provisions of an Act of the Legislature of Liberia approved December 6, 1926, is empowered to summon witnesses, to administer oaths and take testimony, to compel the attendance of witnesses and to punish for contempts.

And I do hereby call upon all citizens loyally to appear before said Commission when duly summoned and to comport themselves in such manner as may facilitate the Enquiry : and towards that end I do advise that at no public meetings held during the life of the Commission shall be discussed any matters coming within the purview of the Commission of Enquiry as hereinbefore set forth.

(L. S.)

GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Republic at the City of Monrovia this 7th day of April in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty and of the Republic the Eighty-Third.

C. D. B. KING.

By the President :
Edwin BARCLAY,
Secretary of State.

Appendix II.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY.

The Government of Liberia with a view to the removal of all doubts with respect to the existence within the territories of the Republic of the institution of Slavery as defined in the Anti-Slavery Convention of 1926, propose to set up an International Commission of Enquiry with special powers to ascertain :

(a) Whether slavery as defined in the Anti-Slavery Convention in fact exists in the Republic.

(b) Whether this system is participated in or encouraged by the Government of the Republic.

(c) Whether and what leading citizens of the Country participate therein.

(d) To what extent compulsory labour exists as a factor in the social and industrial economy of the State, either for public or private purposes, and, if it does exist, in what manner it has been recruited and employed whether for public or private purposes.

(e) Whether shipment of contract labourers to Fernando Po under the terms of arrangement with Spain, or shipment of such labourers to the Congo or any other foreign parts is associated with slavery, and whether the method employed in recruiting such labourers carries any compulsion.

(f) Whether the labour employed for private purposes on privately owned or leased plantations is recruited by voluntary enlistments or is forcibly impressed for this service by the Liberian Government or by its authority.

(g) Whether the Liberian Government has at any time given sanction or approval to the recruiting of labour with the aid and assistance of the Liberian Frontier Force or other persons holding official positions or in Government employ, or private individuals have been implicated in such recruiting with or without Government's approval.

2. The Commission shall be authorized to issue summons for witnesses, and to enforce the attendance of such witnesses under the provisions of the law of 1926, defining the powers of a Commission of Enquiry, copy of this law is hereto attached.

3. It is within the competence of the Commission to make to the Government of Liberia such recommendations in respect of their findings as they may deem appropriate and necessary in relation to the subject matter of their enquiry.

4. The Enquiry shall be concluded within four months and the findings of the Commission filed with the Liberian Secretary of State within one month thereafter.

Department of State,
Monrovia, Liberia,
September 3, 1929.

Some further testimony before the Commission.

Appendix III.

MONTSERRADO COUNTY

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT KAKATA.

We work our farms but cannot chop it. Every day we tote hampers. They want labourers to send to Belleyalla, Boporo, Monrovia and Firestone. They send us and no money. When we give rice to the labourers to come down they get down and they have no chop. The soldiers take the chop. When they send messengers, we have to give them two buckets of rice and two chickens. When they send for us to tote loads and we get there they put us in the kitchen and set fire under. That is No. 1 District, D.C. Garnett.

Our fathers had money and they gave us our women. When we get our women the soldiers go there, flog us, and take the women from us. There are no men in the town again. The President told us the D.C. has only two messengers, this time they tell us the D.C. has 60 messengers. The D.C. has a clerk and a station master and other people. We have to tote them in hammocks. We have to feed them. One goat, 10 hampers of rice, one tin of palm

oil, and after that we have to give them monthly chop. So President King make us slaves. The President says that when American people come into the interior they should walk the big road, but now they go in the bush. This my brother. They cut him and fined him £5. The one woman he had, he had to pawn her because we have no money.

They fined him because he did not clean the road. It is the man's own village. He made them stay there, but did not clean the road and they fined him £5, and he had to pawn his woman. President King told us we are not to tote any hampers again, but now when the people going up the country them make us tote their loads. If we do not agree they fine us. When the D.C., his clerks and station master go up there they do us bad. Every work they give us to do, the whip is our pay. In our own country, we are there as slaves. Now we see you, you are our father and we have to tell you. We are not going up again because they flog us. Our own rice they put on our backs and call it government loads. We are country people. We do not do our own work. We work to give them chop.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT KAKATA.

Witness. — We are doing government work here, we got our own farm, and do labourer's work, and then tote loads. When the government rice business come, they come for us. When we are sitting down for nothing, if we are doing farms for ourselves that will be enough for us, but too many work round here now, but when monthly rice and soldier's rice come out, after that, they take us for labourers. When we come in town, they make us tote loads. One time, when they lined us up here, we were 100 labourers, they sent us to Careysburg. When they sent us there the cutlasses we had to work with, they took from us, and the people that worked there they gave them the tools. The Paramount Chief and his speaker told us to give them the tools to keep, and they told us that when we come down they will give us our tools back. I told them I had only one cutlass, because we are doing this work every day. And our own farms that we cut, it for others. If I leave my cutlass here, I would not see it when I come back, because every day they force us, and when we go they say we must bring government tools. Since the government work started, they say we must find our own tools, and they took the tools from us, and turned us over to the messenger who came for us.

Question. — When the men bring their own tools, do they ever get them back again ?

Witness. — Sometime we get them back, but the last time, we did not. When we came back, we did not get our tools back. Any time we brought our own axe, and they take it. That is the trouble that happens to us here. We are labourers and we must let you know all. When we come here to work with District Commissioner, David Carter, we clean the yard with our fingers, we get no food, all the pay was beat. The soldiers beat us.

WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT KAKATA.

The man who opened Kakata section was Gbantooba. This section here, it belongs to us, but what they are doing to us in this section we are afraid to talk. What we will tell you of, we will punish ourselves for, because, just we hear that you all are here, that is why we come in town. I am in the bush now. This Liberia has turned slaves out of us. We are slaves in this country now. This section used to belong to us, but we are slaves since this Government started, to tote loads, and labourer work started. When they come, they ask us for labourers to tote loads. We feed ourselves, and then the messengers and soldiers beat us. One time, they whip one man till they killed him. Just where the District Commissioner stays. We told the President, but nothing was done. We do not know if the Paramount Chief sent words to the President, they only told us to bury the man, and we did. When we are working here, our own farms do not belong to us, because they take the rice from us, and then we work without no farm. They make us give them the rice, and our women plant the rice. When the rice is ripe, they make the women cut the rice, and the men build the kitchen. Just now, they have one kitchen full of rice right near here. If they hold us like that, and they cut the rice, can they not feed the soldiers from there ? This house you see, we built it. When the women rubbing the house they prick them with sticks from behind. When we told the Paramount Chief, he told us to get out. That is the Merican palava. The time the country was here, when Faulkner was here, the men who said they were behind Faulkner, they talked their last talk, that is why we are afraid. The time you all leave here, they will get us again. Just now, they have written a letter to the President. The Paramount Chief wrote it. You see the way we are doing, you mean we cannot rest ourselves in our own section ? We opened this place, but we are slaves now. When you come and ask what news, that is what I have to say.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT KAKATA.

I am from this section. First time all round no town was here except this Kakata. My father's brother when he was killing elephants, worked thru this road. When people from the country walked they had to clear the roads to walk. Since this Liberian business start, it has been eight years now, just running round, and we cannot sit down. We have been working as labourers. We have been as far as Sanoquelle—no chop for us to eat. When tax came they caught my father who was chief. He was deaf and blind in one eye ; where was he to get the money ? One Kroo man came to us, and my father told the Kroo man to lend him £2. The man lent him the £2, and he put one boy in pawn. I went to Monrovia and worked £2. And he turned the money over to the Kroo man, and redeemed the boy. The man brought the money but the soldiers caught him on the road, beat him, and we have not seen the man since. They took him as labourer, took me to Banga, I stayed there one week, with nothing to eat. They took my brother down and beat him. When he came he vomited blood and died. That is why I keep walking round because I cannot stay one place. Then they sent us back and every time we work on the road, and they flog us and when you leave the road, you are half dead—no chop to eat. I have one sister and she is in pawn ; I am the one who works to redeem my uncle's child in pawn. We are on this Government work, I have my own gun. I went to walk in the bush one day, I met soldiers on the way, they took the gun from me, beat me, and here is the mark on my thigh. When we are on labourer work they beat us. When we take our own rice they beat us. The soldiers took my gun from me, tied me and fined me £4. My uncle put someone in pawn to get me out. When we went down the road, the labourer company down the road took my rice from me. We have no clothes to wear. One time, Faulkner came here and called all the country people. In Kakata they beat me. Look at the mark on my foot. We are not working any farm. When we work they make us pay monthly rice and palm oil. We are suffering. (Here ——— interposed and said : “ The Paramount Chiefs were strong at the last conference, but they cannot do anything against the Government.”)

WITNESS FROM BANGA BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT KAKATA.

I come here to you the same Government work has made us stand up. The time I was there, we were doing labourer work, we tote loads, and one Liberian man was there name Finsabbu. One time we gave him labourers. My part was small, and they were behind us and flog us. They caught me and beat me. They gave me a lantern to hold and I put the lantern on the road, and somebody took it. After we went, the Lieut. came and asked why the boys took his lantern. I paid £6 for that one lamp. I told the Paramount Chief, so the Lieut. sent a messenger to the town and they caught us and brought us to the camp. I was sitting down one of my brothers came to tell me that they had caught all the people to pay the £6. And I pawned a boy to pay the amount. The Mandingo man I pawned to wanted to take the boy to Monrovia, so I followed the Mandingo man as far as Secretary Cooper's farm, and begged the man to redeem the child. That is what is in my mind. When you are sitting in your house, the soldiers come into the town and call for palm wine. If you have none to give them, they throw them down and give you “ 25 ”. If not, they get into your house and take everything you get there. The farm I get this year, if I do not fight hard there is no one to scratch it (plant). This work they brought upon us, some towns have four men, and they tell us to send two, then they call for chickens, rice and palm oil, and when they call for these things, they sit down there till they get it. I gave them once 4 buckets palm oil, and one bucket rice. And they caught me and said they asked for 6, not 4, they put rope round me and beat me. The gown I had on they took it from me, and took my hat because they do not allow prisoners to keep anything. I am a gentleman, I was born in Banga, but when they punish us in our own section, we cannot stay there. If you were going further, you would see something, but where they punish us, we have to run away. When the soldiers get in the town and see a small boy, they take him away. They take the small boy and put him over us—the big people. When they finish eating the rice in the town, they just call the boys together and take them away.

WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT KAKATA.

I am from Kakata Section. Something happened so I come. We were to Naifokol section we stayed there till this government work started, and we are all still working they made us broke a small town and build big town. One chief was here name Fahn, he went to Naifokol section and spoke to the chief there about road palava. He stayed there and they sent some messengers to our town, and broke our town. Momo Gray's brother did this. We were sleeping in the bush and did the work. We had no place to sleep. Every day they ran behind us and caught us. Once when they cut one cotton tree here they let it fall in the town. When you

stay there the sun rise, they ask you why you let them stay there, and they let you sit on the cotton tree till you pay one chicken. We are working Government work and no pay. Sometime if we are late they make us pay one dollar. They caught our father and he is gone to Monrovia. They caught him in the night and carried him on the road and asked him why he is not building the town. One time they caught a chief and whipped him. We do not know who whipped him, and after that he took sick. We had to take the same man into the same bush where we sleep. I went and told his son. As soon as I left there, the same night the man died, so I came here to tell one man and he sent to get the dead person and brought him to his place. The chief's wife and people also came. I came and reported the matter to Daniel Walker, the late Paramount Chief. We let work alone when we buried the man. A man called Kolmingro brought one shilling and one leaf of tobacco and took it to the Paramount Chief to tell him that the man is dead. The man was in Monrovia, they went and told his wife. He did not send anybody. When you stay in some section, anything happen to some of your people and they tell the Paramount Chief, he should go to see. After we finish burying the man, we did not see anything else, but the chief sent to catch the dead man's property. We reported the matter to Walker and he stopped the people, and when D.C. Collins came, we reported the matter to him. They take labourers up and compel them to build houses. The way they treat us here, we are not satisfied. We got there by force. And came back. When D.C. Watson came back, we reported the matter to him. They caught us and brought us to Kakata, and did not give us time to talk, but sent us back to the town. We went to Weblu town and he told us that all he caught and brought there he must swear them so that they cannot move away, I did not make them swear me. The Paramount Chief told them to come and catch me, and I had to pawn my own mother to get out. They said if we refused to build the house, they would put our feet in stock. Then they put rope on our waist and make us work on Sunday. The speaker, Klimibioko did all this. Since they have kept me so long, I am now messenger. When they caught us, they made us build house.

Question. — Is your mother still in pawn ?

Answer. — Yes.

Question. — How long ago did you pawn her ?

Answer. — Myself did not pawn her. One of my relatives they pawn her for £2. The Paramount Chief fees brought it up to £4.

Question. — Where is the boy ?

Answer. — He stays with the man. They fined me £4/10., and cost making £8/10.

Question. — What are you owing now ?

Answer. — £6.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

We are there, we stay there. Since this government palaver come, they have been doing too much. They do too much to us. If we want to do our farm, we cannot do it. We have been all right till this road palaver come. If a man misses one day, if a labourer wants to rest, if he is sick, he has to pay 60 cents. If we miss one week, 12 shillings. One man there has put £2 to pay fines. One day, somebody comes and says they want monthly rice one town, four hampers rice. If we do not do it, they catch us, beat us, and tie us. The name of our Paramount Chief is Sikfie. When the monthly rice finish, one town, one tin palm oil. If we do not do it, they beat us. The farm time come and now they say we must go faster. They gave me 80 labourers to take to Firestone. The men don't want to go because when we go, we cannot get any pay. When we were coming down they gave us 46 hampers of rice to bring down. It is with the D.C. now. It is Government rice. We heard about you, we come to see you and ask if we must go. The town chief from our section is with the D.C. here. The speaker sued him and he has come to the D.C. to talk the palaver.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT KAKATA.

Every month the rice they get from us, we send it they are not satisfied. When the messengers leave the rice here and go when they reach there they say we must feed them again. We ask them if they leave the rice in Kakata and go back to us for rice. If we don't give them they jump on us and beat us. If you pay anyone of these native people here they won't fight

the messengers. Even if he is chief and he fights the messengers he will stay in jail till he pays the fine they put on him. When we buy liquor from Monrovia and bring it here the soldiers take it from us. If we buy powder they take it from us, and when they come here they ask for meat, we don't know where to get the meat, because we don't buy powder and bring it here again. This khaki trousers, white people make cloth for us to wear, if you all were not here soldiers would have taken my trousers from me,

The people staying in this section, the old people send them on the road, when they beat them you see them you will be sorry. When they send some and they see all this trouble they won't go again. Now they open way for us to go to Fernando Po. Ever since the people went they won't come back. That big farm of the President you see there, labourers did that work. They don't send all on the farm they divide them. Some go to David Carter, some they send in bush to cut palm nut. The time we were building this camp, no Merican man brought one cassada stick here. The native people did all the work.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT KAKATA.

We are native people. Since we have been here the road started. It did not come Kakata soon—it started in Monrovia, and they sent note to collect boys and we sent them. Now the road reaches here. All the time we send labourers on the road and we give them chop. We have to give them cutlasses and axe ; we take money to buy these and send on the road. When we send boys on the road they catch them and tie them ; when they get through with them they come back and report. So we let the Paramount Chief know because he said we must send labourers on the road. The Paramount Chief said it is Government order. The road has got here to Kakata. Every week 250 men from this section here on the road. When we collect all that some go to the Secretary's farm, some to the Station Master's farm, and they tell us to bring some more. If we do not, they fine us, and the old people left back in town they will take some women and pawn them to get money and pay the fine. Ever since the road started we have been paying fines. After that District Commissioner came here, he said we must build all this camp. The women took dirt and rub the walls. Both the women and labourers come to work ; if they don't they catch them and put a long stick on their back. This is one of the sticks (stick handed to Commission). When they were building this camp, we had to pay the women and labourers to build the house. We have to do it ; if we go anywhere they bring us back to do it. That is the palaver here. We have our own jail here. I have been there too. We were 19 town chiefs they locked up.

Because we did not send the monthly rice. I stayed there, and each town sent 5 hampers rice with 10/- cash from the whole section to buy palm oil. After we do that then we do all the work ; we see no money, and before we get one cent we have to take our own sons and pawn them to pay fines. Who will be satisfied to pawn his own child to get money ? All this now. That is the news in this section.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT MONROVIA.

David W. Ross, said to be adopted son of Hon. S. A. Ross, late Postmaster General, states before the Commission :

In the Sinoe incident, so much mentioned, the boys were sent from the Tabien section. District Commissioner Watson sent them down with 150 hampers of rice. They had messengers with them and a letter stating that the rice was Government property. When this reached Sinoe it was sold to various people. The boys were housed on the other side of the river. I was sent here by row boat with a letter to the Spanish Consul asking him to arrange for a steamer to call at Sinoe. When the steamer arrived the boys were forced into the boats. Some jumped overboard and swam ashore. They were all sent to Fernando Po. Coming down to Sinoe messengers were in charge of the boys to prevent their running away. Blacket was over the messengers. Mr. Collins also helped to guard the boys. One lot of boys was never sent to Fernando Po. Mr. Sherman stopped them going.

When Mr. Ross came to Monrovia and was made Postmaster General he began to ship for Fernando Po ; he sent them to Sinoe to his brother-in-law Pelham, who was recruiting agent there. Sometimes they were sent from here by a German steamer to Sinoe. Sometimes a British steamer picked up more boys at Bassa for Sinoe, sent by the Superintendent, but the Spanish steamer took them from Sinoe to Fernando Po. Civilized people who sent boys to Mr. Ross received £1. from him, but boys sent by native people got only 4/-.

During the Kakata conference Mr. Ross wrote to D.C. Watson asking for boys. Peabody and myself carried it but Mr. Watson replied that the Secretary of the Interior was there and he would be unable to supply boys at present. We then carried gin, tobacco, and rice to No. 7 Firestone Plantation for recruiting purposes. We told the boys they were wanted for work on the ships. When they learned that their destination was Fernando Po some escaped. Mr. Simpson, Secretary to General Postoffice got a number of boys for us, and Col. T. Ellwood Davis got others. We had 4/- for each boy obtained. Policemen and others sent their brothers and got 4/- for each for Fernando Po. The Spanish steamer usually came about the 20th of each month, and brought with it the money for the boys. At first Mr. Ross received £8 for each boy, but the price went up to £9 or £10. After the Spanish steamer arrived Mr. Ross always went to the bank and the money deposited. Sometimes we brought away sixteen bags of £100 each. Some of the money came in gold and some by bank draft. He took it always to his house, and that evening or the next day the President called. On leaving his driver always carried money to his car, but how much I cannot tell. Col. T. Ellwood Davis, also went for the same purpose and sometimes collected the President's money, and a sum of money was always sent to Mr. Pelham, Mr. Ross's son-in-law, Alfred was often present and can vouch for all this. I can swear and am swearing now that money was carried away. I, myself, sometimes handed it to the driver.

From the statement of President King before a special meeting of the Commission convened at his request, July 31st, at the Executive Mansion :

President King. — Well now, all that I know is that these statements were made, and that possibly some other explanations might be necessary ; although there have been differences of opinion as to whether it was necessary for these steps to be taken by me. But the mere fact that the Commission had had these statements before them on their records and cross examinations were made on them, I thought it was necessary to make some clarifying statements on the matter.

First, in the matter of the statements made by young Ross, I can state very emphatically that it is not so. No money transactions have been made between Mr. Ross and myself, which I can prove. I have gone to the trouble of getting statements from some of the other parties who have sworn affidavits to contradict this.

Affidavit.

Republic of Liberia, County of Sinoe.
Justice of the Peace office, Greenville, Sinoe County.

Personally appeared before me a duly qualified justice of the Peace for the County of Sinoe, Alfred Ross, and stated upon his oath that it having come to his knowledge that one David W. Ross, his fostered brother, stated before the International Commission of Inquiry inter alia that he the said Alfred Ross was present at the residence of his late father, Honorable S. A. Ross, when His Excellency C.D.B. King called there during the fall of night after the passing of the Spanish steamer on the 21st or 22nd and there they both that is to say President King and his late father, divided money which had been drawn from the Bank by his father during the day in bags of 100 pounds each and that the President would carry his share when leaving and that Col. T. E. Davis would call there for his share after which some of said money would be sent here to Mr. Pelham, that to the best of his knowledge said statement is without foundation, that although he has seen the President at home of his late father on many nights during his lifetime ; yet he has never seen them dividing money nor he the President carrying money with him when leaving.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 23rd day of May A.D. 1930.

(Signed) Alfred Ross
Deponent.

(Signed) William R. DRAPER,
*Justice of the Peace for
Sinoe County.*

Affidavit.

I, Jonathan Chuku Labor, of 17 Hill Street, Freetown, in the colony of Sierra Leone, Chauffeur, make oath and say as follows :

1. I was chauffeur to His Excellency Charles Dunbar Burgess King, President of Liberia, for more than five years in and prior to the month of December 1929.

2. I have never at any time during my employment as chauffeur to President King or at any other time received from the late Honourable Mr. Samuel A. Ross, Postmaster General of Liberia, either directly or through any other person any sum of money or its equivalent to be handed to President King or to be dealt with in any way whatsoever for President King.

3. I have never on any occasion when I have driven President King to the house of the said Mr. Ross or at any other time received or allowed to be placed in the motor car driven by me or any other vehicle any sum of money whatsoever or any equivalent of money.

4. I have never during my employment as chauffeur to President King or at any other time been sent or gone to the said Mr. Ross for any money or any equivalent of money.

5. I have never at any time during my employment as chauffeur to President King or at any other time received of or from David Ross, the son of the late Mr. Samuel A. Ross, either directly or through any other person any sum of money or any equivalent of money whatsoever nor has the said David Ross ever put any sum of money or any equivalent of money whatsoever in any motor car driven by me or of which I have been in charge.

6. "I am informed and verily believe that the said David Ross has stated that he once handed to me a tin full of gold coins to be handed to President King. The said David Ross has never handed to me any tin or other receptacle containing any coin or coins whatsoever.

Sworn the 5th day of July, 1930.

(Signed) Jonathan Chuku LABOR.

Before me
(Signed) W. E. MACAULAY,
*Commissioner of Affidavits and a
person lawfully authorised to
administer oaths.*

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT MONROVIA.

They told me we were to go to Cape Palmas to work. That was why I with (witness) Hurley agreed to go. That was a lie. They never told us we were going to Fernando Po. We learned that from people outside. I said I would not go to Fernando Po and I was told that in that case I would have to return the money for the food I had eaten. I said give me time to find it. When I went outside to try to get it, they sent police after me, flogged me, tied me up and put me in the latrine. I kicked and shouted, and when they took me out I heard the steamer had arrived. They forced me into a boat and I was taken out to it by Mr. Yancy's orders. Later we were brought back on shore again. When we reached the shore we were taken to the police station and told that those of us who did not want to go to Fernando Po could go back home. Now we learn that a Commission of Inquiry is here, and we come to tell you about our trouble. When boys are sent to Fernando Po and die there their friends in Liberia have no means of knowing what has happened. The Government should supply each boy with a passport so that he can be traced if necessary.

The Liberians ship us Kpessèh people as they do their coffee, and sell us as they please. Because Mr. Twe on this occasion did not let them do so they broke him; they took his job from him. If we live up country the Commissioners make us feed them. If we give two hampers (a load) of rice it is not sufficient, and we are liable to be tied up and flogged.

As truly as I am standing here now my father was chief of fifteen towns, but those towns now have no inhabitants; the people have all left and gone over to the French side. We as boys came to the coast to look for stevedore work at the ports, and they try to ship us to Fernando Po. Because Mr. Twe helped us to get out of the difficulty ("put his mouth in it") they accused him of doing bad things.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT MONROVIA.

One of Mr. Yancy's boys named Johnson told me that boys were wanted to go from Monrovia to Cape Palmas to work on Mr. Yancy's farm; I and others agreed to go. When we came to Mr. Yancy's house in Monrovia we stayed there, and some friends we met outside told us we were for Fernando Po, not Cape Palmas. We refused to go to Fernando Po and Kpalukpolo who was with me went away. When Mr. Yancy heard he had gone he sent and fetched him back. Mr. Yancy then said take him to the place below and tie him up. When he was tied they flogged him, and he made so much noise that Mr. Yancy had him brought into the yard and asked him what was the matter. He replied, "These people flog me." Mr. Yancy said, "That's your own fault. You agreed to work for me and I gave you \$1 and found you food. If you don't want to go you must pay me the \$1 and the cost of the food." Kpalukpolo said, "All right, I will go and look for it and bring it as soon as I get it. I am not going to Fernando Po." All this time they had tied and he was crying, and Mr. Yancy said, "If he keeps on making a noise put him in the latrine." Later he was taken out when a 'Merican man named Simpson came. He spoke good Kpessi and interpreted for Mr. Yancy, "who told

us a lot of sweet story and made us feel good." Mr. Yancy said, " In this country I get plenty of money, myself and President King. The day Mr. King's time is up they will put me in the mansion. That is why plenty of people do not like me, and that is why people tell you all you are going to Fernando Po. They tell you a fool story to defeat me in the next election." Then they untied Kpalukpolo and told us to go back and sit down, and to morrow the steamer would come.

In the early morning Kpalukpolo ran away again. Mr. Simpson took us down and told us to get into the boat. While we were doing so Kpalupolo was brought down in charge of two policemen and Johnson, Mr. Yancy's boy. The policemen were flogging him and he was crying. They put him in the boat and we went on board the ship where they counted us four times. Afterwards Chiefs of Police came on board and told us that Mr. Twe had made a complaint about us. He took us back on shore and at the police station we heard it was because force had been used. Those who did not want to go to Fernando Po were told to stand aside, and they were then sent away. I went with them.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT MONROVIA.

I was coming from Sinkor to Monrovia with my brother (a friend), and we met a man who said he wanted boys for Cape Palmas and that we must go and stay with him till the steamer arrived. To this we agreed, and he said that while he was feeding us we were not to go out and walk about. After a while we heard that we were not going to Cape Palmas but Fernando Po. We wanted to go and walk on the road, but Mr. Yancy objected to our doing so, because the steamer might come at any time and we would have to go on board. We refused to go to Fernando Po.

That night when Kilikai, my friend, returned to the house he was seized, flogged and shut up in the latrine. Then we said to ourselves if they treat us like that here in Monrovia what will they do to us in Fernando Po. We were eventually sent on board. Later Mr. Twe hearing about us sent for us. We do not know who gave the instructions, but we were brought back on shore. Mr. Yancy told us that some people were fighting him because they did not want us to make some money.

A WITNESS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT MONROVIA.

I was down on the waterside and heard a noise at the wharf so I went there and saw a man who was working for Mr. Yancy pushing some boys into a boat. I asked him why he was forcing them to go, and he said because Mr. Yancy and Mr. Simpson said they must go. Mr. Simpson then came and ordered the boat to push off. I asked him about the matter but he gave me no answer.

Then Mr. Twe came on the scene and we went together to the Superintendent of Police. Whilst there the telephone bell rang and we understood that the Superintendent was instructed to send on board the ship and bring the boys back.

I went on board with Mr. Twe and one of the boys told me they did not want to be sent to Fernando Po.

MR. FRANKLIN WALKER BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT MONROVIA.

Mr. Walker of the territory of Marshall, when asked about the labour employed on road construction, said :

In 1926, when on the way from Schieflin to Monrovia, I met Mr. Samuel Wheaton at Du Port. He was trying to get to Bassa with orders to begin a motor road, and said if I would assist him to get there he would make me one of his overseers, but I declined. However, when he told me the job was a good one and I would make plenty of money, I agreed. He appointed me as clerk, and we went down to Grand Bassa together. He reported himself to Mr. Smith, the Superintendent of Grand Bassa County. Mr. Smith gave us a house and Mr. Wheaton took over charge of all the labourers on the road. I was told that I was clerk of the road and must receive all the fines imposed.

The road boys are generally changed every Monday. Each small village (half town) sent two boys. One day some of the boys brought no cutlasses or axes ; others were a day late—the latter were fined 2/- each and the former 1/- each. I prepared the bill against their chief and sent it to him. He was brought down to the road and put in chains. This man had to work in chains and begged Mr. Wheaton to release him so that he could go and look for the money and he did so.

Later they brought down another chief named Zokagch from Yoyukon. He was a wealthy man, and they fined him £2 because all his boys were late. His people came up there and then paid the money. After that I got sick and had to leave the road.



During the time I was away they put Paramount Chief Dugbogba in prison for not sending boys. One of his town chiefs named Dorsen from Dwarzon village came to my mother and begged her to keep him. He was fined, and as all the boys in the town had run away he could not get the money. They therefore sent for him and flogged him and put him in jail, but he found some one to bail him out on bond and he now had to find the boys or the money.

The road overseers are appointed by the Interior Department. The latter is in charge of the building of the road. The clerk keeps note of the number of boys and the number of days they work, and also a tally of the tools, etc. He keeps no record of the fines, but the overseer keeps the money. Sometimes he instructed me to collect the fines and pay them over to him. The overseer in this case was Mr. Walter Ford. The Bassa people called him "Beh" meaning pepper because he was a bad man.

The fine for failing to work on the road is \$3.00 per quarter according to statute law, but the construction work I was employed on in Bassa is not under statute law, for I asked Mr. Wheaton. This road starts from the market shed in Buchanan and leads into Gio section. Sometimes when fines were not paid promptly the boys, instead of being allowed to leave at 12 o'clock on Saturday, were kept on at the road work until the fines were paid, and often had a bad time because they had no food.

A PARAMOUNT CHIEF BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

The palaver is in our hands. We are between the barracks. The D.C. at Boporo work us, beat us, and we tote hammocks and he is hard on us. Just now nobody in the country will work. The monthly rice we give is 100 hampers for Boporo to Bellevala, and while we take them, they flog us. When we take the hampers to Boporo they beat us on the way and fine us. While we have the hampers on our heads they keep flogging us. This is the pay we get for the hampers we tote (exhibits a whip). This is the pay we get for the hampers we tote at the end of the week. This man is a town chief. Look at his back. When D.C. Garnett's clerk came there the other day, that is the mark he put on his back. They flog him, cut his back and skin.

When we pay the monthly rice to the D.C. any day when the D.C.'s soldiers are passing thru the town we have got to feed them also. When we give them rice they tell us to cook it. Sometimes when we give them chop they eat the meat and throw the rice away. When we give them chop again, they ask for palm wine and if we do not get the palm wine to give them they flog us. If they give letters to the messengers to carry when they get to our town we tote their hampers. Just now we are working. Nobody in our country has any farm now.

This road palaver when D.C. Garnett went up he fined us £15 for the road. We clean the road one week ago. When we go to work on the road they give us no spades. We have to use a piece of stick for spade. They give us no hoe and no pick-axe. We have to get them ourselves.

Appendix IV.

SINOE COUNTRY.

ABSTRACT OF TESTIMONY OF P.C. LAMANDINE BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

I was Commissioner in the Sinoe district in 1924. During my term of service many boys were sent from the interior by Capt. Howard to Mr. Ross for shipment to Fernando Po.

They were sent down under military escort with rice and were detained by Mr. Ross, who placed an armed guard over them till the steamer arrived. I was Commissioner at Sikon near Sinoe at the time and the matter was reported to me. I was one of the oldest Commissioners in the county. I made complaint to the President and to the Secretary of the Interior. To those communications I never got any reply, and was shortly afterwards relieved of my post. Mr. Ross was in power (County Superintendent) and he said to me, "You shall regret it. I am going to teach you a lesson."

A large number of boys were sent down under escort to Sinoe during 1924; 600 or 800 were recruited from my section. I tried as Commissioner to prevent it and to stop the military escort being used, but while I was in one part of the country Mr. Ross arranged to send the boys through another part. The boys were not sent down by me but by Captain Howard under military escort. This recruiting for Fernando Po began in 1924 at the instance of Mr. Ross.

The military authorities of the country have been very hard on the natives who are made to work from January to December, husband and wife alike, and are fined in addition. The people are marched out of their houses and made to work with soldiers behind them, planting rice, reaping rice, husking rice, carrying rice, constructing roads, digging out stumps without tools, cutting sticks and building bridges and barracks. There is no end to it. They get no time for themselves. Women are made to carry loads with babies on their backs ; all this and much more and no complaint has any effect. I would willingly write out a statement on the subject for you as you suggest but the natives themselves will be able to explain all these details to you much better than I can.

As Commissioner of the district it was my duty to make the people work cleaning hammock roads and planting rice to feed the soldiers and the messengers in my station and others. No motor roads were constructed in my district and I supplied no boys for construction work. I tried to keep the soldiers under control and made them repair their houses themselves and look after the road cleaning parties in order to keep them occupied.

Appendix V.

MARYLAND COUNTY.

A SODOKEH CHIEF BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT CAPE PALMAS (HON. H. TOO WESLEY INTERPRETING).

I am very glad to be here because I have many grievances to lay before you. First, we are made to pay hut tax from year to year from which we get no benefit. Nor do we get any receipt for our money. We take the money to Mr. Yancy, and when we ask for a receipt he sends us away. In my town I am compelled to pay hut tax year after year for people who are dead and for house sites with no houses on them.

Since last year Vice President Yancy has been making demands on me for boys for Fernando Po. I have refused to comply with his request, and the Vice President Yancy has openly stated that he will oppress me for this refusal. He sent Commissioner Frederick Prowd to arrest me, and I was tied up and taken down to Cape Palmas. (Here the story was taken up by the Speaker.) This made us frightened, for the way our chief was taken down to Harper was terrible. So about 30 young men and women ran away and crossed over the river to the French side.

Before the war, when we went to Fernando Po many of us died there. Out of 35 only 10 returned. We are obliged to work now on the road and our complaints are chiefly about the road work and Firestone. On the road we have to work with little food and have to bring our own tools. When anyone is sick and unable to come to work he is fined £1. While working we are beaten, and we are not allowed sufficient time to make our farms. When the bird season comes we have no boys to guard the rice fields. (Here the chief again took up the story.)

I am the chief of my town, and I will tell you my personal experiences. In 1926 I was ordered to supply dry grass for thatching purposes, and because I could not collect sufficient within the time stipulated, Vice President Yancy fined me £6. and put me in prison for a month. After he released me I went home thinking that the trouble was over, but I soon found that it was not. District Commissioner Prowd, finding that I was not of favor with Mr. Yancy, put me in prison for the most trivial things.

When the Frontier Force men came to my town they asked for rice, fowl, oil, and other things, and while my women are getting these the soldiers beat me regardless of my cries. We have to work for the Government continually without any pay. If we do not work we are fined. They have a way of fining us for the least thing. If the Government paid us for the road work we would work hard and willingly. Even if they did not pay us cash, but remitted our hut taxes, we would work on the road and be pleased. We have no money and yet we have to feed these people who treat us as slaves.

A GREBO CHIEF BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

The first thing I have to give is this. Last year, Vice President Yancy sent to me at Wedabo, and it is not a port of entry, and also to Grand Cess, Picanini Cess, to the Tupo people, Suehn, etc. to meet him. I was there. The first word Yancy said was that he had received instructions from President King, that President King and the Spanish Government had made an agreement to ship people from here to Fernando Po. Grand Cess must give 60; Picanini Cess 80; Wedabo and Kplepo people must give more than either; 100 from Chief Broh's towns; Chief Bellor's town, Barrobo, 100; Chief Jeh's people 150; Suehn, 60; Tupo, 60. If any of these people are short, that is, if 59 are sent instead of 60, £10 would have to be paid for each man short. This was in the year 1928. And if any man refused to pay the fine, he, Yancy, would burn that town, he would send soldiers and burn it. John Delaney, the government instructed, is Commissioner of the District, and John Delaney must watch for Spanish Steamers and grab boys by force. If anybody refuses he must go and ask President

King, either send by boat or letter ; because Vice President Yancy says, these are the President's orders. So Paramount Chief Jac Jaraca, says inasmuch as you have been instructed by the President, nobody will refuse. Since the President has ordered it, it will be carried out.

The Paramount Chief of Picanini Cess, Jurah, made some comments and Yancy said : " P. Chief, Jurah, did you hear what V.P. said. You must tell your own people don't bother about what these people should do." I, the chief, was there and heard and I understand English too, but I cannot read or write.

All the people did not go. When Yancy had said, the people got confused, and went to Monrovia. When the Kpelepo people (Broh's people) went to Monrovia to see the President Yancy became disgusted, and sent soldiers to humbug the people, taking their things, cattle, dogs, anything they could find. The Vice President sent to them and said you should not report me to President King. When the report went to Monrovia, Yancy stopped and did not send soldiers again.

Apart from that, Yancy when he was Superintendent, of this County, sent us an order to go to Cape Palmas to make motor road. My wife was sick. He say you must go too ; I say "No! my wife is sick." That thing make me vex. Whatever is in the bottom of the ground I am going to dig it out. I sent my son there to Cape Palmas to do the work. My wife she die, while I was there with him in Cape Palmas, leaving her behind. They buried her. I never saw her.

When they appoint you to the road, each man carries his own rice, sometime two bags. Those people going to the road divide that. Every two weeks they send fresh gang. We sent twenty persons every two weeks. The first come back and new one go. Keep on. The Government don't feed us, don't pay us. When we go now, instead of working the Government road, they say : " Some go to Yancy's farm. Some go to Yancy's wife's farm." Working his farm and his wife's farm too, without chop. No pay. Boys no eat, join early in the morning without eating anything tote hammocks. If they find nobody at the next village, people going to tote clear to Garraway. Commissioner here, John Delaney. We feed him, give him £5.12 every month for his chop, Grand Cess section alone. One whole consecutive year, I went to John Delaney, I beg him, I say we are tired of this burden, too heavy to tote, cost too much. You say £3.8, then you say £5.12 and fifteen Paramount Chiefs you are controlling ; how much do you want ? We pay this amount—£4.12—one whole year. I used to carry the money, Chief . . . gave me the money. You ask the people if I am lying. From that time till now he reduce the amount to £2.10. Presently, now, we are paying £2.10 every month for chop.

Supt. Brooks, he came here, when he was going back we furnish him hammock boys, when the boys got as far as Wedabo, they were hungry, they run away, because in carrying the government officials they generally carry persons from town to town. Supt. Brooks get vex about that and put fine of £20 on Grand Cess. This was in 1929, May 19th.

A CHIEF OF MARYLAND COUNTY BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT CAPE PALMAS.

I wish to speak on behalf of myself. My speaker spoke on behalf of the tribe. I received all communications from Mr. Yancy when he was Superintendent. Once upon a time, one of my boys was sick from rupture and could not go on the road. I did not know this. In consequence of this, 15 soldiers were sent to arrest me, in the night. Although there is a road on the seaside, yet to increase my trouble, I was carried interiorwards. When we reached Mr. Yancy's residence that night, Mr. Yancy came out on the verandah with a lantern in his hands. They reported that they had brought me, and he then put out his lantern and said : " Carry him to Pудuke." When we got there, they brought a large bucket, filled it with sand and told me to carry it to the sea. They made me carry it back to the town after we got to the sea side. I was there in this sort of trouble for two weeks, without any food from the Government. This was only last year, during the Superintendency of Mr. Yancy. When the boys were not in full number on the road, he would write me and order me and my chieftains to come and count the boys. Then I would go with 15 of my chieftains. When we went, Mr. Yancy would seize these 15 chieftains and carry them to Barrobo and say : " You alone will go back, these chiefs will be jailed." My former speaker has told you that we work the road without any food or tools or pay. But what grieves me more is : The Government told me that we should go into farming, to which we responded. Whenever our crops get full, the Liberian would go and steal them. They go with guns, and when you want to talk, they point the gun at you. Then they say : " now you are a dead man, if you talk you will be shot down."

We generally plant such things as cassada, rice, plantain, cocoa, yams, etc. I do not know the name of the people that come here to steal my crops, but it was Frontier Soldiers that came to arrest me. It was Mr. Yancy who sent them to do this. Sometime ago, Mr. Yancy sent Mr. Brooks, who is now Superintendent at Bassa to assess huts in my town, and because I asked why he did not send me previous notice, Mr. Yancy got vex because of this question

and fined me £10. This I paid. On this occasion, Mr. Yancy did not go to my town, he sent Mr. Brooks who reported us and I was fined the £10.

While I was in the Pudukke Barracks, I was not fined, only harsh treatment all the time, and it was my people that begged for me before I was released.

When a man does anything, he will be taken to the Court, and if he is convicted, he will be punished. But one of my men was found in the premises of Mr. Yancy and Mr. Yancy killed him. He killed him and dragged his dead body in the street where he was found the next morning. The only explanation Mr. Yancy had to give was that the man went there to steal and he killed him, because he thought the man was a wicked one and would have killed him (Mr. Yancy), if he did not defend himself. This happened about four years.

STATEMENT OF A CHIEF IN NO. 5 DISTRICT, MARYLAND.

The Liberians have soldiers and these are a source of infinite trouble to us. They come at any time and make free of my town. They catch anything they can see. Sometimes if they want something I cannot supply they manhandle me and tie me up. One day they behaved so badly catching boys for Fernando Po and beating the people that a man was lost in the bush and died there. After this they came again for more boys and managed to catch 15. I have had no palaver with the Government; and why they should treat me in this way I don't know. These soldiers come and loot my town and take my women for bush. When they have officers with them they are worse than when alone. The officers say nothing. They seem to encourage the men. Sometimes while we are getting food for them they steal all our fowls. They bring cutlasses and guns. Capt. Whisnant who is in command at the barracks often comes with the men. He sees all that they do but does not interfere. The barracks are only a day and a half away and my village is on the direct route to Cape Palmas. They do the journey in one and a half days from here. We supply the barracks every month with a large quantity of our rice for the soldiers, but they make us feed them again when they pass through and sometimes there are 20 or more of them. Our women have to go to the nearest trading centre, which is Flebo. If the soldiers meet them on the way they catch them and take them for bush. This happens frequently now.

MEETING WITH HALF GARROWAY CHIEFS AT GARROWAY.

A Chief said :

We have to find ten men every week for road construction work, but very often some of the men we send do not work on the road, but are sent to work on Government farms or the farms of Government officials, or even private persons. Sometimes they are required to act as hammock men. Mr. Yancy disposes of these boys as he pleases. They do not like to be hammock bearers. The work is tedious and fatiguing. On the English coast hammock men are always paid at a higher rate than that of ordinary portorage and they receive a dash. Here they get nothing whatever—pay or dash.

A little time ago Mr. Yancy came to Garroway, called us together and told us we must supply him with boys for Fernando Po, or otherwise, he said, we should not have any land (referring to a land palaver case now before the Liberian Courts). But we refused to find any boys for Fernando Po, although they usually forced us to go anywhere. This we determined to stick to and so far we have not been obliged to alter our decision.

Only once have we refused to find boys for the road work. On that occasion they sent men to the town who caught us and obliged us to pay £10 for the 10 boys. This amount was promptly paid. Even if a man is sick and cannot go to work on the road or if his food has been taken away by the soldiers, and being hungry he goes to look for some more, he is fined £1. The money for fines has to be obtained from the work of the women, but chiefly from the boys who are earning good money at stevedore work at the various ports down the coast—or if the fine is very heavy we must sell stock or produce, or resort to pawning, a system more common further up the Coast, by which a man takes his daughter or his maidservant to someone to hold in exchange for so much cash down until such time as he can redeem the pawn.

A PARAMOUNT CHIEF BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT GARROWAY.

It was in Governor Brewer's time, in 1919, when we were all hale and hearty here they sent for us all of a sudden, marched us to Sodolu, and put us in a hole in the ground at the barracks there. They told us we were to be made slaves. In a week they took us out and made us work. (Here one of the chief's men volunteered some information regarding the hole at Sodolu.) He said : I myself was put in that hole. The treatment we received while in it was horrible. It was in President Howard's time about 1919 in connection with the policy of general disarmament of the natives, although many of the tribes had given up their arms in 1916. Many people died as the result of being imprisoned in that hole plus the ill-treatment

by the soldiers. The prisoners were beaten unmercifully, and one chief had his long beard and mustaches cut off with a cutlass by one of the soldiers as a joke. The state of sanitation in the hole was terrible. An old brass kettle did duty for latrine purposes. If you happened to have on you some little medicine or juju for protection—little trifles which we natives believe in, they obliged you to eat it and swallow it. Sometimes they made a man eat his own hair, and if he hesitates a blow with the butt end of a rifle soon decided him. Some of these jujus I believe contained poison. I had none on me and so escaped the ordeal. Soon after I was released, when President King was being inaugurated on his first term, we all went to Monrovia. After the inauguration he was at home to all the chiefs and asked if there were any complaints. I mentioned to him about this hole at Sodolu and he instructed Colonel Young to look into the matter. All that resulted, I think, was that the President ordered the Governor not to do it again.

From the time of our disarmament we have been virtual slaves. Things were a little better when we had guns. They are now building barracks at Barrobo and so much local labour is constantly employed that the district is at a standstill. The natives can do nothing for themselves. No produce such as kernels and palm oil can be carried on the pathways because the soldiers catch the people and take it away. If they are lucky enough to get through and return with anything the soldiers say it does not belong to them and take it away. They ill-treat the women and beat the men.

Another grievance is in connection with the hut tax. We are required to pay \$1.00 per hut. This tax is very reasonable, but if a man dies and he leaves a house it is left unoccupied and falls into decay. The town nevertheless still has to pay tax for that house and for the site when the house is gone. If the Chief stops to reason with the governor when he pays the half yearly taxes he may find himself in prison, or tied up and sent somewhere. The present chief's father died years ago, but we still have to pay D.C. Diggs for the house or its site. We are often not allowed to have a receipt for our tax payments. When Commissioner Diggs came here first he counted all the houses and we paid according to his estimate, but when Gov. Yancy heard it he sent for the D.C. and we had to pay according to the old lists on the book. To minimize the injustice we build bigger houses to hold more people. Previously there were many more houses and people than now. We even have to pay taxes for houses the Fishtown people burnt down during the trouble over the land question. We feel this land question to be a great grievance. The land which my boys have farmed for me for ages has all been taken away from me, as well as that belonging to other people here, by Vice President Yancy and given to the Fishtown people, because they paid him a large sum of money. My coffee plantation and much more has gone with the land. President Barclay long ago gave his decision on this land matter in our favor, but the Fishtown people would not abide by it and paid Mr. Yancy to help them get back the land, which after all originally belonged to us. Recently the Government gave most of the land to the Nihwie people living halfway between us (Garroway) and the Fishtown people. This seemed the last straw, and we then took the matter to the President at Monrovia. This so vexed Governor Yancy that he said that if we did not drop the land question he would send the soldiers to burn down our towns. After this the President himself came down here, and strange to say he confirmed the actions of Mr. Yancy. He told us that if we dared to come to Monrovia again he would put us in jail. For this reason we despair of ever getting justice. We should like to go to another country, and had we not heard of the Commissioner's coming I think we should have been away, and you would have found no one here. The people want to leave the country. As soon as you go from Liberia, all of us will become slaves again if we remain. As regards Fernando Po, things have been made very uncomfortable for us. The people have flatly refused to go in spite of attempts to send them.

The Chief continuing said : What hurts me so much is that I have no port. My port of entry has been closed. No ship is allowed to come here for our produce. I want my port opened again. This once was a big place, but now is stagnant. Produce now has to be taken by sailing boat to Cape Palmas, sometimes a voyage of three days, in order to be shipped and a boat with 10 boys cost money. Our produce is coffee, piassava, kernels, etc. At Grand Cess progress is to be seen everywhere, owing mainly to there being a free port of entry. We have paid much money to try to get this port open, but the lawyers have not been able to help us.

Appendix VI.

AN ACT ABOLISHING THE PRACTICE OF RECRUITING AND SHIPPING OF THE NATIVES OF THE REPUBLIC FOR FOREIGN SERVICE OUTSIDE THE LIMITS THEREOF.

It is enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Liberia in Legislature assembled :

Section 1. — From and immediately after the passage of this Act it shall be unlawful for any person or persons, Firm, Corporation, Syndicate, or agent thereof, to recruit and to ship labourers out of the Republic to any foreign country, whatever.

Section 2. — The penalty for the violation of this Act shall be a fine not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) or imprisonment not exceeding nor less than five years.

Section 3. — No existing contract made for the recruitment of labourers for service in a foreign country shall be affected by the provisions of this Act unless such contract contains an expressed stipulation which would cause it to run for a period exceeding six (6) months from the date of the passage and publication of this Act—that is to say, all contracts made prior to the date of the passage and publication of this Act shall terminate and be of no legal validity at the expiry of six (6) months from the date of the publication thereof. To entitle any holder of such a contract to the benefit of this section he must, within thirty (30) days from the date of the publication of this Act, file and register with the Secretary of Interior a true and complete copy of said contract under a penalty of five hundred dollars (500.00) fine recoverable before the Circuit Court of any judicial district of the Republic.

Section 4. — During the period of six (6) months allowed for the execution of existing contracts, no holder of any of such a contract shall recruit labourers from prohibited areas, that is, the Territories of Grand Cape Mount and Marshall, the Counties of Montserrado and Bassa, for shipment ; and any person who, directly or indirectly, by himself or by any other person on his behalf, recruits the natives of any of the aforementioned prohibited areas and sends them as passengers to other ports with intent to reship them shall be subjected, upon summary investigation and conviction, to the penalty provided for in section 2 of this Act.

Section 5. — Nothing in this Act contained is intended to affect or interfere with sea-going labourers—defined in section 1 of an Act entitled “ An Act to Prohibit Profiteering on the Wages of Sea-Labourers,” approved February 14, 1928—who are specially employed to perform service on board ships and intend to return home with their respective ships.

Section 6. — This Act shall take effect immediately and be published in hand-bills. Any law to the contrary notwithstanding.

Note. — Bill passed in the House of Representatives on the 23rd of Oct., 1928, and killed in the Senate on the following day. Re-introduced in the Senate in Oct. 1929 but as there was a tie in the vote, Senator M. T. Van Pelt, President *pro tempore*, of the Senate, killed it by casting a negative vote against it.

Appendix VII.

THE FERNANDO PO AGREEMENT OF 1928.

THIS INDENTURE OF AGREEMENT made and entered into this 2nd day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and twenty-eight (A.D. 1928) in the City of Monrovia and the Republic of Liberia by Messrs. Barclay and Barclay, Attorneys at Law, under special power to act for and on behalf of Thodomiro Avendano, President of the Syndicate Agricola de los Territorios Espanola del Golfo de Guinea, residing at Santa Isabel, Fernando Po, hereinafter referred to as the Syndicate, of the first part, and Thomas E. C. Pelham, Robert W. Draper, E. G. W. King, J. C. Johnson, M. A. Bracewell and C. L. Cooper, citizens of the Republic of Liberia, Recruiting Agents, now represented by S. A. Ross of Counsel for the Recruiting Agents, hereinafter referred to as the Recruiting Agents party of the second part.

That the party of the first part agree to pay to the party of the second part nine pounds sterling to cover headmoney, taxes, advances, commission and food ; in other words including all expenses (except passage money to Fernando Po) which is to be borne by the party of the first part, exclusive of the nine pounds above mentioned. The party of the first part request the party of the second part to recruit and ship, fifteen hundred boys to the Spanish authorities at Fernando Po in accordance with the laws and regulations of Liberia governing shipment of labourers.

On arrival of these boys at Fernando Po to the Curador, the Curador and Liberian Consul shall engage these boys to the Syndicate, which the Syndicate undertakes to see it done according to the Spanish law ; the Liberian Consul being present and superintending the engagement of said boys as per the laws of the Colony.

The fifteen hundred boys above mentioned should be shipped within one calendar year from the date of the signing of this Agreement, and the party of the second part should do their level best to have these boys so shipped.

The boys shipped by the Recruiting Agents are contracted for the period of two years, one year's salary to be paid each boy in cash in Fernando Po and the remaining year's salary to be paid each boy when returning to Liberia, by cheque on the Bank of British West Africa Ltd. in Monrovia or in the agencies in Sinoe or Cape Palmas.

The party of the first part agrees and faithfully promises not to inflict any inhuman punishment upon these boys but to treat them kindly and feed them properly, furnishing quarters for said boys, and in case of sickness, to give said boys proper medical treatment.

The party of the first part empowers the party of the second part to make advances to each boy in the sum not exceeding three pounds sterling, which is allocated within the nine pounds sterling above mentioned, and will be the only sum chargeable to the boy. All other sums within the nine pounds sterling is free to the boy and paid by the party of the first part.

The party of the first part further agrees to pay to the Headman of each gang of 25 boys the sum of ten dollars money of the Colony in cash per month ; and to each common labourer the sum of six dollars money of the Colony in cash per month ; and at the expiration of the period contracted for, the boys are to be returned to the place from whence they were shipped in Liberia.

Should any of these boys die, whatever amount may be due to said boy at the time of his death shall be paid over to the Liberian Consul. The party of the first part and their assigns further agree that any time the Liberian Consul desires to visit any of the farms where these boys are engaged for the purpose of inspecting and looking after the welfare as well as the interests of the said boys, he shall be permitted to do so without any objection on the part of the party of the first part or their assigns.

The party of the first part further agrees to remit the sum of nine pounds sterling through the Bank of British West Africa Ltd. as agreed upon to the party of the second part on each boy on return of the steamer conveying these boys to Fernando Po, without failure, said cheque to be drawn on the name of S. A. Ross, Counsel of the party of the second part.

The party of the first part agrees and will pay to the Counsel of the party of the second part the sum of one thousand pounds sterling as a bonus at the signing of this agreement ; and further agrees to pay another sum of a thousand pounds sterling in British coin to the party of the second part for every additional fifteen hundred boys so shipped to the party of the first part.

In consideration of the above stipulations mentioned the party of the second part promise and agree to recruit and ship to the Curador at Fernando Po, fifteen hundred labourers or more if possible under the laws of Liberia made and provided for, *so long as there be no intervention on the part of the Government to prohibit the recruiting of boys to Fernando Po.* Said boys to be shipped within one calendar year from date.

The party of the second part further agrees and accepts from the party of the first part the sum of one thousand pounds as a bonus on the fifteen hundred boys to be shipped on the signing of this Agreement, and also further agrees to accept from the party of the first part another sum of one thousand pounds on a further additional shipment of fifteen hundred boys, whenever shipped as is stipulated in the above agreement.

The party of the second part further agrees to recruit boys and ship them to the Curador at Fernando Po within the space of two calendar years, providing there is no objection on the part of the Government of Liberia.

After two years, either party being dissatisfied, may serve notice on the other party as to their intention of severing this agreement, said notice to be in writing.

And should there be any indebtedness to the party of the second part by the party of the first part at the terminus of this Agreement, same shall be paid, and all indebtedness on the part of the party of the second part to the party of the first part shall also be refunded.

It is further agreed that the party of the second part so requires that the party of the first part not presenting any authorization showing their status, before signing this Agreement, same shall be guaranteed by the Spanish Consul duly accredited to the Liberian Government at Monrovia.

It is mutually agreed that the party of the first part shall cause the Spanish steamer to call at the ports of Greenville and Harper or any other ports within Sinoe and Maryland Counties, the party of the second part furnishing proper charts where these boys may be recruited according to the laws of Liberia, and that no delay shall be occasioned on the part of the party of the first part by said steamer not calling. All Spanish steamers shall call when advised by the party of the second part, and the party of the first part hereby agrees to pay all damages incurred on account of the delay of the steamer. Such damages and delay to be settled by Arbitration. (Arbitrators to be appointed in the usual legal way.)

It is mutually agreed between the parties that the party of the second part shall also operate within the County of Maryland, either in person or by appointment of subsidiary agencies in Maryland County to carry out the intention of this Agreement, and will do all in their power to recruit and ship to Fernando Po fifteen hundred boys more, making a grand total of three thousand boys under the laws of Liberia made and provided so long the *Government of Liberia place no obstruction in the way.*

The party of the first part agrees to pay to the party of the second part, the sum of nine pounds sterling per boy for all expenses incurred on labourers from Maryland County as above stated, and further to pay a sum of one thousand pounds sterling gold or silver coin as a bonus for this privilege, making a total sum of two thousand pounds sterling to be paid at the signing of this Agreement.

In witness whereof the parties hereto and hereunto have set their hands and seals this 2nd day of April, A.D. 1928.

For the Syndicate Agricola of Fernando Po,
(Signed) BARCLAY AND BARCLAY,
Party of the First Part.

For the Recruiting Agents,
(Signed) S. A. Ross,
Party of the Second Part.

Witnesses:

J. A. Dougan.
E. A. Monger.
J. W. Howard.

Appendix VIII.

RADIOGRAMS RELATING TO THE SINOE INCIDENT.

From Secy. State, Monrovia, to Hon. S. A. Ross,
Sinoe.

October 5, 1927.

Regret to say steamer passed Monrovia Saturday. Have notified Spanish Government cessation shipments. This however can be rearranged.

(Signed) BARCLAY.
6 p.m.

To Hon. Ross,
Sinoe.

October 5, 1927.

Secretary State stopped recruiting boys to Fernando Po as advised you already. Will show him your cable and turn over all interest to him. Spanish steamer passed to Fernando Po Saturday. If Secretary Barclay agrees will send German steamer to Sinoe for the boys.

(Signed) PARKER.
6.45 p.m.

To Edwin Barclay.

October 5, 1927.

Yours received. Boys were recruited long before September twenty-first. 150 boys from Sasstown were on hand and have been fed when San Carlos was here. Since Spanish steamer has passed could we not send boys by German steamer expected? 300 boys now, or I shall retain them or let them go? Undergone enormous expense.

(Signed) DAVIES and Ross.

To Parker, Vice Consul, Spain,
Monrovia.

October 5, 1927.

Yours received. Have heard from Barclay who says recruiting can be rearranged. What I want to know shall I return 300 boys now on hand or let them go and at whose expense? See Guyatt let him cable Dutch Company to feed boys as rice is out. Send remittances from San Carlos Shipment at once by German or Dutch steamer.

(Signed) Ross.

To Hon. S. A. Ross,
Sinoe.

October 5, 1927.

German steamer calling for 300 boys Fernando Po. This is last permissible shipment, as a favour to you.

(Signed) BARCLAY.
10 p.m.

October 5, 1927.

To Secretary Barclay,
Monrovia.

Ross wired yesterday asking for boys to be shipped Spanish steamer which request please deny. I am informed that boys are decoyed from Hinterland under promise of bringing rice for sale which is taken from them and they forced aboard just as in slave days. Over 300 boys here with rice now across the river being guarded to await ship by Government soldiers. Is it in accordance with the terms of our contract that soldiers should be used to guard free men and force them out of the country as labourers to build up another country? Is this not a reflection on our motto, "The love of Liberty brought us here"—shall we whose fathers founded this country to secure liberty for their sons encourage this blighted and cursed practice which is ruining our country?

If the labourers are to be guarded by Government soldiers, is it not plain then that Government encouraging and aiding slave traffic?

Knowing our conversation *re* Fernando Po I am certain that your Excellency will not grant such a permission.

If you so instructed, I shall gather proof to establish the foregoing facts. Will explain conditions fully when I return.

(Signed) SHERMAN.

5.30 p.m.

October 5, 1927.

To Secretary Barclay,
Monrovia.

Further to my radiogram concerning shipment of boys to Fernando Po, have been across the river and have seen the boys. Oh Secretary Barclay in very truth we have Slave Trade in this place. Boys told me that they chased, caught and forced down here under a purported order from Headquarters. They were flogged and I saw with my own eyes the fresh scars on their backs and the rope marks on their hands. Is it not possible that such practice be ordered stopped by you? The poor creatures are herded up and guarded by Frontier soldiers and messengers. Because some talked me Station Master, Blackett's messengers pushed them about and actually slapped them in my presence. My blood boiled and I feel certain that if you had been here you would have dismissed Blackett and ordered the release of the men.

I appeal to you Mr. Secretary in the name of all that is sacred, in the name of Justice, Freedom, Liberty and Humanity for God's sake give these poor people their freedom and do not allow them to be snatched from their homes and brutally treated, and order Supt. Grigsby to cause them to be sent back to their homes and oblige.

It is ruining our Hinterland. It will affect the commerce and agriculture of this country and government. It will affect our reputation as a free country and will make our Declaration of Independence a sham.

Ross is asserting broadcast that the leaders of this country are sharing the money he is receiving from this abominable practice and had the audacity to offer me a bribe of (£25) twenty-five pounds to cable you in his behalf. For God's sake do not grant his request for shipment boys but order them to be returned to their respective homes and oblige.

(Signed) SHERMAN.

5.45 p.m.

October 5, 1927.

To Attorney General,
Monrovia.

Natives are being forced for shipment to Fernando Po, they are being maltreated and made prisoners. Shall I proceed against the perpetrators and is the Government interested? Reply immediately.

(Signed) William WITHERSPOON,
County Attorney, Sinoe County.

6 p.m.

October 5, 1927.

To Postmaster General Sherman,
Sinoe.

Thinking Ross acting bona fide I granted him permit for shipment of 300 labourers. These were supposed to be men voluntarily engaging for service. Your message reveals iniquity. Am cancelling permit. You will instruct Grigsby in my name in the name of the Government to have man who is involuntarily held released immediately. If necessary have everybody concerned prosecuted. This is peremptory. Blackett must be dismissed.

(Signed) BARCLAY.
Secretary of State.

10 p.m.

October 5, 1927.

Hon. S. A. Ross,
Sinoe.

On official report of the iniquitous methods pursued by you in getting labourers for Fernando Po the permit granted you to-day is hereby cancelled. Superintendent authorised to release every man held by you involuntarily.

(Signed) SECRETARY OF STATE.
10 p.m.

October 5, 1927.

The Officer in Command of Barracks,
Greenville.

You are ordered to report immediately upon what authority you have been employing soldiers to guard alleged labourers for Hon. Ross.

(Signed) BARCLAY,
Secretary of State.
10 p.m.

October 5, 1927.

To the Honourable Secretary of State,
Monrovia.

Your reply received with greatest delight. Citizens have been rejoicing to-day that I had informed you and felt confident that you would disapprove of such nefarious practice. Accept my most cordial thanks and appreciation for having justified our confidence. Will see Superintendent about this matter before leaving to-morrow. Best regards.

(Signed) SHERMAN.
10.20 p.m.

October 6, 1927.

To Secretary Barclay,
Monrovia.

Supt. Grigsby held investigation this morning. Boys all stated that they were either decoyed or forcibly caught, tied and flogged. Supt. asked to see some who were flogged from Wehjah Section and about six arose and showed council the scars on their backs. Although Supt. tried to coax them to remain to work for Ross all refused and said they preferred to go home. Supt. seems to be dodging prosecuting those concerned in atrocities but promised to meet the men this afternoon.

Citizens ask me to thank you most cordially and extend their wishes for God's blessing on you.

You had been scandalously misrepresented by Ross which I had to defend and your radio made the people to know that you had been wickedly misrepresented. Too scandalous to radio. Will tell you and name witnesses when I return. Boys have been dancing and they started to tote me home. They asked me to thank and bless you on their behalf. Ross tried to bribe them, but they fooled him to get to court. Ross locked up nearly all the Juwaszon boys and Supt. had to order their release. Will inform you action taken by Supt. this afternoon. Ross even tried to brand the President which I had to strongly refute. He tried to impress folks that your radio would be cancelled which gave the impression that you are easily influenced by him or that I will soon be changed. Boys leaving for their homes in the morning. What about the rice they brought? Is it not Government property? Please advise. Best regards.

(Signed) SHERMAN.

October 6, 1927.

To Secretary of State,
Monrovia.

Matters *re* shipment of boys to Fernando Po voluntarily or involuntarily found without doubt that they were to be sent involuntarily and as per instruction released.

Accept our congratulations as it was given and that the President demanded it and no one was to question the same.

(Signed) GRIGSBY.
Supt. Sinoe County.
9.30 p.m.

To County Attorney,
Sinoe County.

October 9, 1927.

Radiogram received. Persons endeavouring to coerce labourers must be apprehended and prosecuted of their liberty must be discharged upon writ of *Habeas Corpus*, for which you must apply.

(Signed) ATTORNEY GENERAL OF LIBERIA.
Thru R.Z.F.

To Hon. Ross,
Sinoe.

October 9, 1927.

Secretary Barclay revoked permission shipping labourers. Packed and ready to come as advised cannot understand Secretary says official reports from Sinoe last night compelled him to cancel permission granted yesterday. Remittance sent Bank.

(Signed) PARKER.
Thru R.Z.F. Cape Palmas.

Appendix IX.

DOCUMENT OF PARAMOUNT CHIEF JEH.

Monrovia, Liberia.
December 6, 1929.

His Excellency C. D. B. King, President of Liberia,
Executive Mansion,
Monrovia.

Sir,

We, the chief and Sub-Chiefs of Wedabo, most respectfully beg to submit our complaints for your Excellency's consideration and to do for us whatever you consider right.

To tell the naked truth, Mr. President, we have been reduced to a state of servitude in our own country by the Cape Palmas Officials. We are no longer free men, judging from the way and manner we are being treated. What is the trouble? Are we not brethren?

As the Father of us all we appeal to you to give us a hearing and to cause the return of the money and cattle taken from us unjustly. We really believe that if we were not so far from you and there was a way whereby we could get information to you quickly, things would have not gone so bad and so hard with us. We are now appealing to you as father and final source of justice with utmost confidence that you will examine our complaints and remedy the condition of things in the Wedabo country.

We are, Your Excellency's most obedient Servants,

(Signed) Tuveley JEH (his cross),
Paramount Chief.

Toe ZEBO (his cross),
Sub-Chief.

Jeh MARTIN (his cross),
Sub-Chief.

Witness to signatures

(Signed) K. J. N'YEPAN.

COMPLAINTS OF PARAMOUNT CHIEF JEH AND CHIEFS OF WEDABO TRIBE, MARYLAND COUNTY,
PLACED BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT.

I am the Paramount Chief of the Wedabo Tribe by the consent of my people and the Government, and for a number of years I have served my country as faithfully and as loyally long before the Presidency of His Excellency, Arthur Barclay, to the present time.

Pool River, the tribe next me, is divided from my country by a large river; we are on the right bank and they are on the opposite side. Between the years 1922 and 1923 a fight or small riot took place between the people of the Pool River town on the other side and the

people occupying the town on my side. The fight grew out of a very large fish which drifted ashore on my side of the Wedabo side of the river. But it was found or first seen by Pool River man ; therefore, according to native law, the fish really belonged to the man who found it. Now when the Pool River people came to carry the fish over to their town on the other side, my people said that it should be cut on our side and their share given to them, so it was acclaimed that they refused to allow the Pool River people to carry the fish away. This brought about a great hand to hand fight between the two peoples, as consequence of this some people were killed.

I was at my town up in the interior when this matter took place on the beach. Vice-President Yancy who was Superintendent of Maryland County at the time came to the scene and sent for me when the case was reported to him. I tried to tell him that the affair took place between the Pool River and the Wedabo town on the beach, and that I was not responsible for it. He pointed out to me that as Paramount Chief of the country, I was responsible for the actions of the Wedabo men on the beach, accordingly when after investigation my people were found guilty, the Superintendent sent, not Sub-Chief Womplu who was owner of the town on the beach and whose people were directly connected with the matter, but me to your Excellency along with the 12 men from Pool River tribe, as plaintiffs in the matter so that I can account for the actions of Wedabo.

After careful investigation of the matter you ruled that my people were wrong ; whereupon your Excellency imposed £300 fine on me as Paramount Chief for the actions of the Wedabo men and ordered that the amount be paid in full before I could be permitted to leave Monrovia for my home. On hearing this, I sent Karpeh and Tarplah back as messengers to inform the Wedabo people to collect the money to bring it to Monrovia. When Superintendent Yancy heard this, he followed the messengers to Wedabo about one week after they reached home.

Sub-Chief Jeh Martin. — While we were collecting the money the Paramount Chief sent us to send to Monrovia, Superintendent Yancy arrived at Womplu's town, the Wedabo town on the beach and ordered us down there to himself. When we arrived he said, " I called you to tell you that you all are country people, I don't think you are able to collect the £300 fine on your Paramount Chief quickly so he can return soon. Let me pay the fine for you, but I want you to give men to go to Fernando Po after I pay the £300." I told him that we had no boys to go to Fernando Po so we will try to collect the money ourselves. In reply to this he said that if I tell the people not to go to Fernando Po then my town alone must pay the £300 ; this made me fear, so I shut my mouth and said nothing more to the contrary. At this point we put our heads together and agreed that he must pay the fine and we would give him men to ship to Fernando Po. He said we should give 700 men. We agreed to give them in our country.

After the above agreement, Superintendent Yancy said he would send the £300 to Monrovia without delay and that our Chief would soon return, but he requested that we give him 100 men per town first before the coming of the chief. Men were accordingly collected, from the following towns :

Soloken.	100 men
Markangbo	100 „
Jalalugbo	100 „
Beach-Town.	100 „
Juluken.	100 „
Total.	500 men

Not long after the shipment of the first 500 men the Paramount Chief was released and he returned home.

Sub-Chief Zebo. — When the Chief arrived and saw the country empty, he asked why we allowed such a large number of young men to be shipped away ; he said his orders to us were that we collect £300 cash and send it to him, but not ship men out of the country. We explained to him that while we are trying to collect the money, the Superintendent came and pressed us to give him 700 men and he offered to pay the £300. We told him (the chief) that we owed the Superintendent 200 men ; he said to ship that number of men away would break up the country completely. After listening to the chief we agreed with him that he was right, so we decided that the 500 men that Supt. Yancy shipped to Fernando Po from our country were more than enough for the fine he paid for our chief ; so we decided not to give the 200 men we owed him, because we saw that to give the men would break up the country. When Supt. Yancy heard this he sent Com. J. B. Delaney to our country to collect the 200 men by force. When he entered my town at night he caught 5 big men, and went thru the country and caught as many big men as he could get, put ropes round their waists and carried them

to Supt. Yancy. The idea was to hold the big men at Cape Palmas till we give the 200. My own son who had the audacity to tell Mr. Yancy that our country was empty and there were no men to go to Fernando Po, was immediately arrested by him, sent to the rear of Harper as prisoner and he remained in prison till the 200 men were collected. After the 200 men were collected by force and ready to be shipped, he sent for my son from prison and said to him, "Your head is hard, you told me that there were no men in Wedabo, but I have sent there and found enough men, therefore I will make you headman and ship you to Fernando Po with these men." Of the 700 Wedabo men Mr. Yancy shipped to Fernando Po 100 men died, only 600 returned.

This is the end of the first Fernando Po palaver that entered our country. We do not relate here as a new case to be taken up. We realize that the £100.0.0 cash, the 170 large bags of Palm Kernels, the 1,400 bundles of Piassava we paid to Supt. Yancy at Cape Palmas before the matter between ourselves and the Pool River people reached Monrovia, the £300.0.0 fine at Monrovia to, the detention of the Paramount Chief and the introduction of the unfortunate Fernando Po palaver grew out of the same killing case in which we did not get best.

We relate the foregoing story to enable Your Excellency to understand what we have come to Monrovia to place before you.

The Paramount Chief. — I am come now to relate something about the two demands upon us by Vice President Yancy for men to be shipped to Fernando Po to which you have strongly objected. The hardships and unpleasant condition of things which have grown out of these two demands is what has caused us to return to Monrovia to place the matter before your Excellency for some relief.

Sometime this year Vice President Yancy came from Monrovia and called the whole of Wedabo, Piccanini Cess, Grand Cess and Kpalapo people and requested us to give him men to be shipped to Fernando Po. He said they must give 60 men per town, he further stated that it was the President's order and it must be carried out and any Chief who did not want his men to go will be relieved only upon the payment of £10 per man he fails to supply. The Vice President explained to us that if any person doubted him he could send to Monrovia to find out from the President.

I did not attend the meeting myself because I suffered from a swollen knee at that time, but when my representatives returned and reported to myself and the big men around me and the news got out, all the women began to cry. The women said, "What shall we do to get out of this trouble? Not long ago 100 of our sons and husbands died in Fernando Po, now we are called upon the second time to send our sons to Fernando Po, if they go they may all die and may not return to us." The cry of the women over the country produced a great sadness everywhere so much so that as Paramount Chief I was confused and was unable to eat—my appetite was gone for days.

All the big men got around me and told me emphatically that the country was already empty and broken up and they could not give any more men to go to Fernando Po or any other place even if they kill us. This decision of the old men in the matter put a little life into the women. The final decision of the Wedabo people was that they could not go to Fernando Po this time. If Vice President Yancy wants them to leave the country they are willing to look somewhere else to go rather than send any men to Fernando Po.

Chief Broh sent messengers to Monrovia to ascertain the truth whether your Excellency sent orders for us to go to Fernando Po or not. When the messengers returned, Chief Broh called us to his town and informed us that the demand for boys to go to Fernando Po was not your order. This report brought happiness all over the country and all the women were dancing and praising Your Excellency.

Soon after this Vice President Yancy sent Supt. Brooks with soldiers into my country, he did not come by way of my town to tell me of this errand, but he passed by round about route and entered the big town above my town. He had the big men of the town arrested tied and extracted £5.0.0 out of them. After the payment of the £5.0.0 he released the old men. From this town he sent the soldiers to me, but he did not come himself, when they arrived they demanded £5.0.0 from me, saying that it is the order of Supt. Brooks. I called my big men together to put the matter before them to collect the money, the soldiers said I was too slow so they seized me by my gown and began to push me about. They gave me a load and started to compel me to carry it to the next town for them. I told them positively that I am the Paramount Chief of my country. I have never carried a load in my life for any body, so I would not under any condition carry the load. At the same time they pushed one of the old big men of the country, he fell and his foot was badly cut. I paid the £5.0.0 and the soldiers left my town and returned to Superintendent Brooks.

Sub-Chief Martin. — From the Paramount Chief's place, Supt. Brooks and soldiers came to my town. When he entered the town, the Superintendent said to me that he came for the Fernando Po labourers that we were ordered by Vice President Yancy to supply. In reply to this I told him the order was given publicly to many chiefs and not specially, I could not understand why he left all the big chiefs and came to me directly for men when he knew

that I was not a Paramount Chief. He said my answer was bad, he got vexed and fined me £8.0.0 for the question I asked. I paid him the money, after which he left and proceeded to the next town.

Sub-Chief Zebo. — From Marten the Superintendent and his soldiers came to my town. I was not at home when he arrived, I was on the farm with my workmen, but he refused to come down from his hammock; and remained in the hammocks on the boys' heads till I was sent for from the farm and he was still on their heads when I arrived. Upon my arrival he told me that he would not come but was passing right to Kpalapo to sleep. He told me to follow him the next day, but I was to bring his chop; he left two soldiers to sleep with me as to escort me to him. When day broke I took three men and went to see him. I carried £1.0.0 cash for his food.

When we were near the town where he was, the soldiers put a rope around the waist of one of the men and tied him. I asked what was the trouble; they said it was the Superintendent's order they were carrying out. The rope was around his waist when we reached the Superintendent's quarters. I asked him why he permitted the soldiers to tie the man. After long talk he turned him loose as he could not show any reason for the punishing of the man, but he told me to pay £8.0.0. I told him unless he gave good reasons for the punishment my man had received, I would not pay him a cent. I returned to my town and did not pay the money. Two or three days afterwards the Supt. followed me to my town for the money. When he arrived he asked me where was the £8. I told him that I would not pay it, whereupon he threatened me saying that he would make things hot for me and my people and we would not be able to make farms this year. He left and went away.

When Chief Broh was arrested and carried to Cape Palmas there was great confusion everywhere in the country, so when his messengers and sub-chiefs were running to Monrovia, I sent three men along with them to hear directly from Your Excellency just what the Government was decided to do to free us from the Fernando Po labour oppression, so that we could rest and sleep better in our country. When the news reached Cape Palmas that I had sent three messengers to the President V. P. Yancy sent Lieut. Phillips with soldiers into my country. When the Lieutenant entered Sub-Chief Zebo's town, Zebo sent for seats for the soldiers but they said why he did not go for the seats himself, so they seized him and flogged him mercilessly. This was done by the guard. Lieut. Phillips was behind and not present. But when he arrived on the scene, instead of rebuking the soldiers for their actions he said. "Look here, Zebo, I want one goat, one big cow, and one bag of rice for our chop." Zebo gave these things immediately, but he turned right on the same spot and demanded £10 cash; Zebo paid this amount to Lieut. Phillips. While the soldiers were flogging Zebo all the women and children from his town scattered in all directions, crying to the top of their voices and ran to my town. One of Zebo's boys who had made up his mind to remain to see what would become of his father, while the soldiers were flogging him, was also seized and flogged by the soldiers and 10/- was paid for him before they would let him go.

From Zebo's place Lieut. Phillips proceeded to Martin's town. When he arrived he ordered Martin to gather all the people in one place to meet him. When the men had gathered in front of Martin's house, the soldiers jumped into the crowd and began to flog and tie them. Martin said to him, "Lieut. Phillips, you told me to call the men together and you took them out of my hands and tied them; it would be my trouble to-morrow so untie them." He told Martin to pay £10.0.0. The money was immediately paid and he untied all the men except 21. After Lieut. Phillips demanded 6 cows and 2 large bags of rice, which were given to him on the same spot.

After all this Lieut. Phillips turned his soldiers loose and they began to break into houses, break boxes open, and began to plunder the whole town. They took away cash, clothes, and everything the people had; the town has been completely ruined. After they had plundered the town, Lieut. Phillips took the 21 men as prisoners, proceeded to Cape Palmas and gave them V. P. Yancy who sent them to prison at his farm.

I sent two messengers to the Vice President with £5.0.0 to tell him that Lieut. Phillips had plundered one of my towns and ask why the 21 men were arrested. When he received the £5.0.0 he asked the messengers where I was. They told him that I was suffering from a swollen knee. He said to the men, "Go tell Jeh, I want to see him, even if he is not able to walk fast, he must walk slowly and come to me." When this message reached me I was greatly worried in mind so my people gave me £20.0.0 and told me to walk slowly to go to him. I took the £20.0.0 and handed it to him, he looked at my knee and said that he believed I was really sick. "But", said he to me. "Jeh, I see this £20.0.0 I will put it one side. The old town your people vacated and came to your town, the tax is not paid, so you must send for £40.0.0 more." I told him the people left the town six years ago and that we made farm on the very site where the town was and ate the rice two years, how then could I pay such money? He refused to listen to this explanation and demanded the money. I sent the messengers to my country, my people collected £40.0.0 and sent it to me and I gave it to the Vice President.

The following morning after I had paid the above amounts, I went to tell the Vice President goodbye, and to tell him that I was going home. Much to my surprise he said to me: "Jeh,

I am sorry to tell you that you can not go home yet, you must stay here and pay £100.0.0 before you go anywhere." I asked what this money must be paid for. He said he heard that I had sent messengers to Monrovia to report him to the President, therefore I must pay £100.0.0 fine. I told him that it is true I sent messengers to the President and if he wanted me to pay £100.0.0 for that, what could I do? I have it to pay. So I agreed to pay it. But I asked him to allow me to return home and to give me time to look for the money; he agreed but gave me one week only. I left Harper and went home. When I reached home I called my people together and placed the matter before them, they collected £40.0.0 at once and gave it to me, and I took it to Cape Palmas myself and delivered it to the Vice President within the one week he gave me, remaining a balance of £60.0.0.

Sub-Chief Zebo : — At this point of the matter Supt. Brooks examined the two Wedabo men in prison at the Vice President's farm and found out that I was not among them. He sent message by Bellor, a Kpalagbo man, that the Superintendent said I must go to Cape Palmas to be jailed by him. On hearing this I was greatly alarmed and upset in my mind, the women and children of my town were crying but I could not leave my country and my children and run away. So on the next day I took £8.0.0 cash and one big bullock and started to Cape Palmas ready to be jailed by the Superintendent but for what reason I did not know Mr. President, the sad story of the cruel treatment that we, the natives of Maryland County are constantly receiving from the officials there is nothing but a fraction of a great tale.

When I arrived I went to the Vice President and reported my arrival. I gave him the bullock and the £8.0.0. He thanked me and said that Brooks sent for me to put me in jail, but since I saw him first, he would not allow me to go to jail, but I must bring £100.0.0. I told the Vice President that Lieut. Phillips, when he sent him to my town, had taken everything I had and left me dry and poor, therefore I was unable to get £100.0.0. After all this begging and explanation I paid £50.0.0 any how, and I was released and returned home.

Sub-Chief Martin : — I went to the Vice President and told him that the 21 men who were arrested and brought to Cape Palmas by Lieut. Phillips came from my town and begged him to release them from prison and give them to me. He told me that he was very sorry for me; he heard the soldiers had plundered my town and broke it up, so I must bring £60.0.0 and he would release the men. I paid him £40.0.0 cash and £20.0.0 in piassava. He gave me the 21 men and I took them home.

Sub-Chief Zebo. — I come now to relate one of the most serious cases in Wedabo, which the people particularly instructed me to place before Your Excellency.

The first Paramount Chief that God gave the country was "Tuweley". He was ordained and blessed by God himself, for during his reign women bore plenty children, rice grew in abundance, and the country was full of food, sickness and death was less, above all the Wedabo country was never defeated in any of the wars waged against our enemies. From the time of the death of the old man, when we have a chief who is kind and good to the people and knows how to hold the country, we always meet and formally change his name to that of the old man. This is the highest respect we can pay to any chief in our country.

The name of our present Paramount Chief is Tuweley Jeh. From the above explanation you can clearly see and understand that we love and hold him in the highest esteem. According to our customs he placed one Wonplu as a Sub-Chief of the Wedabo town on the beach. This man Wonplu subsequently became a trader for Vice President Yancy from the time of his Superintendency up to the present. The killing of the Pool River people for which Chief Jeh was carried to Cape Palmas by Supt. Yancy, subsequently sent to Monrovia and fined £300.0.0 by Your Excellency was done by Wonplu's people in Wonplu's town, while Chief Jeh was way up in his town. He was arrested and held responsible for the actions of Wonplu's people because they are Wedabo men and Jeh is Paramount Chief of the whole country.

But much to the disappointment and regret of the whole country, soon after the settlement of the matter mentioned above Supt. Yancy dismissed the Paramount Chief and took away his Commission from him—the commission he received from you—and gave it to Sub-Chief Wonplu and made him Paramount Chief of Wedabo. Worst of all Supt. Yancy fined Jeh £140.0.0 after taking the commission away from him. Just for what cause the Chief was dismissed and fined such a large sum has never been explained to us. The £140 was paid thru Commissioner J. B. Delaney.

Mr. President, I am instructed by the people of Wedabo to inform you that they want their Paramount Chief to be given back to them. They are not satisfied with the present condition of things. The country has been and is still disorganized since the abrupt removal of Paramount Chief Jeh without just cause.

We appeal to you therefore to take up this matter and settle it once for all.

Wonplu is among the people that you instructed to go home but to report back at Monrovia in September. When we were ready to come to your call, Wonplu went to

V. P. Yancy. Just what they talked and what advice he received I do not know, but he returned home and sat down and refused to come to Monrovia as you had ordered. Please send for Wonplu so that we can sit face to face before you in order to enable you to settle this matter.

(Signed) Tuweley JEH (his cross),
Paramount Chief.

TOE ZEBO (his cross),
Sub-Chief.

JEH MARTIN (his cross),
Sub-Chief.

GBADE YEEN (his cross).

Witness to Signatures,
S. K. J. N'YEPAN.

Appendix X.

STATEMENT OF PARAMOUNT CHIEF BROH OF FRENROPO—MARYLAND COUNTY.

When Vice President Yancy returned from Monrovia, last year, he ordered the chiefs and people of Picanini-Cess, Grand Cess and Wedabo, including myself and people to meet him at a big meeting at the Wedabo town on the Beach. I was not feeling well to attend this meeting, so I sent my representatives. When they returned they told me that the big men of Picanini-Cess, Grand Cess and Wedabo were all at the meeting; the men also reported to me that after the meeting had been convened, Vice President Yancy said to the people that he had just returned from Monrovia and brought a message from President for us. The Vice President said that President King had asked him to say to us that we must give him men to send to Fernando Po and thereupon made the following appointment among the representative towns.

Picanini-Cess	60 men.
Grand Cess	60 men.
Wedabo.	60 men.

But when he got to my people he divided my country town into four sections, requiring 60 men from each section. He went on further to say that he will not force me to send the men, but if I do not give them I will have to pay the sum of Ten pounds (£10.0.0) sterling for each man I refuse to send, or else he would send soldiers, in case I refuse to pay the money.

At this stage of the meeting this question was put to Vice President Yancy: Is that all that President King told you to tell us? He answered in the affirmative, and said further that if the people did not believe him they could send to Monrovia to find out from the President for themselves. All of this was told to me by my representative which I had sent to attend the meeting.

Upon hearing this, I called my people together and put the matter before them; they finally objected to supply the boys for two reasons; namely, (1) Because some years ago thirty (30) boys were sent to Fernando Po from our country and not one returned, and (2) once I was ordered to send men to work on the road and a portion of these men were sent to Firestone Plantation to work. After working there for several weeks, and not receiving any remuneration for their services, they complained to the Manager for their pay. The Manager of the Plantation immediately discharged the men, when he found out that they were not being paid: this gang of men returned home without a cent of money. In the face of these objections which were very pertinent, I could not consistently insist on the people supplying men to be sent to Fernando Po.

Subsequently I sent two messengers to Monrovia to President King, explaining what Vice President Yancy had said, and also to ask whether same was true or not. The President replied me saying that he never sent any order for us to give men to be sent to Fernando Po, but anybody who wanted to go could do so of his own free will; this report brought joy to my people and the other tribes also rejoiced, when they heard the news which my messengers had brought from Monrovia.

When the news reached Cape Palmas that I had sent to President King and that my messengers had returned bringing the above news to all the people concerned, Supt. Brooks, Hon. W. V. S. Tubman and McBorough came to Picanini Cess. Upon their arrival they sent for me. When I arrived there, Supt. Brooks asked me whether or not I had sent messengers to Monrovia? I replied in the affirmative saying that I had sent to President King, as I consider him the father of us all, and before I could get through with my statement I was seized and put under arrest and sent aboard the steam launch, which they brought from Cape Palmas. On our way from Picanini Cess to Cape Palmas Supt. Brooks and his fellows stopped

at Grand Cess and went ashore to sleep, leaving me on board of the launch. At midnight the sea became very rough, so much that the launch was thrown on the bank. Receiving no injury, I got out of the launch and got on a rock where I remained until daylight. The next morning we proceeded on to Cape Palmas. While at Cape Palmas I was kept at the home of Supt. Brooks, not being allowed to walk about at large. While being detained at Cape Palmas Supt. Brooks sent Lieut. Phillips of the L.F.F. with soldiers to guard me and the others sections to arrest people and bring them to Cape Palmas. They arrested forty (40) men from my section and more or less a number from the other sections, but I cannot give the exact number.

The men who were arrested in my section were laid down and flogged severely by Lt. Phillips and the soldiers. Of my men those flogged one died from the effect. One or two others died also, but they did not belong to my section. In addition to this cruel treatment given the men, the towns were plundered by the soldiers. Some of the men who were among those arrested are here with me, who can give first hand information, if necessary.

When Lt. Phillips and the soldiers returned to Cape Palmas with a large crowd of men they had arrested, it was late in the night; but before daylight the next morning all of the prisoners together with myself were sent to Vice President Yancy's farm. I, whom the Government of Liberia through its chief Executive had recognized and commissioned as a Paramount Chief of my people, was here humiliated to the extent of being flogged in the presence of my people whom I have authority to rule, as well as in the presence of my colleagues.

While there on the farm, Vice President and Supt. Brooks ordered us before them. The Vice President then said to me, *inter alia*: "Broh, is it you who sent to Monrovia to report me? What is the President to you, is he a relative of yours? Do you know what is the secret understanding between the President and myself? You are now in my hands. Let President King come and take you out. President King belongs to Monrovia and rules there, but I rule Cape Palmas; if I want to ship you to Fernando Po, now I can do so, who can stop me? I can turn you over to the soldiers to take you to the barracks in the interior, and then give them order to kill you on the way, and when the report gets to Monrovia, I will simply write and tell the President that you died from sickness, and whatever reason I give for the cause of your death will be accepted by him." The Vice President then said to the other people, "You have allowed Broh to fool you to send complaint to Monrovia against me, and now you all will receive the same punishment which I will give him. I will require each section to pay the following fine:

	£
Frenropo	200
Kpalagbo	394
Topo	100
Suehn	100
Wedabo (fine not stated).	

I paid my fine in full and also did the Topo and Suehn people, but I cannot say anything possibly as to whether Kpalagbo and Wedabo people paid their fine. After having paid this illegal fine, the Vice President told me that the steam launch which he sent down to Picanini Cess for me costing him £72.10.0 and that I must pay this amount before myself and my people could be released; this necessitated me having to send back home the second time, for the several towns to be in order to raise the amount required by Vice President Yancy, the amount having been paid in full he ordered the release of myself and people.

The Kpalagbo joined me in sending the first complaint to the President; but after we had been punished and fined at the Vice President's farm and returned home, they blamed me for the treatment received and the money they paid. Seeing that to send complaint to Monrovia meant trouble, they decided to make up with Vice President Yancy in order to be permitted to blow a little bit; by my holding out to my complaint which I had made to the President is why the Kpalagbo people, who are living with me on my land which I permitted them to build on quite seventeen years ago, were bitter against me.

One day some of my people met some Kpalagbo big men going to Cape Palmas and upon being asked by my people what was their errand, they replied saying that the Vice President had sent for them; just what they talked there and what instruction was given them, I do not know because they did not break word this time as they usually do, but I noticed that their attitude was completely changed, and they commenced to find palava on us for nearly every little thing.

The site which I gave Kpalagbo people to build on is very close to my town, the two towns being separated by a small mud stream in which the children of both towns used to go to catch small fish and frogs during the rains. One day while the children were catching frogs I heard loud talking between them. I then told one of the town men to go there and find out the cause of the trouble. This man met some of the Kpalagbo people cutting down some plain-tain trees planted on the edge of the stream, known as Kbo at the foot of my town. The men were armed with cutlasses and spears. The men from my town being unarmed quietly asked the people from the other town to stop cutting down the trees, in the meanwhile endeavoured

to enquire into the matter. Without making any explanation, one of the men of the Kpalagbo tribe came up to the man from my town and cut him with his cutlass. This caused the children to scatter and run shouting War! War! which created a great excitement. Other men from my town who had just returned from their farms ran to the scene. They too being unarmed were attacked and some wounded, one of them died subsequently from the wound received and was buried of the District Commissioner who witnessed the same in Picanini Cess.

The man who wounded deceased was arrested and handcuffed by the District Commissioner. The culprit escaped and went back to his town, and during the investigation at Cape Palmas and Grand Cess he was present, but no further attempt was made to rearrest him.

When the District Commissioner heard of the fight which had gone on between the two tribes, he sent up and ordered all of us down, saying that we should bring all the wounded and dead men with us. The Kpalagbo people claimed that one of my men had wounded one of their men with a spear, but when the District Commissioner ordered them to produce the wounded man they could not; but for four days afterwards they claimed that the men who had been wounded by my people had died. Subsequently the report of the fight reached Cape Palmas. Supt. Brooks accompanied by Senator Tubman and Representative McBorough came to Grand Cess where we were. The Supt. ordered us down to an investigation. When we went down, for an investigation the next day, I went to see Supt. Brooks on the matter. During the course of our conversation he said to me, "I am sorry to hear of the way your people have been wounded, but it is a big Court matter and so I would advise you to get a lawyer. He then recommended Counsellor Tubman who was present. Upon approaching the Counsellor he agreed to make a representation and asked that I retain him with the amount of Ten Pounds sterling, which I paid. On the following morning the Superintendent called up the case. After both sides had been allowed to give their statements, the Superintendent said that he hold word. He afterwards announced that the case had to be taken down to Cape Palmas and he exacted the amount of £25 (Twenty-five pounds) sterling from both sides to cover their expenses at Grand Cess. We were ordered to be in Cape Palmas within one week's time. Counsellor Tubman, my lawyer, told my clerk to tell me that he charged me £100 sterling to represent me in Cape Palmas, and ordered that I hand this amount over to Commissioner Diggs, who was to accompany us to Cape Palmas. On our way to Cape Palmas I handed the Commissioner the one hundred pounds sterling at Garraway for Counsellor Tubman, my lawyer.

Two days after reaching Cape Palmas the matter was called up by the Superintendent. Both sides made their statement before the Supt. and Council. In my statement I claimed and explained that the Kpalagbo people crossed the branch of the stream Kpo, that runs near their town and came over that part of the stream lying immediately before my town. (The stream Kpo has two branches running like the letter "Y" between the two towns, leaving a small piece of land between the two arms of the stream.

The Kpalagbo people claimed that we were the first to attack them. I then requested the Supt. to send some one to see the spot. The request was granted, and Vice President Yancy, Senator Dossen. Hon. D. B. Cooper and County Attorney Shannon and Commissioner Diggs were appointed to go up there. Both sides were requested to pay £75 sterling each and furnish thirty carriers each to defray the expenses and transportation of the Commissioners. My amount was fully paid as well as the carriers furnished.

Some of the men of the Commissioners told me that from the situation of the place where the fight took place, the Kpalagbo people evidently were the aggressors. However, when we got back to Cape Palmas, much to my surprise, things were turned against me, for what reason I do not know, excepting that it was the same feeling against me for complaining or asking the President in Monrovia about supplying boys for Fernando Po. The Superintendent in deciding the matter adjudged that I pay a fine of One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars. (1,500.00). To said judgment I took exception and appealed to Monrovia, as I felt that I had not been justly dealt with.

The Kpalagbo clan belongs to the left bank of the river Hargba. (The large river lying near to and on the Piccanini Cess side of the town of Grand Cess.) We belong on the right bank of Piccanini Cess, side of the same river. We gave the Kpalagbo people a spot to build on on our side of the river, where they build their own Seeter which town is now concerned in the present case. The rest of the Kpalagbo clan are still living on their original land on the left bank of the river Hargba.

(Signed) BROH,

*Paramount Chief of Frenropo Section,
Maryland County, R.L.*

Appendix XI.

DECISION OF HIS EXCELLENCY, THE PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA ON THE MATTER OF THE WEDABO PEOPLE KILLING THREE MEN OF THE PO RIVER PEOPLE, RENDERED AT THE EXECUTIVE MANSION, MONROVIA, ON OCTOBER 23, 1924.

The President having named Mr. John Delaney to interpret, proceeded to deliver the following decision in the matter of the Po River people's complaint against the Wedabo people for the alleged killing of Three of their Countrymen :

" Tell the Po River people first that we are glad that they took the step of appealing to the Central Government in this matter. This is what we have been trying to get everybody to understand, that in any case of difficulty the parties should appeal to the Central Government in the last resort.

" Tell the Wedabo people too, that we thank them for coming to Monrovia at the call of the Government. Of course they are a little late coming, and the other side was up here waiting for me a long time. I however received a letter from the Superintendent of Maryland County, stating that the steamer which was to bring them to Monrovia had the small pox case on board, and so that excuse is acceptable.

" This is now my decision in the matter after hearing from both parties. I said to you all the first day that the case came, that the old Liberia is passed away and a new Liberia is in existence. Things that used to happen on the Liberia Kroo Coast in former days cannot happen now. Those were dark days. In those days when a man owed a debt to another and the debtor happened to be passing thru the country of the creditor, the latter would catch the former ; and afterwards the people in the town of the debtor would catch some men or other coming from the town of the Creditor and would say that ' you people did so and so to our men ' by way of justification. All this is now passed.

" From what we have heard in this case from the side of the Wedabo people, it would be as if they had this same old idea. Now when we called them up for killing the people from the Po River side, they began thanking us for having given them an opportunity to state their side ; and they went as far back as fifteen years ago and told how the Po River people at that time killed of their people, and again in 1918 they killed another. Then I asked them why they went so far back—was that the reason why they also had killed the Po River people which is the cause of this investigation. Their answer was, ' Yes '. This is why I said the Wedabo people still have that old time idea, that is, that when any tribe does anything you consider wrong, you wait until you have a chance and then you do what you like with their people.

" They stated that the Po River people killed three of their people ; they took the matter to the Cape at the various time this happen, and at each time nothing came of the matter. When this finish palaver came up now, then they said, ' We will satisfy ourselves ', and they have not killed 4 persons, not 10, not 20, not 15, but *Three*, the same number of persons that they say the Po River people had killed of their people. This shows that the same number of persons that the Po River are said to have killed is what they also meant to kill of the Po River people.

" Now, we cannot permit this sort of thing. When the Po River people killed their people and they took the matter to Cape Palmas and they were not satisfied, they should have done as the Po River have done in this instance and brought the matter to Monrovia. When this matter came up it was taken first to the Commissioner and then on to Cape Palmas ; and as the case did not satisfy them, they wrote to us and so we sent for the people and had them to come up to Monrovia to talk the matter. You, the Wedabo people, did not do so.

" Now, we are not going back to matters of 15 years ago, but we are going to confine ourselves to the matter of the three Po River people killed by the Wedabo people. The Wedabo people themselves admit killing *two* persons, altho the Po River people state it is three ; and the Wedabo people have admitted also that these men were killed in their town, and they were messengers sent to them, who was so killed. According to the custom of their Country, they know that even when war is going on messengers are not killed, much less when there is no war on. The Wedabo people have therefore committed two series of offenses. The first is that they have broken one of the fundamental laws not only of the civilized people, but of their own country custom—that is, not recognize the sanctity of messengers even in war. This is a law not only among us but is thruout the whole world. You cannot even put such a messenger in sticks, much less kill him.

" The second offense is that they have killed these people, which is against the law of the country. The Wedabo people are therefore wrong altogether.

" We ask them to show us the people that committed this act of killing and they said they do not know them. We cannot let the matter rest at that. We asked the Wedabo

people's chief why he did not find the people and turn them over to the Government and he said he could not find them. Now the Government cannot permit any tribe or set of people on the highways to be catching people and killing them.

“ THEREFORE THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION IS :

“ 1. The Wedabo people must produce the persons who killed the three men of the Po River Tribe.

“ 2. That the Wedabo people also pay, for allowing the act to be committed in their towns, a fine of *Three Hundred Pounds Sterling*.

“ 3. That on failure to produce the men who killed the persons in question by the Wedabo people, their towns on the beach in which the act was committed will be broken up by the Government, and their inhabitants sent back into the interior to some spot selected by the Government. This congency [sic] will happen if after the expiration of *Two Months* the parties are not produced, who killed the three Po River people.

“ The Government will hold the Paramount Chief of the Wedabo people up here until the persons who killed the Po River people have been produced. If these people are not produced within 20 years, 40 years, or indefinitely, he will remain in the hand of the Government for such period of time ; but if they find the persons within two months or so, he will be set at liberty. It must be understood that whether or not the persons are produced, the fine of Three Hundred Pounds is to be paid by the Wedabo Tribe ; but they must produce the people, their Paramount Chief remaining here until they are produced, and that failing the production the Towns on the beach will be destroyed.

“ We have to make the people of that Coast know that the Government means to have law and order and peace and we cannot suffer anybody, even the Po River people themselves, to kill or do any body harm. We will do the same thing to any one who does these things, as we are doing to the Wedabo people. All are our children, and we can not like one more than we do the others.

“ We will hold the Chief up here until the *Actual Murderers* of these men are produced ; and the Government gives the Wedabo people *two months* in which to produce them, failing which, their towns on the beach will be destroyed.”

(Signed) C. D. B. KING,
President, R.L.

“ This is to certify a true and correct copy from the original.

(Signed) M. G. W. YANCY,
Departmental Clerk, Maryland County.

Appendix XII.

COMPLAINT OF PARAMOUNT CHIEF GOFA OF TOPO, MARYLAND COUNTY.

Presented to His Excellency
the President of Liberia.

5/XII/29.

Not long before farm time this year, when Vice President Yancy returned from Monrovia, he came to Wonplu's place, the Wedabo town on the beach and ordered the Paramount Chiefs, Sub-Chiefs and people of Grand Cess, Picanini Cess, Wedabo, and all the four Kpalapo sections of which my country, Topo, is one.

The Vice President said that he had just returned from Monrovia and that the President said we must give him men to ship to Fernando Po. He said all the towns must give 60 men a piece. On hearing this my people refused to comply with the order ; they gave as their reason for refusal the statement that not long ago the large number of Wedabo men the V.P. shipped to Fernando Po, when he was Superintendent of Maryland County, died and many did not return. In reply to this objection of my people, the Vice President said, all right, if the people refuse to go, then we must give him £10.0.0 per man or £600.0.0 per town. He further stated that this was the President's order, and if any of the chiefs doubted him let them send to Monrovia to ask the President.

On hearing this Paramount Chief Broh, of Frenropo sent two messengers to Monrovia to get the facts of the Fernando Po question directly from the President himself. Chief Broh did not tell us that he was sending the messengers to Monrovia, so we knew nothing of the

matter. But, when the messenger returned with the President's message that he did not send the Vice President to collect labourers for Fernando Po nor tell him to fine the people as reported, but that His Excellency would soon send the Secretary of the Interior to make our country good, Chief Broh sent for all of us and the messenger told us what the President said to him. The President's messenger to Chief Broh caused a great joy all over the country; as a result the people stopped everything and there was singing and dancing everywhere. Women and children were happy and rejoicing.

When the news reached Harper that Chief Broh's messengers had returned from Monrovia and that he had gathered all the people and told them what the President said about the Fernando Po labour question, and that as a result the people of Broh's section as well as the people of other sections were all beating drums and dancing, Superintendent Brooks accompanied by Senator Tubman Representatives McBorough and John Dunham went to Picanini Cess and arrested Chief Broh and took him to Harper.

On the following day it was reported that the Superintendent would send soldiers to catch all the Chiefs and big men of the other sections, who doubted the Vice President and were dancing and rejoicing because of the message from Monrovia. On hearing this report, some of the chiefs and big men of the other sections, including myself, ran away and came to Monrovia to the President. We jumped in the bush in our country in the rear of Grand Cess and walked for 15 days till we reached Grand Bassa, from there we took boat and came to Monrovia by sea.

Speaker Boryono Doco. — I will now relate what happened in the absence of Paramount Chief Gofa after he left the country and ran to Monrovia to see the President.

After Chief Broh reached Harper and was confined as a prisoner, as we were told, Vice President Yancy sent Lieutenant Phillips of the Liberian Frontier Force with a large number of soldiers into our country. When he arrived at Chief Gofa's town he called all of us together and said to us, "Bring chop for my soldiers". In complying with the order we gave him 5 bags of clean rice first. He further ordered us to bring the soup to go with the rice before he sat down. We immediately gave one large bull, but he said the bull has stones (nuts) and he Lieutenant Phillips has stones (nuts) therefore he refused to accept the bull and demanded a cow. We gave him one cow with young one. He took the cow home and did not kill it for the soldiers.

After this Lt. Phillips dismissed us; he said he was going in to bathe and see about chop and ordered us to return to his quarters two o'clock after breakfast. At the appointed time all the men of the town gathered in front of the zinc house he occupied, he ordered his soldiers to surround us on all sides; and when he was satisfied that all the men were completely surrounded, he put this question to us: "Where is your Paramount Chief Gofa?" I arose and answered him that Gofa went to Monrovia. He asked me, "What is your name?" I said to him, "My name is Boryono Doco." Lieutenant Phillips then said he liked the man who would tell the truth. He raised his big rubber whip and began to flog me as hard as he could and when he was tired, he ordered the soldiers to throw me down. The soldiers seized me, threw me down and began to beat me. After this severe beating, the soldiers put my foot between two pieces of hard wood and then tied the ends of the stick together, the tighter the ropes were drawn, the more the stick pressed into my flesh. I suffered awfully from this cruel treatment, the scar of the sore cut into my flesh by one of the sticks is right on my foot and I can show it to any person. I am not the only one who was flogged. The soldiers jumped into the crowd and beat the other men right and left and tied as many as they could and put them thru the same torture. Afterward the Lieutenant put all of us into one house and locked us up at sunset. Yanfor and Magbe, the two oldest men of the tribe who are even older than Paramount Chief Gofa, were amongst the crowd; in fact, the two men are owners of the country. We did not want them to sleep in confinement, so we went to Lieut. Phillips and begged him to release them. He asked us to give him £10, if we did not want the old men to sleep in the guard house. The people gave Chief Gofa's speaker, M'ma Doe £10 for the old men's release and he paid the money to Lieut. Phillips. Upon the receipt of the £10.0.0 he released the two men.

After the release of the old men, we who are in the guard house are 24 men. On the following morning, when Lieut. Phillips and the soldiers were about to take us all to Harper as prisoners, the people begged him to release me, they pointed out to him that being sick from the results of the severe flogging from his soldiers and himself, I might die on the way if he carried me to Harper, because the soldiers were most liable to beat me again on the journey. He agreed to release me, but asked the people to take me out of his hands, that is, they must bring something to pay for my release. They gave him £4 but he refused to accept it, and demanded a cow, and said that he would carry me if it is not forthcoming. On hearing this the women began to cry and there was a great cry in the town. My family caught a grown cow with young one and gave it to Lieut. Phillips and I was released.

He took the remaining 23 persons and moved off to Harper. The Lieutenant reached Harper very late in the night and gave the men to Vice President Yancy who sent them to his farm just before daybreak the next morning. The men were so severely flogged by the

soldiers on the two day journey from our town to Harper that one of them Kohkoh Jehleh by name, died from the effect of the beating two days after they reached the prison house at the Vice President's farm.

When the news of Jehleh's death reached us, my people, the Topo tribe, sent M'ma Doe as a special messenger to Vice President Yancy to find out what was the reason for the arrest of the men Lieut. Phillips took to Harper and treated so cruelly that one was killed by beating. He said he sent and arrested the men because P.C. Gofa of the Topo tribe went to Monrovia to report him to the President and he would not release the remaining 22 men unless we sent him £100.0.0. We collected the £100 and gave it to the same M'ma Doe and Gebo Chea ; the two men carried the money and paid to the Vice President. After the receipt of this money, he said to the two men, " I see this £100. I accept this amount as a fine for your Paramount Chief going to Monrovia to report me, but I like to know what got in the heads of your big men to allow Gofa to go to Monrovia. For this reason you must go and tell your people to send me another £100, before I release the prisoners." The two messengers returned to us with the news of the additional demand for money. We collected the second £100.0.0 and sent it to the Vice President by the same messengers. They paid the money to him and he released the men and sent them home by our messengers.

We work on the Government road without pay, tools or food, we do the work freely and willingly, yet every year we are required to pay £60.0.0 when we want the boys to leave the road to come home to attend to their farms during farming season. In keeping with this practice, when the released 22 men were about to leave Harper, the Vice President lined them up and said to me : " Your men are here working on the government road and this is farm time, but when you go home tell your people if they want me to release them to come to work their farms, they must send me £80.0.0, if not I will not let them go." The men told him that considering the large amounts already paid, where the people would get money from to pay the £80.0.0 ? To this he replied and said to the men : " Your people have money to send their Paramount Chief to Monrovia to report me, but they have no money to pay for the release of the men on the road ; all right : I will not let them go till I see the money." We collected £40.0.0 and sent it to him and asked him for time to pay the balance. He agreed, accepted the money and sent them home and gave us time. In order to raise these large amounts of money, we were compelled to sell all of our seed rice this year and as a result a large number of our farms remained unplanted this year which condition of affairs caused hungry and hardship throughout the country. We collected our hut tax for 1929 and paid the money to Commissioner Diggs at Grand Cess, but for the remaining £40.0.0 we owed for the release of the road laborers, Vice President Yancy went to Grand Cess and took £40.0.0 out of the tax money we had paid to the Commissioner and then ordered him to recollect £40.0.0 from us to put in the place of the £40.0.0 he took. We had to collect the second £40.0.0 to fill up our tax money before we were permitted by Commissioner Diggs to leave our country. This accounts for our being late to reach Monrovia at the time appointed by Your Excellency.

From Vice President Yancy's Superintendency up to the present we never receive a cent as commission on all taxes we have been paying, though we are told that the law of the country allows Paramount Chiefs commission on all taxes paid by them.

Mr. President, from all that we have related you can clearly see that we are suffering awfully, we appeal to your Excellency therefore to remedy the sad condition we are in. As to the accuracy of your complaints we are prepared to face Lieutenant Phillips and the other persons whose names have been mentioned to thrash the matter out before you.

SARLE GOFA (his cross),
Paramount Chief.

BORYONO DOCO, (his mark)
Speaker.

Witness to signatures :

GOFA SUNDAY (his cross).

TANOYENIPO (his cross).

S. K. J. N'YEPAN.

TOPO MARNOR.

Appendix XIII.

DOCUMENT FROM CHIEF YARN OF SUEHN.

His Excellency,
Charles D. B. King,
President of Liberia.
Executive Mansion,
Monrovia.

Monrovia, Liberia,

Dec. 6, 1929.

Excellency :

I beg most humbly to submit to Your Excellency a written statement of the grievances of the people of my country, which Paramount Chief Yarn sent me as his special representative to place before the Government. I do not come here as an ordinary messenger, I am one of the [sic] near the chief, and I possess personal knowledge of most of the matters now placed before you, in fact, I am one of the sufferers.

Mr. President, the condition in which we are in Maryland County is awful, when you read our complaints thru and see the large sums of money we are constantly forced to pay without just cause, you cannot but see that we are really oppressed. We have been reduced to the worst state of poverty by these heavy fines. As our conditions grow worse and worse every year, we sent messengers to report these things to you at the beginning of the year, but the fact that we took this step has caused us large sums of money and made things worse for us than before. If we are punished and fined simply because we run to Monrovia, when we are hard pressed, then what shall we do and to whom shall we go ?

We are here at your command to verify our complaint, and to appeal to you as the father of all of us and final source of justice, believing with utmost confidence that Your Excellency will give us a sympathetic and fatherly hearing. Finally we appeal to you to advise the Cape Palmas Officials to stop the constant sending of soldiers into our country in the way they have been doing it. This keeps the whole country in a state of constant terror.

We beg of you to stop the Kpalagbo people from crossing the river Doe, the boundary struck between us by Commissioner John Dunham, to our side of the river to cut our bush. We beg of Your Excellency to finish these matters once for all.

A statement of our complaint is enclosed herewith for Your Excellency's information.

Your Excellency's most obedient servants,

Witnesses to Signatures :

GOFA, SUNDAY (his cross),
BORYNO DOCO (his cross).
S.K.G. N'Yepan.

TANO FERIPO (his mark),
For Paramount Chief Yarn.
TOCH MARNOR,
Representative of Townsmen.

[Copy.]

COMPLAINT OF PARAMOUNT CHIEF YARN OF SUEHN COUNTY, MARYLAND COUNTY,
THROUGH HIS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE YENIPO.

When Vice President Yancy returned from Monrovia at the beginning of this year, he called us at the Wedabo town on the beach and told us that we must give him men to send to Fernando Po. He required us to give 60 men per town, but if any tribe did not want to go, it must pay £10 per man and the matter would be finished at that. We were told by him that this was the President's order. We positively told the Vice President that we did not want to go to Fernando Po, because many of the Wedabo men who went there died and a very few returned. He said that if any one doubted him that the order came from the President, the person could go to Monrovia and ask the President.

When we heard this, Chief Broh sent messengers to Monrovia to find out something definite from the President. When the messengers returned with the news that the President said that he did not issue order requiring people to go to Fernando Po nor impose fine upon them if they refused to go, we were all glad and we played and danced for a number of days. When the news of the return of the messengers reached Cape Palmas and that we were playing, Superintendent Brooks came to Picanini and arrested Chief Broh and carried him to Cape Palmas.

While Chief Broh was in prison in Cape Palmas, Chief Yarn sent Sunpon along with the old men who ran away and came to Monrovia to get the truth of matter from the President for the information of our people.

While the chiefs were in Monrovia, Lieutenant Phillips came to our country with soldiers and told us that he was sent by Vice President Yancy. The lieutenant and soldiers reached our town in the morning, but they entered the town in such a fury that women and children ran in all directions when they saw them. Chief Yarn asked him what he had done which caused him to bring soldiers in his town ; the Lieutenant said he did not know, but he was sent by Vice President Yancy.

Lieutenant Phillips said that before he sat down the Paramount Chief Yarn must give him £40.0.0 for his drink otherwise he would set town on fire. The Chief was frightened by this expression, so he collected the money and gave it to me and I myself put the £40.0.0 in Lieutenant Phillips' hand right in front of the Chief's house. After this the Lieutenant said : " Chief Yarn, I see the money for my drink, but I want four cows for my chop." The Chief said he could not get four cows but gave two cows ; but after the receipt of the two cows he sent his soldiers over the town to catch any cow they might see, they went out and caught one and brought it to him, making three cows in all that the Lieutenant got from our town.

After this Lieutenant Phillips said : " I see my drink and chop, but you all must bring chop for my soldiers." We gave him 6 large bags of cleaned rice, but the matter did not rest at that. He demanded 9 goats for the soldiers' soup and 1 ram for himself which we collected and gave to him immediately to save our town from being burnt. All of these things were collected and passed from the Paramount Chief thru me to Lieutenant Phillips. I am ready to face him at any time.

After all this Lieutenant Phillips arrested twelve of our big men and carried them to Cape Palmas. I must say that he did not tie nor beat any of the old men on the way from our town to Harper. The people arrived at night and upon the receipt of the information of their arrival at the waterside, Vice President Yancy went down there and when he got there whether by his order or not I cannot say, but just upon his arrival, the soldiers jumped into the people and began to flog them in his presence. This was the report brought back by the men who received the beating.

At daybreak the Vice President sent all the men to his farm, where they were locked up.

Two days after the old men were taken away as prisoners, Chief Yarn sent his special messengers, Doe Geeray and Chea Wreh Muna to ask the Vice President, what was the trouble that caused the arrest of the men. He said to the messengers : " Chief Yarn says he does not know what he has done ? Was it not he who sent to Monrovia to report me ? Go and tell him that I will not let the men go unless he sends me £100." When the messengers returned we collected the £100.0.0 and sent it by the same messengers and he released the men upon receipt of the money.

He further sent to tell us by the same men who carried the money that, if we wanted him to allow our labourers on the Government road to come to see about their farms, then we must send him £80.0.0. Otherwise he would not release them. Of this amount we paid £40.0.0 down and he released the men and gave us time to pay the balance. The first £40.0.0 was paid when we were planting rice, the second £40.0.0 we paid when we were cutting the same rice.

We hear that the Chiefs in Montserrado County and in other parts of the country, receive commissions from the Government on all taxes paid by them, but Paramount Chief Yarn never received a cent as commission on all the hut taxes we have paid from time to time.

Sometime ago Commissioner John Dunham settled a land dispute between Chief Yarn and the Kpalagbo people, in which a river called Doe was decided upon as the boundary between the two peoples. This adjustment of the question was all right (sic) and there was peace in the country because there was no dispute between us after that. The people on both sides went home and sat quiet.

But this year the Kpalagbo people informed Chief Yarn that Vice President Yancy said they could cross the river and come over on our side to cut farm, so they say they will cross next farm season, that is after Christmas this year.

We appeal to your Excellency to adjust this and the other matters mentioned herein as speedily as you can, because my country is in a very unsettled condition and we are not resting in peace as we should.

To satisfy yourself that our complaints are true, you can send a man from Monrovia to my country to see and to hear from dozens of other people who cannot come to Monrovia and to bring back to you a confirming report that our statements are true.

TANO YENIPO (his cross),
For Paramount Chief.

TOCH MARNOR,
Representative of Townsmen.

Witnesses to Signature :

GOFA SUNDAY (his cross).

BORYONO DOCO (his cross).

S. K. J. N'YEPAN.

Appendix XIV.

HEADMEN'S COMPLAINT OF NON-PAYMENT IN THE MASSAQUOI INCIDENT.

Bassa Community Heights, Monrovia, Liberia,

July 1, 1930.

*His Excellency C. D. B. King,
President of the Republic of Liberia,
Executive Mansion,
Monrovia, Liberia.*

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing this letter to lay a very grave complaint before you :

We were shipped on board the S.S. *Loke*, a Norwegian steamer, by the Atalanta Steamship Company for coastal work and were promised, on the return of the steamer to be paid our dues forty-eight hours thereafter. We returned to Monrovia over three months ago and up to the present we have not been paid.

The history of the whole situation is this : These Norwegian Steamers are understood to be chartered by Messrs E. & H. Nissen of Norway and their representatives here are responsible to supply boys and to see that they are paid promptly upon the return of the steamer. It happened that these steamers have different owners. On the particular outward trip of the S.S. *Loke* she was consigned to Mr. Alhaj Massaquoi instead of Mr. Jaiah Massaquoi, who is now representing the Atalanta Steamship Company. The cable however got into the hands of Mr. Jaiah Massaquoi, his brother Alhaj Massaquoi being at Cape Palmas then, and we were selected to work the steamer down to Libreville and back. On the return of the steamer Mr. Alhaj Massaquoi had arrived in Monrovia and boarded the steamer. It is well known that the money for our wages had been cabled to him and was then laying in the Bank.

Now when it comes to our being paid, Alhaj Massaquoi raised a contention that the boys had been advanced by Dr. Lee and that his brother Jaiah had given him written instructions to return the advance to Dr. Lee. To save all dispute, the money so advanced was paid over to the Bureau of by Jaiah Massaquoi, as Alhaj Massaquoi alleged he had paid Dr. Lee the sum involved. It now remained for Alhaj Massaquoi, to pay the balance of the money over to the Bureau for our wages to be paid us. Up to the present this has not been done.

Now we have used all the means at our command to see that Alhaj Massaquoi pay this money over to the Bureau, but to no avail. We have written the Attorney General, through the Shore Headman ; we have complained to the Secretary of Interior, but there seems to be no relief.

Now the reply of the Attorney General is that we should seek relief through civil process in the Courts. Our contention is this : Since the Government has established a Bureau for the protection of labourers in the Republic of Liberia, we feel that the Bureau should use the legal Department of the Republic to relieve us. Again it is understood that Alhaj Massaquoi has declared that, if we go to Court with him, he will use such influence as will drag the case along for an indefinite period.

In the circumstances, therefore, we approach you to see what aid you can give us in the matter. We are attempted to feel now that the Bureau of Labour is no protection to us, and also that we are not properly protected in this matter by the Government. We as loyal citizens do not wish to take the law into our own hands, which would be unpatriotic, but we feel that if we support our Government they in like manner should afford us the protection desirable.

Trusting that you will aid us in some way as early as possible, We are, Your obedient servants,

David BROWN, Alias *Zodeh gar* (his cross),
Headman.

Whea BESTMAN (his cross),
2nd Headman.

A letter like this is also to be written to :

Hon. D. E. Howard,
“ F. E. R. Johnson,
“ Arthur Barclay,
“ E. J. Barclay.

List of (34) Thirty-four Crew Shipped by S.S. " Luka " As Deckhands.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. David Brown — Headman | 18. Menyorgar |
| 2. Whea Bestman — 2nd Headman | 19. Dieh |
| 3. Two Cents | 20. Boaryou |
| 4. Tinway | 21. Toe |
| 5. Beer Case | 22. Weakpee |
| 6. Frank | 23. Doe |
| 7. Nyarmee | 24. Kaiser |
| 8. Barwen Freeman | 25. Johnny Faulkner |
| 9. Barhn | 26. Bai-Gebsey (Mormor) |
| 10. Jim | 27. Boima |
| 11. Tarngbor | 28. Boima-Kpenah |
| 12. Gborwiaye | 29. Gblor |
| 13. Wehnyou | 30. Wruah |
| 14. Karwoh | 31. Fronwoe |
| 15. Zoryouway | 32. John Davis |
| 16. Willie | 33. Johnny |
| 17. Karngar | 34. Joegar |

Total 34 (Thirty-four) boys.

This is to certify that I have today medically examined the above named 34 (thirty-four) deckhands, and that I find no signs of infectious disease whatsoever. They are all vaccinated.

Monrovia, Liberia, February 5, 1930.

Appendix XV.

COMPLAINT OF THE NEMIAH PEOPLE REGARDING THE FISHTOWN-GARROWAY INCIDENTS.

Nemiah, May 16th, 1930.

Hon. Committee,

We your humble servants King and Chiefs of Nemiah or Half Garroway come to lay a complaint before you against Vice President Allen N. Yancy during the time he was superintendent for the Maryland County. The subject is : He took our land from us and give it to the people of Fishtown 1909 February. 25 these people call Fishtown people went to one Superintendent call Supt. Thornes and asked him to called us, in order that we might give them a portion of forest land. This we agreed to. So Superintendent Thornes sent out a committee from various tribes. Three men from Fishtown people, namely, Heayude Dowe, Gbenohne, and H. Too Wesley. Klebo people sent out 6 men, namely, Dano Dowe, Dowedo Hodo, Nmaanyo, Sobodenyema, Nwanesie, Nemletia. Ourself we sent three men, Gbododiebe, Negbe Yue, and Gyidetoo. And Supt. Thornes himself sent one surveyor name Mr. Hyes. Now when this committee went, we took a portion of forest land and gave it to the Fishtown people for which they said were sufficient. Since from that they never come to us to beg us for any land. Now 1921 when Superintendent Allen N. Yancy got in that office as Supt. he called us that Fishtown people made a complaint against us that we crossed to the boundary and cut their part of land. Then we answered him not so. And we explained to him as new Governor how we gave them a portion of land during the time of Supt. Thornes administration. But he didn't agreed to us and say I will make another new boundary. This new boundary he say he going to make is not a boundary. But the hold land, which we have, he took from us and gave to the people both our low land and our high bush. Since from 1921. As you white people know we Kroo people live upon the farms we making. Our food is rice and casava. Since from that we never cut farms. We buy before we eat. We dont have enough to use, so hungry scattered, so many of us. So now we went to him to change is discition. So he told us all right go and bring me £40.0. because the Fishtown people pay me money. And we pay that money, but he did not give it to us. When that year finished then he again called our King and say that he had our lands receipt only he must bring to him £40.0.0 to sign it, and we payed that money again, but he did not change. Again 1928 he called our King, and say I am tired of your land matter bring me £40.0.0 I am now going to Monrovia ; when I come back, I will give it to you. When he returned he told us that we made one man Inspector Mr. Mars when he come from Monrovia he will return your land back. When that man arrived at Cape Palmas, then we went to him. But the man did not give us our land. Then last year he say it will be good for you to survey the land. So he ask us to pay £71.0.0 to the Surveyor and we payed that amount. So he sent to us to send down 36 carriers and asked us to send along with the carriers £10.0.0. But when the carriers returned they report to us

that Yancy say he is not able to come. This was this year January 27, 1930. The next following week we and Fishtown people have a fight. For this fighting case Government called us and we explained to them the matter.

But the Government put our King jail and five other chiefs.

And Government people charge us to pay £156.4.6 before our people will free from the jail. Well we dont know how to pay that money. All this is done by Hon. A. N. Yancy who sold our land and give it to the Fishtown people.

So we come to lay our bad conditions before you to consider and investigation by you. Because a tree without root cannot live.

So we cannot live without food.

So we ask you as a Committee from abroad to take us out from this danger.

We have the honor to be, Sirs, your obedient Servants,

King and Chiefs, Nemiah.

Appendix XVI.

FEAR OF THE AFTER.

"Paramount Chief says he thank you and he says that he is more than glad to see you, but thing for true as you sitting down here, there is a steamer waiting to carry you home. He will express himself but power around him will consume him tomorrow for which he is afraid."

"It is good for others to tell grievance. You who come here to find our trouble we are glad you are here. We are sorry that the man is not here himself to see it. We will explain all, but today or tomorrow you are off. Then we afraid the lion will jump upon us. Where shall we fly, our women and children and us? Where go? To what land?"

"You will be far away. . . . They will blame us and bring war. No help for us."

"The Paramount Chief says there is something that troubles his soul. When you go away they will press him down for testifying."

"I have stated what I know. I have got nothing more to say. I ask your behalf when you go away, for Yancy and his officials will punish us. We have got nothing. Yancy says he is going to be President after C. D. B. King."

"Mr. Yancy doing all these things to us hurt us, but one thing he always tell us make us sorry: 'When I tell you something you try to cheat, refuse. Have you wings to fly in the air so I can't catch you, or is there anybody above me who can say, no?' This thing make us very sorry."

"I thank you very much. I born in this country in the land of Picanini Cess. As the League of Nations come here now, we going to talk and explain whatever is in our hearts, but they are going to kill we again when you leave."

"They say now when you go Liberian people will send army here and mistreat us. Wha'll we do?"

"Paramount Chief says he thank you and he says that he is more than glad to see you, but thing for true as you sitting down here, there is a steamer waiting to carry you home. He will express himself but power around him will consume him tomorrow for which he is afraid."

"You say you have come and the grievances of the natives you want to know. Yes. I can express myself what has been happening but I am afraid. Paramount Chief says he could express himself but you will be going tomorrow and he will be between three fires. Having expressed himself as being afraid and having related all circumstances he is over-joyed. He will talk. People by whom he is surrounded, their treatment of the authority of the Government of Liberia he will now tell."

"We thank God there seem to us to be some hope. You are now the one who is confidence of soul and body to rescue them from slavery. Give us protection, else when you come back you will find the country vacant."

"The Barrobo people say you are leaving them in the fire. They are afraid. There is the Barracks where you have been yesterday, there is the District Commissioner and the Superintendent of the County. These three you are leaving them between. You must give them some words of comfort. They are afraid that their houses will be burned. We ought to be afraid, knowing the activity of the people."

"Although the Paramount Chief spoke truth, they may say: 'Now your white people have gone, what are you going to do?'"

"We hear all you say, but we are more afraid than other tribes because we are in the section where the barracks are located."

"This is part of our grievances, and there are more, but we are afraid to tell it, for we will be tied after the Commissioners leave."

"We have come to tell you all, because when you shall have left these shores, and we are sent on the road again, the trouble we will see will be worse than what we have already seen."

" Captain Grant said all the people who carried reports to the Commission must be caught and put in jail. It is already time for us to pay hut tax, but there is no chance for us to come down and sell our rice to get our tax money. I heard this from Captain Grant himself and he has some of our people now in prison."

" If I were to say all what has been done there would not be space for you to sit down. We have sworn but we are afraid that if something is not done to fix the country what these people will do to us we do not know."

Monrovia, Liberia, August 17, 1930.

The International Commission of Inquiry, Monrovia.

Sirs :

With reference to my summons of April the 24th wishing me to appear before you on the 25th of the same month I beg to call your attention to the jeopardy which it has brought upon me by the under scribe lines :

(1) Mr. S. V. Parker, the district commissioner of my section has told the President of Liberia that I was not call, but I voluntarily came before you without your knowledge to tell you of the existence of force labor in Liberia which they say it is not, and in particular to tell you of the unlawful fine that was imposed on me by the President.

(2) That I am not accepting any orders passed by the Government, but only listen to your dictation. However, he says that I shall be dealt with as soon as you leave Liberia.

Now, under these false reports of Mr. Parker, I am sent for, compelling me to resign from office. Although the office may be taken from me, but I am appealing to you at this moment, most respectfully requesting you to call Mr. Parker, so that you, he and I may meet face to face and let him report the very words.

I hope this letter will meet your kind consideration and immediate attendance.

Believe me to be sir, *yours truly*, (Signed) NJOLA CARMO

*Paramount Chief of Dey-Sen,
Jeh Section Gola, Liberia.*

Note. — Chief Njola was called by the Commission. Information was received by the Commission on September 6, 1930, that his commission as Paramount Chief was taken from him by the President, and that he has been deported following the protest of District Commissioner Parker.

Greenville, Sinoe County,

9th day of July A.D. 1930.

To the Chieftains of Yerpo. Little Kru, Settra Kur,

Krobah, Nuah Point, Nana Kru and allies, King William Town and allies, Nimroh, Carr, Tatay, Soboe, Wesepo, Du, Butrah Boroh and allies Nifu, Getu, Sasstown and allies.

Sirs :

As a consequence to the purported rebellion muttered by you to our knowledge against the Government you are hereby commanded immediately to appear and bring with you three of your important men before Messrs. Z. B. Russ and W. R. Draper, Justices of the Peace for Sinoe County not later than Monday the 14th day of July A.D. 1930 at the precise hour of eight o'clock in the morning to exonerate yourselves before the citizens of Sinoe County as to your disloyalty disobedience, and threats of war to the Government. Fail not at your peril.

(Signed) THOS. E. CESS PELHANE,
*Secretary, Citizen's Meeting,
Sinoe County.*

Attest : (Signed) Z. B. RUSS,

(Signed) WILLIAM R. DRAPER,

Justices of the Peace for Sinoe County.

SIGNED.

Monrovia, Liberia, September 8th, 1930.

(Signed) Cuthbert CHRISTY, *Chairman*,
League of Nations.

Charles Spurgeon JOHNSON,
America.

Arthur BARCLAY,
LIBERIA.

Permanent Mandates Commission (VI)

Minutes of the First Session, held at Geneva, October 4th to 8th, 1921. (C.416.M.296. 1921.VI)	5/-	\$1.—
Minutes of the Second Session, held at Geneva, August 1st to 11th, 1922. (A.36.1922.VI)	5/-	\$1.—
Minutes of the Third Session, held at Geneva from July 20th to August 10th, 1923. (A.19. 1923.VI)	7/6	\$2.—
Annexes to the Minutes of the Third Session. (A.19. Annexes. 1923.VI)	5/-	\$1.20
Minutes of the Fourth Session, held at Geneva from June 24th to July 8th, 1924 (and Annexes). (A.13.1924.VI)	5/9	\$1.40
Minutes of the Fifth Session (Extraordinary), held at Geneva from October 23rd to November 6th, 1924. (C.617.M.216.VI)	6/6	\$1.60
Minutes of the Sixth Session, held at Geneva from June 26th to July 10th, 1925. (C.386. M.132.1925.VI)	6/6	\$1.60
Minutes of the Seventh Session, held at Geneva from October 19th to 30th. (3.648.M.237. 1925.VI)	7/-	\$1.80
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Minutes of the Eleventh Session, held at Geneva from June 20th to July 6th, 1927 (including the Report of the Commission to the Council). (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1927.VI)	not on sale.	
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