

PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT
OF
Commercial and Natural Resources
IN THE
REGION OF THE VALLEY OF THE NIGER



TERRITORY EXTENDING SOUTH TO NORTH FROM THE
Southern Seacoast of West Africa to the Southern Border of the Sahara
AND WEST TO EAST FROM THE
French Colony Senegambia to the Eastern Course of the Niger

Illustrated by Maps and Photographs



FRICA. Commander Cameron, the distinguished African explorer, says, in "Great Thoughts": "Africa has a greater future than America, Australia or India. It is the richest of all, but of course, everything depends on management. Take South America, for instance.

It is very like Australia. The Europeans could bring up their children well there. The natives are very teachable. Even the hitherto wild tribes are already drilled into good police, engineers, riveters, etc. Take my word for it, *Africa is the hope of the future, and will be the salvation of an overcrowded world!*"

Although commercial relations between the more enterprising countries of Europe, and, in a limited measure, with the United States, have for many years existed with Africa, yet it is only within the last decade that the attention of the entire commercial world has been thoroughly aroused and directed to that vast continent,

and that we have realized it is the only country offering unlimited and virgin fields for capital and enterprise. With Stanley's explorations and the information given by him and other explorers to the civilized world, an impetus was lent to African colonization and commerce, the importance of which was recognized at once, and resulted in the division of enormous tracts of land amongst the leading European powers. Steady colonization and development of the territory acquired, was soon followed by introduction of laws beneficial to the natives.

Valley of the Niger. Among the most attractive and fertile regions on the African continent (see map of Africa), the Valley of the Niger, a territory of about 800,000 English square miles, probably ranks first: the country extending from the South coast of West Africa to the southern border of the Sahara desert, and from the French colony Senegambia to the eastern course of the Niger. Within this vast and fertile region enormous quantities of the most valuable commercial products lie untouched.

Expeditions. In the Spring of 1887 I undertook my first expedition into the Valley of the Niger, in the interests of science and political economy, and at my own expense. My trip was from the German Togo territory on the Slave Coast, and its exceedingly satisfactory results were substantiated and extended in the following years, by the expeditions of Major von François, of Stabsarzt Dr. Wolf (Station Bismarckburg), of Hauptmann Kling and Lieutenant Herold (Station Misahoehe, near Jo), who were sent out by the German government on geographical missions and to establish stations. Just as Liberia has been found to possess very rich lands in the interior (though unfortunately closed by legislation which excludes commerce with the interior), so, based on these recent discoveries, it may positively be stated that the entire Valley of the Niger is a most wealthy and productive region, valuable both from a commercial and agricultural view.

Products. The new animal species, and therapeutically valuable plants, hitherto unknown, which lately have been discovered, and the immense treasures of india-rubber, ebony and ivory, which can be so easily obtained in this region, must undoubtedly interest all commercial circles both in Europe and the United States, since we are entirely dependent for such supplies on tropical countries. Von François confirms my own observations in his official report of 1888, saying: "Nowhere in Africa did I find so many caoutchouc plants abounding as in Adeli, Kebu and Akposso (German territory), but at present all this wealth of india-rubber is practically left untouched, and awaits development."

a. Animals. Among the domestic and wild animals existing in large numbers in the territory already explored may be mentioned: Horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry and pigeons—elephants, lions, leopards, the buffalo, antelope and wild boar, monkeys, hippopotami, alligators and ostriches.

b. Plants. Of trees and plants the most important and valuable are: Oil, coconut, date, wine, and fan-palms, breadfruit, sheabutter, dyewoods, acacia, ebony, papaw, orange, lemon, caoutchouc (india-rubber), cotton, castor-bean, banana, cinchona, pineapple, sugar cane, tobacco, arrow-root, ginger, tapioca, yams, kola and peanuts, rice, maize, millet and tomatoes.

c. Metals. Of metals the two most important are: Iron and gold.

Climate. The conditions of temperature characterize the coast plain as a moist-torrid country. A strip of land of ten to fifteen kilometres, or six to nine English miles up the country, forms the fever zone, in which the tropical—malarial, not yellow—fever is prevalent during the rainy season. That the climate at the Togo Coast is healthier than at any other place on the Gulf of Guinea is owing to the fresh sea breeze, to the absence of mangrove thickets, and to the good tillage of the interior. In the higher lands and mountains the climate is very favorable and salubrious, and the variations of temperature are generally less than on the coast. In fact, the climate would be suitable for settlements and work, for handicraft as well as husbandry, by white men.

Fertility. The Niger territory is for the greater part flat on the coast, from which the hill ranges extend regularly in a northeastern direction, developing into the high plateaus of the West Soudan. Many partly navigable rivers traverse the inland. On the hill ranges, the mountain streams, fed during the frequent rainy periods (which obliterate the sharp transition of the seasons, and are wanting in other tropical regions), produce rare fertility. The soil shows everywhere a heavy "humus-layer," and is suitable for the cultivation of all kinds of tropical products, as it has been tested, especially in Togo, by different trial plantations. The natives sow and reap twice a year without manuring the soil at all.

Population. This region is thickly populated. With the exception of a few tribes on the highlands, the natives are peaceful, intelligent and industrious. Their religion (fetish worship) is looked upon as Pagan, although my observations lead me to class it as monotheistic; it is decidedly not fanatical like the Mohammedan.

SALAGA. Trade is principally concentrated in the markets of Timbuctoo and Salaga (see map of West Soudan). Undoubtedly the more important of the two places is Salaga, in the neutral zone established by the agreement of 1888 between Germany and England. The geography of the country, and a mild, intelligent sovereign, desirous of promoting commercial relations, make this city the trade-capital of the whole Niger territory. Salaga is situated opposite the middle of the great bend of the Niger, and is almost equidistant from all chief cities on that stream, as Segou, Bandjagara, Timbuctoo, Say and Kirotaschi, and also favorably located in regard to all important points of the German Togo Colony and the English Gold Coast. Three natural connections by extended water courses are making Salaga the key for the Wolta territory and the mountain defiles. Out of the ample Valley of the Niger, from the West Soudan plateau, four great caravan roads meet at Salaga, and four other roads radiate from here to the seacoast, namely:

- A. FROM WEST, NORTH, EAST TO SALAGA.
1. Tengrera-Pong-Bontuku.
 2. Ban Djagara-Arreo-Wagu Dugu.
 3. Kirotaschi-Sansanne Mangu-Jendi.
 4. Gomba-Bisuggu-Bembelleke.

B. SOUTHWARD FROM SALAGA.

5. Station Bismarckburg-Avehó-Anehó.
6. Kratji-Kpandu-Lome.
7. The Wolta River, navigable from Salaga for canoes, from Kratji for small steamers, from Adafu to the coast for seagoing vessels.
8. Kintempo-Ateobu-Kumassi-Cape Coast Castle.

For centuries these roads have served as a medium for a lively traffic to and from the table land, and lately also to the Togo territory. Extremely interesting is Salaga from the caravan intercourse and the brisk dealings in the market. Here is the best place for the anthropologist, ethnographer and philologist who wish to study the nations of the Niger. For, not only all productions, but also all the tribes from the Valley of the Niger come together here. Great caravans, often to the number of 1,000 to 2,000 men, arrive and leave daily with merchandise,

horses and cattle, with slaves, asses and sheep, bartering them for kola-nuts, guns, gunpowder, gin, etc. Salaga is amply provided in every way for the comfort and intercourse of foreigners, who compose at least one-third of the population. No tolls are levied here, while in Jendi and in other northern places the caravans have to pay transit duty. The Sultanate of Salaga holds a political position, in contrast to the coast and hill ranges, where, with the exception of Agotime, larger territories are not united under one head, and where each village has its own chief who exercises judicial and political power, and whom the fetish priest assists as counsellor.

Commerce. The trade in this region, being extended to Salaga from the distant Sultanates in the North and East, Sokoto, Timbuctoo, Saccatoo, Kano, Bornoo, Bagirmi, Waday, etc., consists mostly of kola-nuts, brass, copper, cotton etc. stuffs, and rum in exchange for ivory, ostrich feathers, horses, donkeys, cattle, slaves, stuff, shea-butter and gold, and is carried on over good roads. Although the products of agriculture at present exported are very limited, they still present an important feature in the great markets of the interior, at the Adaklu Mountain, in Bolu, Towe, Kpandu and Kratji. The primitive forests of the hill ranges now contain rich and seemingly inexhaustible amounts of palm kernels, india-rubber,



KING OF AGUEWÉ WITH HIS MINISTERS.



WEAVER AT WORK.

shea-butter and piassava. Here every year, millions of dollars are lost, because a medium of intercourse is lacking to transport these treasures to the coast, which are now only rotting in the interior. For example, the export of palm oil and kernels from Togo alone can be at least four times greater than it has been (see "Export"), while the ivory, ostrich feathers, cattle, etc., as now exported, are not worth mentioning, notwithstanding the great quantities offered for sale in Salaga.

North of the 7th degree of latitude, the commercial advantages (especially in regard to the rich Haussa States recently opened up by Hauptmann Kling's last expedition) are completely lost for want of a railroad to the coast. Only the territory south of this degree can be considered to-day as available for trade. Along the whole West Coast, German, English, French, Dutch and Portuguese firms are represented; but they confine their efforts chiefly to the coast barter, being satisfied with a net profit of an average of 62 per cent. per annum by twice turning over their capital, and as yet they have made no effort to open up a trade in the hitherto unknown interior.

Import and Export. The barter on the very small German Togo Coast—extending only 53 kilometers = 7 German or 33 English miles—shows, according to the official statistics of the German Foreign Office, the following results in regard to the principal articles of trade :

A. IMPORT.*

No.	OBJECTS.	April 1, 1890—March 31, 1891.		April 1, 1891—March 31, 1892.		April 1, 1892—Sept. 30, 1892.	
		Marks or Shillings.	Dollars.	Marks or Shillings.	Dollars.	Marks or Shillings.	Dollars.
1	Cotton, woolen, silk, velvet goods	310,270	74,465	688,586	165,261	662,386	158,973
2	Linen goods and cordage	19,193	4,606	23,304	5,593	135,582	32,540
3	Paper and leather goods	2,254	541	3,039	730	11,296	2,711
4	Wood and woodenware	25,340	6,082	81,214	19,491	107,904	25,897
5	China, glass, earthenware	18,378	4,411	40,285	9,668	55,847	13,403
6	Yankee notions, corals, jewelry	3,590	862	4,087	981	10,944	2,627
7	Iron and ironware	32,555	7,813	49,501	11,880	65,569	15,737
8	Other metal ware	959	230	8,749	2,100	8,644	2,075
9	Groceries, provisions, agricultural products	41,903	10,057	74,325	17,838	88,500	21,240
10	Salt	42,236	10,137	63,945	15,347	110,802	26,593
11	Tobacco and manufactures of	107,921	25,901	134,543	32,283	137,543	33,010
12	Spirits and mineral waters	253,808	60,914	533,162	127,959	561,393	134,734
13	Drugs, perfumery, soaps, candles, matches	18,716	4,492	27,540	6,610	29,974	7,194
14	Fats, oils, etc	7,917	1,900	13,295	3,191	7,961	1,911
15	Lime and cement	3,152	756	4,550	1,092	7,678	1,843
16	Ammunition	200,353	48,085	119,463	28,671	111,336	26,719
17	Firearms	32,228	7,735	51,170	12,281	70,500	16,920
18	Instruments, machines, watches	1,051	252	5,769	1,385	4,257	1,032
19	Umbrellas, parasols, hats, shoes	5,827	1,398	17,683	4,244	(?)	(?)
20	Literary and objects of art	496	119	946	227	1,884	452
Total value		1,128,147	270,756	1,945,127	466,832	2,190,000	525,611

B. EXPORT.*

1	Palm kernels	860,533	206,528	1,531,090	367,462	1,512,781	363,067
2	Palm oil	272,476	65,394	1,183,080	283,940	750,762	180,183
3	India rubber	312,900	75,096	107,316	25,756	144,497	34,680
Total value		1,445,909	347,018	2,821,486	677,158	2,408,040	577,930

C. TOTAL VALUE OF A (1-20) AND B (1-3). ‡

A	Import (No. 1-20)	1,128,147	270,756	1,945,127	466,832	2,190,000	525,611
B	Export (No. 1-3)	1,445,909	347,018	2,821,486	677,158	2,408,040	577,930
Sum total		2,574,056	617,774	4,766,613	1,143,990	4,598,040	1,103,541

* Beside the articles of merchandise mentioned in No. 1 to 20, I would add : Brush, basket, straw, horn and india-rubber goods, lamps and lanterns, live animals, cowries and cash money.

† Other export articles are : Ivory, kopra, piassava, raffia bast, pineapple fibres, tamarind, red wood, ebony, shea-butter, Indian corn, pea, pulghere, kola and coconuts, tobacco, sepia, kopal, hides, ostrich feathers.

‡ In the tables A, B, C, the number of units (pieces, pounds, quarts, etc.) is omitted as hardly important for this prospectus. One Mark is always counted as equal to 24 cents.

In the inland territory, of course, the products of the country are cheaper, and the European wares dearer than at the coast; the selling prices of the latter are as follows:

	In Salaga.		At the Coast.			In Salaga.		At the Coast.	
	Marks.	Dollars.	Marks.	Dollars.		Marks.	Dollars.	Marks.	Dollars.
1 skein of red yarn	1.00	= 0.24	0.25	= 0.06	1 kilogram (2½ lbs.) coarse gunpowder.	4.60	= 1.10	1.50	= 0.36
30 metres (33 yards) of white cotton.	16.00	= 3.84	7.50	= 1.80	1 flint musket.	16.00	= 3.84	10.00	= 2.40
12 metres (13 yards) of flowered calico	6.00	= 1.44	3.00	= 0.72	1 small table knife.	0.50	= 0.12	0.25	= 0.06
1 box of matches	0.10	= 0.02	0.04	= 0.01	1 fez.	5.00	= 1.20	1.50	= 0.36
1 head of tobacco.	1.00	= 0.24	0.25	= 0.06	100 brass nails.	16.00	= 3.84	4.00	= 0.96
1 bottle of gin	1.00	= 0.24	0.25	= 0.06	1,000 cowry shells (tender).	1.00	= 0.24	0.40	= 0.10
51 kilograms (112 lbs.) salt	30.00	= 7.20	10.00	= 2.40					

Duties. The German Government in Togo levies very small duties upon only six import articles: Gin, rum, tobacco, gunpowder, firearms and salt. By these small duties the Colony reimburses its own expenses and acquires even some surplus, while for the German East and Southwest African colonies the Imperial Government has to spend several millions yearly.

Connections with Europe. The transportation of all merchandise and products from and to Europe is carried on at present, and will be in the future, by regular lines of German and English steamers for the price of about Marks 30, or \$7.20 per ton. The "Woermann Line" sends two steamships monthly from Hamburg, and the "United Liverpool Steamship Company" a steamer weekly from Liverpool, and monthly one from Hamburg to Togo. Beside these, Italian and French sailing vessels are running.

SCHEME. My intention is to organize a company for the purpose of developing the resources of the region referred to by trade, agriculture, breeding of cattle, mining, etc., starting from Lome or Porto Seguro at the German Togo coast (see map of Togo), and extending to Salaga, the commercial centre of the whole Valley of the Niger. This enterprise would start under most favorable auspices, and must lead to ultimate success. It would be based upon experience gained on my expedition into the interior of this territory, and of my personal knowledge of its resources. The considerable tracts of land which I own in different parts of this country would also be of great value. Furthermore, most important concessions are assured to me by the German Government, concessions which would practically give the Company the monopoly of trade over a territory of about 800,000 square miles. The Company would also enjoy the full protection and support of the Imperial Government.



KING MENSAH OF PORTO SEGURO.

Trade. For the development of trade, which consists exclusively of barter, I would suggest the founding of a main trading post (or factory, so called on the African coast) in Lome or in Porto Seguro, where I have bought lands free of all individual claims directly from King Mensah, belonging hitherto to the tribe and salable by the King alone. Other main "factories" could be established at Kpandu, Kratji and Salaga, all under the management of expert white agents. In the intermediate villages branch "factories" should be built and left in charge of native clerks. I already have several qualified persons at my disposal for this purpose. Heretofore the chief articles of exportation have been palm oil and palm kernels, and the principal thing now is to immediately develop the important trade of india-rubber, cotton, ebony, ivory and gold. It will also be found that the traffic in the interior must eventually become of more importance than that of the coast, and will lead to higher profits than even 62 per cent. when means of communication and transportation have been effected.

Agriculture. Under the circumstances the connection of trade and agriculture is advisable. Therefore, in the beginning of the enterprise, plantations of coffee, cocoa, tobacco and of other tropical products should be established in the fertile hill ranges, where I possess land rights covering 36 square miles. This territory consists mostly of woody plateaus, slopes and valleys, a heavy "humus-layer" overspreading and enriching the whole surface. In connection with this excellent soil the frequent rains, the daily dews and numerous small rivers produce an admirable freshness of all vegetation, and a fertility superior to that of the lower level. Hauptmann Kling says in the report of his last expedition from Bismarckburg to Salaga and Napárrí: "In regard to the commercial future of Togo a prosperous result can be confidently predicted, if there is a prudent management and strong financial basis. The soil, climate, the rich lands in the interior, coupled with the fact that cheap labor is easily procured, must insure success." The best market for the agricultural products would be in Europe. As Prince Bismarck emphasized in his speech of January 26th, 1889, in the Reichstag:

"Germany alone pays for tropical products yearly about 500 millions to Holland, England, etc., 200 millions for cotton, 192 millions for coffee, 64 millions for tobacco, 56 millions for cocoa, spices, vanilla." This sum for foreign products was increased in 1893 to 700 millions.

Breeding of Cattle, Etc. The demand is greater than the supply for cattle and sheep, which can be easily bred in the savannas, as the numerous buffalo herds show that this country is suitable for neat cattle. In Salaga cattle cost: Marks 30 to 40 or \$7.20 to \$9.60; sheep, marks 4 to 6 or 96 cents to \$1.44; tanned bullock's hides, marks 6 to 8 or \$1.44 to \$1.92. The same proportionate prices rate for horses and mules, marks 40 to 60 or \$9.60 to \$14.40; for donkeys, marks 20 to 30 or \$4.80 to \$7.20.

Mining. In different places of the Niger territory are found iron and auriferous sand. The Agutó mountains, between Todji and Sió rivers, northeastern Klonu, are known to contain veins of gold. Therefore from the beginning of the enterprise borings ought to be made at these places, as well as generally in the hill ranges, and mines established as soon as the findings justify doing so.

Railroad. In order to carry out such plans as are necessary to bring this region into close and quick trading relations with Europe and America, it is important to construct a line of railway from the seashore to Salaga, a distance of 375 kilometres=50 German or 235 English miles. The girdle of lagoons is interrupted behind Lome, where the productive interior immediately joins the coast, and here the first station would be erected, from whence the railroad would prospectively connect the following places: Lome, Kewe, Towe, Batscha, Assang, Klonu, Towi, Agome Palime, Jo, Kpandu, Akroso, Apasu, Kratji (next and South of Salaga the most important market and crossing point of caravan roads), Bajamisso, Pembí (residence of the friendly, intelligent Sultan of Salaga), and Salaga. Following the caravan road, which indicates the route, the work of building is made easy. Continuing from Kpandu to Salaga, the railway would run close along the course of the navigable Wolta river. Along the lower part of the route I have also secured land rights, and any further necessary grounds can be acquired for a reasonable price.

Ground. Special difficulties in construction will not be found. The coast level rises gradually to the foot of the mountains in long, flat terraces, the direction of which being fixed by the coast rivers Sió, Haho, and Mono, running from Northwest to Southeast. The subsoil has a very even quality. Under the all covering humus-layer, often a metre (3¼ feet) deep at the lower places, is a deposit of reddish clay, supported by a substratum of conglomerate. At a distance of 105 kilometres=14 German or 66 English miles—from Lome, at Klonu, the hill

ranges begin, where no great difficulties will hinder the construction of the railroad, and involve no large additional expenditure. The only difficult height to overcome would be at Jo. Altogether there are 26 brooks 6 to 15 feet broad, and 4 rivers 60 to 165 feet broad, to be bridged over.

Laborers. There is no want of strong, able laborers. Occasionally at my negotiations, the native kings expressed in the "palavers" the special wish that their subjects and their slaves might be employed as working men—a wish which would be all the more in the interest of the above mentioned enterprise, since the natives continue their field labor even in the fiercest heat of the sun. They can be engaged for 16 to 20 Marks or \$3.84 to \$4.80 monthly, payable in merchandise, which would leave a still larger profit. As overseers I would recommend former non-commissioned officers of the German army, on account of their firm discipline.

Monopoly. The right of monopoly for the proposed railroad I secured from the Imperial Government in Berlin, which also guarantees complete protection and assistance in this work at all times, including active help in acquiring all the necessary lands.

Capital. The capital requisite for the whole enterprise I estimate at \$2,500,000. The cost of the railroad (narrow gauge) from Lome to Salaga would in my judgment not exceed \$1,500,000, built and fully equipped for transportation purposes. With a further reasonable outlay it would be easy to establish a system of trading and plantation facilities which would result in a commerce yielding enormous annual returns on the capital invested. Supposing the sum of \$500,000 of the whole capital stock of \$2,500,000 should be set aside as an immediate investment for trade purposes, the annual returns then would amount to 62 per cent. for the working capital, or to 12½ per cent. for the whole capital stock. This percentage would naturally increase on the completion of the railroad and with the annual productions of the plantations (tobacco yielding quick returns, while coffee and cocoa require about four years). All the above mentioned rights and property I am willing to transfer to the proposed company for such consideration as may be agreed upon.

Personal Activity. I would consent to organize and to take charge of the whole enterprise in Africa for the period of inauguration. I have studied the circumstances referred to thoroughly on the ground and, of course, I am very much interested in the realization of the plan herein outlined generally, as well as in the prosperity of trade and in colonization. Convinced of the great value of the Valley of the Niger, I took much time and trouble to acquire the above mentioned valuable lands and concessions. Enjoying the personal favor and assistance of the highest officials of the German Government, I anticipate securing the interest of the English Government also. The influence which I possess with the tribes of the Ewe people will prove a good basis for the intended operations, and may be judged, in its importance as a factor to ultimate success, by the single circumstance that their chiefs tendered me the position of supreme chief of the contemplated union of all the tribes. Lastly, I know, the advent of such an enterprise, as it is planned, will be hailed with enthusiasm by all the natives, who expect to learn new, and for them, profitable things by its realization.



MUSIC BAND.

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LIEUTENANT RICHARD STRENSCH.

