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Foreign-Office, January 17, 1837.

A DISPATCH, dated the 30th of December 1836, has been received by Viscount Palmerston, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, from Lord Howard de Walden, His Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Lisbon, containing a report from the Ministers of Her Most Faithful Majesty; and of Her Majesty's Decree for the suppression of the Slave Trade, of which the following are translations :

(Translation.)

Report of the Secretaries of State.

MADAME,

THE civilization of Africa has been, during these latter times, the favourite idea of philanthropists and an object of assiduous attention to the principal Governments, who, both in the old and the new world, lead the advancement and promote the amelioration of the human race, while Portugal, who had laboured for centuries in this great work, now, instead of promoting it, throws obstacles in its way.

The first title which our great Kings, your Majesty's ancestors, added to that of King of Portugal, was that of Lords of Guinea and of the countries beyond the seas, in Africa; borne by the hands of our navigators, directed by the daring science of our astronomers, the Portuguese flag waved successively over the seas of Centa, the fertile regions bathed by the Senegal and Gambia, and the eastern coast of Africa, where we founded factories, built fortresses, and conquered nations.

In our deeds of arms, in Africa, modern historians have calumniously represented us as trafficking, sword in hand, with the lives and possessions of the nations we discovered, but there is not one document extant which does not prove that the principal and almost only aim of the Portuguese Government was

their civilization by means of the Gospel: trade was but a secondary object, although likewise a means of civilization, and dominion was a necessary consequence and not an object.

The errors of religious doctrine and the defects of political measures were imputable to the age, not to the men.

India, in the first instance, and the Brazils next, made us abandon Africa, the most natural field for our labours; but the colonization of the Brazils and the exploration of its mines, and, soon afterwards, the interest which all other nations took in America, were the greatest enemies to the civilization of Africa, which we alone had begun at so great a sacrifice of our lives and property.

The infamous slave traffic is certainly an indelible stain upon the history of modern nations, but we were neither the only, the principal, nor the most guilty. Those of our accomplices, who afterwards reproached us so severely, were deeper in guilt than ourselves.

To repair, therefore, the evil done, to prevent its repetition, are duties binding upon the honour of the Portuguese nation, and conducive to the interests of your Majesty's Crown; for the dominions which we yet possess in that part of the world, are as yet the most extensive, the most important, and the most valuable possessed by any European nation in Southern Africa.

In order to appreciate their value, we are to consider not only what they are, but what they are susceptible of. Their present state is owing not only to the mis-rule of the mother country, but to the latter's having given her almost exclusive attention to the Brazils.

The natives of Africa were captured and conveyed across the Atlantic, to enrich a country whose inhabitants refused to exert themselves for its civilization.

We read in an ancient record that there were formerly seventeen sugar mills on the Island of Saint Thomas, which the Government of Portugal caused to be destroyed, in order not to injure the cultivation