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engaging in this improper pursuit, the boat-owners be publicly flogged; and the justice is requested to cause this order to be enforced. Such was then the summary jurisdiction of the Council!

It will be recollected that M. Sonnerat, in the course of his attempt at self-justification, recriminated upon the English. He not only alleged, in general terms, that Englishmen engaged in this traffic, but distinctly affirmed that three English vessels were, at the time he wrote, about to sail to the Isle of France with a number of slaves, and that he had taken twelve slaves from an English captain the preceding month. Application was thereupon made to M. Sonnerat to state the names of the parties, in order that they might be brought to condign punishment; the French chief, however, declined furnishing this information, without assigning any motive for his refusal, though pressed a second time by the chief and council of Masulipatam, who avow that they gave no credit to the statement.

It would appear that the British military force stationed to prevent the trade succeeded in the object.

The matter contained in the voluminous papers relating to these transactions affords a practical comment upon the character of French government in India. At a subsequent period (1803), when the French and Dutch power in that country was extinct, one of the Madras collectors, referring to the period when children were stolen, and full grown persons carried off by force for sale to the traders of these nations, observes that if they ever return it will be revived, unless the most active and vigilant exertions are made to prevent it. The conduct of the French traders on the coast of Africa gives a melancholy countenance to this opinion.

A transaction belonging to the foregoing class of cases, though developed by the government of Penang, should be recorded here: it marks in a very striking manner the dreadful character of a slave-trade, wheresoever carried on.

In 1793, Mr. F. Light, the governor of Prince of Wales' Island, reported to the Madras government the piratical seizure of a French brig by the Malays of Pedir, under the following circumstances. The vessel in question, the *Jean Bass*, Capt. Gaudron, sailed from Bengal for Coringa with a cargo of rice; meeting with bad weather, Capt. Gaudron put into Ganjam, and there sold a part of his rice. He proceeded to Bimlipatam, where he disposed of the remainder, receiving in return 180 natives of the place, as slaves, who were clandestinely embarked by the purchasers of the rice, two Dutch or French residents at Bimlipatam. The vessel sailed immediately for the Isle of France; but provisions failing, and the sufferings of the wretched beings who constituted the cargo becoming thereby intolerable, the captain visited the Nicobar islands, Acheen, and, lastly, Pedir, to procure a supply of rice. According to the statements of some of the survivors, the people of Pedir, a great many of whom were natives of the Coromandel coast, hearing of the sufferings of their countrymen, who had been thus injuriously treated, resolved to take revenge on the French captain and crew. Under the guidance of a renegade, a native of France, who had become a Mahomedan and taken the name of Abdollah, they effected their object. Abdollah insinuated himself into the good opinion of the French captain, because his interpreter, persuaded him to sell the few guns he had on board, by the offer of a high price, and then took him on shore on pretence of receiving the rice he had bargained for. Abdollah led the deluded man to a house where a large party of Malays were assembled; who fell upon him, and mortally wounded him with their creeses. They made prisoners of the boat's crew, and a party of them,

with Abdullah at their head, went on board the brig, killed the mate, and took possession of the vessel: the rest of the crew, having no arms to defend themselves, were killed or disabled, or forced to jump overboard. The slaves were sold by the Pedir chiefs and distributed along the coast; the vessel's stores were sold by Abdullah to a Capt. Matalister and a Capt. Caird,* who happened to come into the port with their vessels at that time: the vessel was sold by the Pedir raja to the *noqueda* of a Surat ship, who purchased it in the name, and, as he says, at the recommendation, of Capt. Wass, his commander.† The *noqueda* hoisted English colours upon her, and proposed to proceed with a cargo of rice to Muscat, when a Company's cruiser, sent by Mr. Light on this service, took possession of her, and received from the Surat ship five of the French crew and the renegade Abdullah, who, however, had been secreted by Capt. Wass, and was discovered by accident. The vessel was delivered up to the French government at Pondicherry, as well as the renegade, whose French name was Laurent Severin, and who was ordered upon trial there; the two merchants at Bimlipatam (one of whom had been a surgeon in the English Company's service, and enjoyed a pension from them,) were imprisoned; and all the survivors of this transaction appear to have had justice done them but the poor slaves, though, indeed, to their undeserved sufferings may be attributed, as a retribution, the catastrophe which befel the authors of their woes.

This affair excited, in an unusual degree, the attention of the French and Dutch authorities in India, both of whom testified their concern thereat; and the Dutch government at Pulicat, inspired apparently with a new spirit, resolved that strenuous measures should be taken to prevent a repetition of such occurrences, and to punish all kidnapping and trading in slaves.

Under the year 1801 we find two letters from Mr. J. G. Ravenshaw, then collector in the southern division of Canara, respecting a servile agricultural class, denominated *Daerds*, referring chiefly to the policy of allowing the enlistment of them in the Company's military service. The nature of slavery in southern India, where it seems to have existed from very remote times, and to have become extensively incorporated with the institutions of the people, has been much misunderstood and misrepresented. Information from practical observers, calculated to rectify our notions upon the subject, is, therefore, valuable.

Mr. Ravenshaw states that the *Daerds* constitute by far the greatest part of the slaves employed in agriculture in that portion of the province; they then amounted to 52,000 men, women, and children. They differ from each in many respects, and their customs are peculiar, there being few of that caste in any other part of India. They are distinguished into three classes; the *Moondaul*, *Mogare*, and *Mavey Daerds*. The two former abstain from eating beef; the latter will not kill the animal, but will eat it when dead. A *Moondaul* and a *Mogare* will eat together, though it is not common; they never intermarry by consent; but if a *Moondaul* abducts a *Mogare* woman, the offence is expiated by paying a fine, and providing a repast to the *Mogares*, whereupon the lady is considered to have changed sects. Neither associate with the *Maveys*. Among the *Mogares*, property descends from father to son; in the *Moondaul* and *Mavey* sects, the property descends from uncle to nephew; a father gives up his children to their uncle.

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* The want of scruple on the part of these captains, who appear to have been English, induced the Court of Directors subsequently to direct a strict inquiry to be made about them; justly observing that no plea could justify the purchase under such circumstances.

† Capt. Wass's conduct was made the subject of an inquiry at Bombay.