

*HANDBOOKS PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
HISTORICAL SECTION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.—No. 105*

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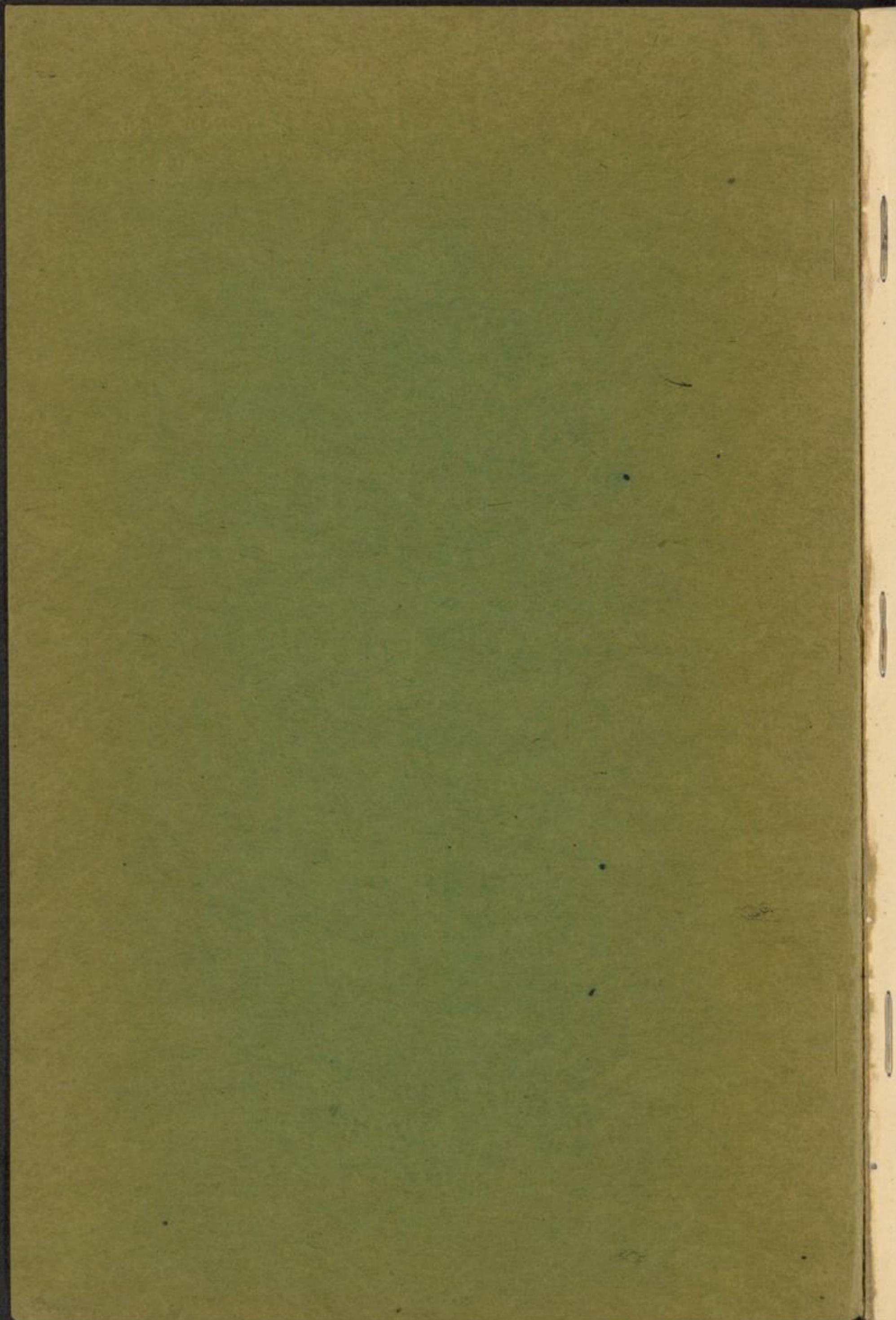
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DAHOMY

LONDON :

PUBLISHED BY H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE.

1920



Gt. Brit. Foreign office. Historical section.
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EDITORIAL NOTE

R.V. S. Feb. 25-25.
IN the spring of 1917 the Foreign Office, in connexion with the preparation which they were making for the work of the Peace Conference, established a special section whose duty it should be to provide the British Delegates to the Peace Conference with information in the most convenient form—geographical, economic, historical, social, religious, and political—respecting the different countries, districts, islands, &c., with which they might have to deal. In addition, volumes were prepared on certain general subjects, mostly of an historical nature, concerning which it appeared that a special study would be useful.

The historical information was compiled by trained writers on historical subjects, who (in most cases) gave their services without any remuneration. For the geographical sections valuable assistance was given by the Intelligence Division (Naval Staff) of the Admiralty; and for the economic sections, by the War Trade Intelligence Department, which had been established by the Foreign Office. Of the maps accompanying the series, some were prepared by the above-mentioned department of the Admiralty, but the bulk of them were the work of the Geographical Section of the General Staff (Military Intelligence Division) of the War Office.

Now that the Conference has nearly completed its task, the Foreign Office, in response to numerous inquiries and requests, has decided to issue the books for public use, believing that they will be useful to students of history, politics, economics, and foreign affairs, to publicists generally and to business men and travellers. It is hardly necessary to say that some of the subjects dealt with in the series have not in fact come under discussion at the Peace Conference; but, as the books treating of them contain valuable information, it has been thought advisable to include them.

It must be understood that, although the series of volumes was prepared under the authority, and is now issued with the sanction, of the Foreign Office, that Office is not to be regarded as guaranteeing the accuracy of every statement which they contain or as identifying itself with all the opinions expressed in the several volumes ; the books were not prepared in the Foreign Office itself, but are in the nature of information provided for the Foreign Office and the British Delegation.

The books are now published, with a few exceptions, substantially as they were issued for the use of the Delegates. No attempt has been made to bring them up to date, for, in the first place, such a process would have entailed a great loss of time and a prohibitive expense ; and, in the second, the political and other conditions of a great part of Europe and of the Nearer and Middle East are still unsettled and in such a state of flux that any attempt to describe them would have been incorrect or misleading. The books are therefore to be taken as describing, in general, *ante-bellum* conditions, though in a few cases, where it seemed specially desirable, the account has been brought down to a later date.

G. W. PROTHERO,

*General Editor and formerly
Director of the Historical Section.*

January 1920.

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I. GEOGRAPHY PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL

(1) POSITION AND FRONTIERS

THE French colony of Dahomey extends for about 450 miles north from the Gulf of Guinea to the Niger. It lies between $6^{\circ} 15'$ and $12^{\circ} 30'$ north latitude and $0^{\circ} 45'$ and $3^{\circ} 50'$ east longitude, and marches with Togoland on the west, Upper Senegal and Niger and the Military Territory of the Niger on the north, and Nigeria on the east. At the coast it is about 75 miles broad, maintains approximately this width as far as 9° north latitude, then widens fanwise, finally narrowing to a pointed end between the Mekru and Niger. Its total area is about 41,400 square miles.

The western frontier was laid down generally in a Convention signed at Paris on July 23, 1897, and was delimited in detail in a Declaration signed at Paris on September 28, 1912. It is an arbitrary line, following natural features only in its southern portion, along the *thalweg* of the Mono.

The northern frontier was fixed by a Decree of March 2, 1907, which transferred a large tract northwest of the Atakora to Upper Senegal. The boundary now starts from the north-eastern corner of Togoland, follows the eleventh parallel of north latitude across the Atakora, and then turns down the Mekru valley to the Niger, which forms the north-eastern frontier.

The eastern frontier was delimited in a report dated at Paris, October 12, 1896. Its direction is, generally speaking, south-westerly, as far as a point just south of the ninth parallel of north latitude, where it meets the Okpara river, follows its valley south for about 100 miles, and then continues south to the sea (see also p. 11).

(2) SURFACE, COAST, AND RIVER SYSTEM

Surface

Dahomey falls into two well-marked natural regions, divided by a transverse watershed coinciding with 10° north latitude.

Lower Dahomey has a flat, sandy shore, with lagoons and mangrove swamps immediately behind it. North of these the country is flat and covered with tropical vegetation to about 50 miles inland, where lies the great swamp known as the Lama Marsh, 6–8 miles broad. Beyond this the ground rises with a gentle and even slope, first forming the Abome–Zanyanado (Zagnanado, Zaonanado) plateau, a wide expanse of savanna country broken by escarpments, its highest point being 700 ft. above sea-level, and then rising to the Delcassé Mountains, a small isolated group of hills (1,575 ft.) dominating the settlement of Carnotville, where the general altitude of the country is 900–1,000 ft. North of this the rise continues till at 10° north latitude the head-waters of the Weme (Ouémé) are reached, and the Weme–Niger watershed is crossed at an altitude of about 1,650 ft. The alluvial soil of the coastal belt is rich and fertile.

Upper Dahomey also consists for the most part of a somewhat featureless plateau, but slopes downwards from south to north and drains northwards into the Niger. Its western portion, however, drains into the Oti and so through Togoland into the Gulf of Guinea. The Atakora Mountains, which run north-east and south-west and divide these two drainage areas, are the northernmost continuation of the Fetish Mountains of Togoland. Northwards this range gradually passes into an elevated plateau bounded by escarpments 1,000 ft. high. The summits of the chain in Dahomey run up to 2,500 ft.

The only other outstanding feature of Upper Dahomey is a group of hills in Borgu, south of Buai (Bouay). They stand 600 ft. above the surrounding plain and reach an altitude of 1,600 ft.

Near the Niger dunes are found, and the country becomes Saharan in aspect.

Coast

The coast-line is about 75 miles long. It consists of a continuous narrow sandbank, almost devoid of vegetation, lying between a shallow and surfy sea to south and a network of lagoons and swamps to north.

The chief lagoons of the coastal belt named from west to east are Great Popo lagoon, Lake Aheme, Lake Nokue, north of Kotonu, and the Porto Novo lagoon. They are practically tideless.

River System

The three main drainage areas are those of the Weme, Niger, and Oti.

The *Weme* (*Ouémé*) rises in the Atakora in 10° north latitude, on the divide between Upper and Lower Dahomey, and flows southward, receiving numerous tributaries on both banks, across the Abomey plateau to the coastal belt, where it empties itself into the lagoons near Porto Novo. Its total length is 300 miles. Its chief tributary is the Okpara, 190 miles in length.

Parallel with the Weme, and west of it, are two rivers of secondary importance. The Kuffo (*Couffo*) is a small stream draining the Abome plateau and reaching the lagoons near Whydah (*Wida*, *Ouidah*). The Mono is a river of some size. It rises in Togoland, at about 9° north latitude, and from 7° north latitude to its mouth in the coastal lagoon forms the western frontier of Dahomey.

The *Niger* drains the greater part of Upper Dahomey by means of its affluents the Kokigoru, Alibori, and Mekru, all practically dry except in the rains. The Niger itself forms the north-eastern frontier of the colony, and the lower half of the Mekru separates Dahomey from Upper Senegal.

The *Oti*, the main tributary of the Volta, is the

chief river of Togoland, but all its head-waters are in French territory, and one, the Penjari (Pindjéri), draining the western slope of the Atakora, is in Upper Dahomey.

(3) CLIMATE

The climate of Lower Dahomey is equatorial, that of Upper Dahomey Saharan.

In *Lower Dahomey* the mean monthly temperatures vary between 77° F. (25° C.) and 85° F. (29° C.). The hottest months are February, March, and April. At Porto Novo the maximum recorded rarely exceeds 97° F. (36° C.), while the minimum seldom falls below 62° F. (16½° C.).

Lower Dahomey has two dry seasons, the first from December to March, the second in August and September; and two wet seasons, the first from May to July, the second in October and November.

The annual rainfall is erratic, varying from 64 to 125 inches (1,630–3,180 mm.); the mean appears to be about 75 inches (1,910 mm.). There are very heavy dews, and the air is exceedingly damp. Even during the dry season (December to March) the humidity is 37 per cent.

The monsoon blows from March to November, and is then replaced by the *harmattan*, which blows from the north-north-east, and during the month of January brings with it a fine white sand which obscures the sky. During this period the greatest extremes of temperature are observed. In the dry season, the wind from the sea is felt as far inland as Zanyanado. Violent storms generally mark the beginning and end of the different seasons.

In *Upper Dahomey* the temperatures show a considerable variation, the maxima and minima being about 60° F. (33° C.) apart. The lowest minimum recorded (January) is 55° F. (13° C.), the highest maximum (April) 117° F. (47° C.). The mean daily maximum is given as 115° F. (46° C.), but this is almost certainly too high. The region falls within the

hottest portion of the earth's surface, but fresh nights are common at many seasons of the year.

The rainfall is lower and more regular than that of Lower Dahomey. The mean annual rainfall is about 21 inches (540 mm.). The lowest recorded rainfall is about 19 inches (480 mm.), the highest over $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches (600 mm.). The rain falls in storms, from May to the middle of November. During this season the prevailing wind is south-west; during the dry season the *harmattan* blows from the north-east and east. The humidity of the air is considerably less than in Lower Dahomey, and the *harmattan* produces an intense dryness which materially lowers the temperature during January and February.

In the extreme north the rainfall diminishes in amount, and the rainy season both begins and ends later.

(4) SANITARY CONDITIONS

The climate of Lower Dahomey is decidedly unhealthy for Europeans. The continual high temperature and humidity have a depressing effect; and, though most of the diseases which are rife among the native population can be avoided, malaria and rheumatism are difficult to escape. The tsetse fly (especially *Glossina palpalis*) is common in the south, and occurs locally in the centre of the country, but is unknown north of the Atakora. Guinea-worm and jiggers are common.

There is a hospital at Porto Novo, and there are ambulance stations with European and native staffs at Kotonu, Whydah, Great Popo, and Paraku.

(5) RACE AND LANGUAGE

Like all districts of the Upper Guinea Coast, Dahomey contains a number of small ethnic groups having little or no obvious relationship to one another. Each group has its own language, often differing radically from those of all its neighbours, while character, manners, and customs vary almost as widely.

Lower Dahomey is mainly populated by a typical

Slave Coast race, the *Fongs* or *Jejs*. These remarkable people once constituted the population of the powerful independent kingdom of Dahomey, whose achievements were only made possible by their fine physical and moral qualities. Their language and civilization are fairly uniform throughout Lower Dahomey, as far north as the ninth degree of latitude. Their language, Fong, is related to the Ewe languages of Lower Togoland and the Chi of Ashanti, and is used as a *lingua franca* over a considerable area.

The *Minas* are a powerfully built people inhabiting the banks of the Mono. They are vigorous and courageous, but not industrious. North of these, in the Mono valley above Attieme (Athiémé), are the *Ajas*, a small, primitive, wild tribe.

There are a good many *Mulattoes* in the coastal region.

The *Nagos* or *Nagots* occupy a large belt in the centre of the colony, from the Nigerian border at Sakete north-west through Savalu. Their district is as large as that inhabited by the Fongs, but they are in every way an inferior race to the latter. They have no centralized organization, a fact which always left them at the mercy of their Fong neighbours, and their civilization is of a primitive type. The *Yorubas* are an immigrant branch of Nagots from Nigeria, who live among the Dahomeyan Nagots without intermarriage or any very close social relation. As Moslems they despise the native Nagot.

The *Mahis* are a small tribe located between the Nagots and the Fongs, south of Savalu. They live by hunting and cultivation.

The *Baribas* are the chief tribe of Upper Dahomey, and occupy most of the colony north of Paraku. They are a powerful and warlike race, distinguished from the southern tribes by their possession of live stock and their use of cavalry in war. They seem now to have completely accepted French rule after a long and determined resistance.

The *Dendis* are the northernmost tribe of Dahomey,

living on the banks of the Niger. They are fanatical Moslems.

Upper Dahomey, like all the neighbouring regions of the western Sudan, contains numbers of *Hausas* and *Fulbes*. The Hausas are mostly migratory ; but the Fulbes are settled in large numbers among the Baribas. They are skilful merchants and strong Mohammedans.

There are about 390 Europeans.

(6) POPULATION

The total population of Dahomey is about 900,000, which gives an average density of 21 per square mile.

Lower Dahomey, which comprises a third of the area of the colony, contains 65 per cent. of the population ; Upper Dahomey, with two-thirds of the area, only 35 per cent. The average densities are thus 50 per square mile in Lower Dahomey, and about 10-12 per square mile in Upper Dahomey.

The whole of the coastal region, especially round Whydah and Porto Novo, and the chief river valleys, are very densely populated. Round Abome again the population is very dense, but falls off with great suddenness to the north. Apart from these areas, there are only a few thickly-populated districts, such as those round Zanyanado (Zagnanado, Zaonanado), Savalu, and Paraku, and a little south of Carnotville. Large tracts of country in the centre and north are almost uninhabited.

The chief towns are Porto Novo (20,000 inhabitants) ; Abome (12,000) ; Whydah (Ouidah, Wida, 10,500) ; Kotonu (2,500) ; and Great Popo (2,200).

II. POLITICAL HISTORY

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

1852. Portuguese and French claims to sovereignty at Whydah.
 1863-64. Brief French protectorate over Porto Novo.
 1875-76. Proposals to exchange French claims as part compensation for the Gambia.
 1878. France acquires Kotonu from Dahomey.
 1884. France asserts protectorate over Porto Novo.
 1885. French agreement with Germany as to Togo boundary.
 1889. French agreement with United Kingdom as to Lagos-Porto Novo boundary.
 1890. Dahomey recognizes French protectorate of Porto Novo and occupation of Kotonu.
 1892. Dahomey brought under French protection; coast region under French rule.
 1894. Coast territory created a French colony.
 1897. Boundary with Togo definitely agreed upon (July 23).
 1898. Boundary with Lagos carried to Niger (June 14).
 1904. Dahomey included in the Government-General of French West Africa.
 1906. Further definition of boundary with Lagos and Southern Nigeria (October 19).
 1911. Whole territory becomes the Colony of Dahomey and its Dependencies.
 1912. Further definition of boundary with Togo (September 28).
 1914. Delimitation of frontier from coast to Okpara river accepted (February 18).

(1) EARLY HISTORY

THE Portuguese Constitution of April 4, 1838, claimed as Portuguese the fort of Ajuda (i. e. Whydah), on the coast of Dahomey; and the Portuguese Government formally asserted this claim when a blockade of the coast of Dahomey was proclaimed, with effect from January 1, 1852, by the British Government in the course of operations to suppress the slave-trade. The French Government also protested on the ground that a French merchant, Régis, had a fort there, which had formerly been established by the French Government, and was

still regarded by France as a French possession. The British Government, however, maintained the attitude that the forts in question, like a fort formerly established by Great Britain, were merely commercial establishments separated from the sea by a mile of territory subject to the King of Dahomey; and the blockade was only raised when the King of Dahomey made an agreement against slave-trading.

British consuls who visited the kingdom of Dahomey in January and June 1863 reported the existence of forts of British, French, Portuguese, and Brazilian traders, but not that of any territorial claims. In 1863, however, the French assumed a protectorate of the small kingdom of Porto Novo, and in the following year the King of Dahomey ceded 'la plage du Kotonou'. But at the end of 1864 the French Admiral on the station announced that the protectorate of Porto Novo had ceased to exist,¹ and, though by a treaty of May 19, 1868, the King of Dahomey ceded to France 'le territoire de Kotonou', no effective occupation seems to have been attempted, while on March 7, 1875, Lord Carnarvon stated that the French had no influence or jurisdiction on the coast.

Any claims that France might have had would, however, have been surrendered, had the proposals then under consideration for the transfer of the Gambia to France in return for the renunciation by France of all rights between the River Pongas and Gabun been carried out. Following upon the failure of this negotiation, the French again turned their attention to the coast, and on April 19, 1878, obtained a treaty from the King of Dahomey confirming the cession of Kotonou, the boundaries of which were defined. Effective occupation seems to have been delayed until 1884, when, in connexion with the revival of interest in Africa, France established a protectorate over Porto Novo, and by a treaty of June 10, 1885, acquired Ouatchis, lying between Great Popo and Dahomey.

¹ C. 1409, p. 25.

In 1886 the colony of Benin was formally constituted, and placed under a Resident.

Portugal, however, on the strength of a treaty of August 5, 1885, made formal notification (in accordance with the Berlin Act) of a protectorate of the coast of Dahomey; but this notification was withdrawn on December 22, 1887. The disappearance of Portuguese claims left France free to deal with Dahomey and to settle the boundaries of its territories with the United Kingdom, established at Lagos, and with Germany, which had acquired Togo on July 5, 1884.

(2) INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

France and Dahomey.—On October 3, 1890, the King of Dahomey agreed to recognize the protectorate of France over Porto Novo, and to permit the indefinite occupation of Kotonu on payment of an annual compensation. Disputes soon followed, and, after military occupations and a blockade of the coast, the King was deposed; and, by a proclamation of December 3, 1892, the kingdom was placed under French protection, while Whydah¹ and other coast regions were placed under the direct rule of France. Further difficulties ensued in 1893, and in 1894 the kingdom was divided into two parts, northern and southern, in which petty kings were installed under French protection, while by decree of June 22, 1894, the coast territory was formally erected into a French colony.

In 1911 the ruler of Dahomey, who had continued to intrigue against French rule, was deposed. His territory was divided among petty chiefs under the direct control of the French Resident at Abome, and the whole territory became known as the Colony of Dahomey and its Dependencies.

France and Germany.—By a Protocol of December 2, 1885, France recognized the German protectorate over

¹ The Portuguese, however, retained a military post in the fort of San João Baptista d'Ajuda with the right of access to it from the sea. See *San Thomé and Príncipe*, No. 119 of this series.

Togoland, renounced her own claim on Porto Seguro and Little Popo, and agreed upon a boundary for the territories of the two Powers at the coast. This was completed by a Convention of July 23, 1897, delimiting the whole frontier between Togo and the French territories of Dahomey and the Sudan, and effect was given in detail to this Convention by the Declaration of September 28, 1912.¹

France and the United Kingdom.—The boundary between Porto Novo and Lagos on the coast was defined by Article IV of the Anglo-French Arrangement of August 10, 1889, each Power being accorded full freedom of action on its side of the line indicated. A delimitation of the frontier was agreed upon by boundary commissioners on October 12, 1896, and accepted by Article II of the Convention of June 14, 1898. This Convention recognized at the same time the extension of French influence to a point above Ilo, on the Niger. The continuity of French territory between Dahomey and the Sudan was thus secured, the boundary having been carried only up to 9° N. lat. by the Arrangement of 1889. A precise definition of the boundary from the Gulf of Guinea to the Niger was laid down in an exchange of Notes of October 19, 1906, and the actual delimitation up to the Okpara river was approved by Notes of February 18, 1914.²

¹ *State Papers*, cvi, 1001-8.

² Cd. 7278.

III. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS¹

By decree of October 18, 1904, Dahomey became part of the Government-General of French West Africa.

Dahomey is included in the area in which, under the Convention of June 14, 1898, British subjects and protected persons are assured of equality of conditions as regards all matters of trade, navigation, and taxation for a period of thirty years from June 13, 1899.

¹ Reference should be made to *French West Africa*, No. 100 of this series.

IV. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

(A) MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

(1) INTERNAL

(a) *Roads, Paths, and Tracks*

CONSIDERING its present state of development, Dahomey seems to be fairly well provided with roads. Two lines of communication, approximately parallel, run between the coast and the northern frontier, and these are connected by cross-roads.

The most important road northwards starts from Porto Novo, and runs by Zanyanado (Zagnanado, Zaonanado) to Paignan, and then north-eastward to Agwagon and Save (Shabe).¹ From this point onwards it is a metalled motor-road (Route de l'Est), provided with substantial bridges, running by Paraku (162 kilometres from Save), N'Dali (223 kilometres), Buai, and Kandi (380 kilometres), to Madekale (Mallanville) on the Niger (483 kilometres).

Another line of roads leading northwards starts from Toki (Tori) in the south of the Allada zone, and runs through dense forest and across the Great Swamp to Abome, and then on to Savalu. In the past, the journey northward was continued by winding routes, more or less parallel with the western frontier, by Kaboli (Cabolé), Bassila, Jugu, and Makha to Nagon Kauri (Konkobiri) in Upper Senegal. Now, however, a good motor-road (Route de l'Ouest) has been made to Bassila and Jugu from Agwagon, which is only about 25 km. east of Savalu and is reached by a cross-road.

There are a number of other useful cross-routes. Beginning from the north, the first of these runs from

¹ The section between Zanyanado and Paignan is marked in the map of Dahomey in the *Annuaire du Gouvernement Général* for 1913-14, but does not appear in the corresponding map in the volume for 1915-16.

Datori on the western frontier right across the Atakora and middle Niger zones, by Makha and Kandi, to the Niger at Ilo. The next to the south connects Bakumbe in the west with Buai on the eastern motor-road. From Jugu routes connect with the same road at N'Dali and Paraku. From Abome a road runs east to Zanyanado and the eastern frontier. From Attieme (Athiémé), in the Mono zone, a road eastward connects with Toki.

These roads are under Government control, and are maintained by the use of forced labour. In most cases the only work necessary is cleaning and clearing from bush, for the surface is unmade, though often hard enough to take light vehicles. The Save-Niger road, or Route de l'Est, and the Agwagon-Jugu road, or Route de l'Ouest, are the only roads of a more elaborate kind.

Since 1912, a regular service of motor-wagons, carrying passengers, mails, and goods, has been in operation along the Route de l'Est. The full journey, including stoppages, occupies two days and six hours. Wagons drawn by oxen are in use on the same road.

Over the greater part of Dahomey, however, goods have still to be carried by native porters, and travellers ride in hammocks borne by four men. This is a slow and costly method of transport, and absorbs labour which might be employed to better advantage. One man can carry between 25 and 30 kilograms, and a day's march may be anything between 25 and 40 km. In the north, horses are used a good deal for riding.

(b) *Rivers and Lagoons*

River transport is not likely ever to be employed to any considerable extent in Dahomey. All the streams are subject to violent seasonal variations, and none are navigable to any great distance even during the rains.

The chief navigable streams in the south, named from west to east, are the Mono, Kuffo (Couffo), and Weme (Ouémé). The Mono forms the western boundary of Dahomey from about the seventh degree of north latitude to the sea. In the rains it is navigable as far as

Attieme, in the dry season to Vodome (Wadome). The Weme is about 300 miles in length, but even when it is at its highest it is navigable by vessels of light draught only as far as Zanyanado, while in the dry season Dogba is the head of navigation. The remaining streams are of little use as means of communication. In the north, most of the rivers are torrential, but the section of the Niger which forms the north-eastern boundary has 3 ft. of water for six months of the year, and for nine months can be used by small boats.

More important for communication than the rivers are the lagoons which lie parallel with the sea behind the coastal sandbank. They change their size and their outlets constantly. Old natives can remember the time when it was possible to go in a boat from one side of the colony to the other. To-day there are two chief sections. To the west is a long, narrow lagoon, into which the Mono and Kuffo discharge themselves, and upon which Little Popo, Great Popo, and Whydah are situated. Close to this to the north is Lake Aheme. To the east is a larger and more important series of waterways, the main parts of which are Lake Nokue and the Porto Novo lagoon, running all the way from Kotonu to the British port of Lagos in Nigeria.

At Kotonu there is at present an opening from the sea to Lake Nokue, but this channel has constantly changed its character, and was often in the past closed for years at a time. Lake Nokue is about 10 miles long and 5 miles broad, and has a general depth of about 8 to 10 ft., though in the dry season several shoals are covered by less than 3 ft. of water. On its eastern side the lake contracts into a narrow and shallow channel called the Toche, into which the River Weme discharges itself. The Toche leads into the Porto Novo lagoon, on the north shore of which Porto Novo is situated. Only small vessels can reach Porto Novo from Kotonu, though in 1911 work was begun with a view to deepening the channel.

From Porto Novo eastward to the sea, on the other hand, there is an average depth of 3 fathoms,

though in places the channel is narrow and intricate, and there are some dangerous shallows, such as Beshe Flat, where there is only a depth of 6 ft. at low water, and not more than 8 ft. even at high tide.

On these lagoons a brisk traffic is conducted, both by steamers and smaller boats. Since 1912 the Chargeurs Réunis have maintained two regular services. One of these is a rapid mail service between Porto Novo and Lagos, the biggest vessel used being of 170 tons. The other runs between Kotonu and Porto Novo five times a week.

(c) *Railways*

Railway System in General.—The existing railways in Dahomey represent merely the initial stages of a much more ambitious scheme of construction. This forms part of the vast programme of railway connexions between West African colonies with which the French Government has been busy since 1898. If the scheme is carried out, Dahomey will possess 950 km. of railways, which gives an average of 12 km. for every 10,000 inhabitants. One object in view is to give the colony increased opportunities of linking up with the caravan routes across the Sahara.

From June 1900 onwards, section after section of line was laid down in Dahomey, and in 1915 a length of 293 km. was being worked. The railway starts from Kotonu, and runs parallel with the coast to Pahu (26 km.), where a branch 32 km. in length leaves for Whydah and Lake Aheme. The main line turns northward at Pahu, and runs past Allada (58 km.), Pawinyan (Pauignan, 194 km.), and Agwagon (235 km.) to its terminus at Save (261 km.). There are 19 stations and 17 halts on the main line, and 2 stations and 4 halts on the branch. The gauge is 1 metre.

At present traffic between Save and the Niger is conducted along the Route de l'Est by the motor service, but it is intended to carry on the railway to Paraku (440 km.) and then to the Niger at some point between Karimama and Madekale (722 km.). It is

also proposed to bring Jugu, the head of the Route de l'Ouest and a caravan centre, into connexion with the eastern districts by a branch line from Paraku, 120 km. in length. The south-western districts are to be opened up by a line, 47 km. in length, running north from Great Popo to Lokossa, and connected with the main line by a short branch of 15 km. A line is also proposed to connect Kotonu with Porto Novo.

Besides the regular railway, there is a steam tramway of the same gauge, often referred to as the East Dahomey railway, which starts from Porto Novo and runs through a fertile and well-cultivated district to Pobe (76 km.). There is a branch to Sakete (39 km.) at a point 34 km. up the line. The track is of Vignerole rails resting on steel sleepers. The smallest radius of curves is 200 metres, and the steepest gradient 1 in 50. It is estimated that the construction has cost about 53,000 francs per km.

Relations to Government.—The railway was constructed by the colony, but its management has been entrusted to the Compagnie Française des Chemins de Fer au Dahomey, which also has a concession of Kotonu wharf. The tramway is run by the colony.

Financial Considerations.—The financial responsibility for the Dahomey railway falls upon the French Government and affects the General Budget for French West Africa. In 1904, when the Compagnie Française received the concession, it was stipulated that a certain sum should be paid to the company from the receipts of each year. The amount payable is calculated by a formula based upon the total receipts, the length of line open, the train mileage for the year, and the number of passengers and tonnage of goods carried. The Rapport d'Ensemble for 1913 states that the receipts were always insufficient to bear this charge. In 1912 by the formula the company was entitled to 1,291,666 francs, but the actual receipts were 1,172,886 francs only, so that there was a deficit, paid from the General Budget, of 118,780 francs. In 1913 the formula fixed the payment at 1,292,729 francs,

while the receipts amounted to 1,154,734 francs; the deficit was thus 137,995 francs.

The finances of the steam tramway, on the other hand, are controlled by the Colonial Administration, and their annual working is shown in the Local Budget. The tramway receipts in 1912 amounted to 248,847 francs, and expenses to 195,766 francs. In 1913 receipts rose to 267,479 francs and expenses to 318,296 francs, in consequence of the extension to Pobé.

(d) *Posts, Telegraphs, and Telephones*

Dahomey is one of the seven divisions of the general postal system for French West Africa. During 1913 five new post offices were added in the colony, and two suppressed, leaving thirty-one in full working order. Postal business is steadily growing.

The telegraphic system looks extensive on paper; but the service is in practice only moderately efficient. From May to October in Dahomey the air is so highly charged with electricity that communication is often difficult.

Telephone systems are installed in the chief towns.

(2) EXTERNAL

(a) *Ports*

Accommodation.—There are no sheltered harbours on the coast of Dahomey. Places of call along the coast, named from west to east, are Little Popo (in Togoland), Agwe, Great Popo, Whydah, Kotonu, and Porto Novo.

At *Little Popo* (*Anecho*, just over the Togoland border) there is a large native town about a quarter of a mile inland, and a line of storehouses along the beach. For eight months of the year ships can find good anchorage in 6 fathoms, but during the rainy season it is necessary to anchor farther out, in 8 or 9 fathoms, on account of the surf.

At *Agwe*, farther east, there is safe holding-ground in 7 fathoms at a distance of three-quarters of a mile from the shore.

Great Popo, a little east of the Mono river, is built on a narrow strip of sand between the sea and the lagoon. It has a native population of about 20,000, and a small number of European traders. Its importance depends entirely upon the produce of the Mono valley, and is certain to increase when the building of the railway line to Lokossa leads to a more active trade. At present, however, there are few facilities. There is good anchorage in 7 fathoms, and a wharf is to be built.

Whydah (Ouidah, Wida) has few natural advantages ; for the surf is heavier here than farther west, sharks abound, and the town is three miles inland from the little beach station. Anchorage can be had about one mile off shore in 8 fathoms. The business of the port has declined since the railway deflected to Kotonu traffic which used to come by road to Whydah ; but the Dahomey authorities are anxious to keep trade alive there, and in 1913 built Decauville lines between the town and the beach.

Kotonu, whose population in 1915 was stated to be 2,500, is the chief port and a busy trading centre. It is a well-planned town, lying in an angle formed on the south by the sea and on the east by the channel leading to Lake Nokue. There is an iron pier, 208 metres long, with excellent appliances for handling cargo, so that vessels can load and unload in security, despite the surf. Close to this wharf is the terminus of the railway, which runs out westward.

Porto Novo lies east-north-east of Kotonu, on the northern shore of the lagoon of the same name. The navigation between this port and Kotonu on the one hand and Lagos on the other has already been described (p. 16). There is good anchorage in 8 fathoms of water on the western side of the town. The native quarters lie over to the east of the European town. The latter is less regularly planned than Kotonu, but contains many important buildings, since Porto Novo is the capital of Dahomey. The population in 1915 was 20,000, of whom 359 were Europeans. Here are situated the Lieutenant-Governor's chief residence, the

central offices of the chief Government departments, the Bank, the Chamber of Commerce, and many of the principal commercial houses. The town is lighted by electricity, but sanitation is not good, malaria is common, and mosquitoes are very troublesome. In 1913, however, the laying out of a drainage system was begun, and embankments are being made to prevent the accumulation of stagnant water from the overflow of the lagoon.

Nature and Volume of Trade.—Before the war, France took the lead in Dahomey shipping, but Germany was in very close competition. The following table¹ shows the nationality and tonnage of ships entered between 1913 and 1916. The totals include traffic between Porto Novo and Lagos.

<i>Nationality.</i>	1913.		1914.		1915.		1916.	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>
French .	173	232,664	149	181,835	115	142,121	112	163,164
British .	131	187,297	117	142,771	115	155,539	105	149,705
German .	169	193,382	71 ²	80,037	—	—	—	—
Other Countries	4	4,851	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals .	477	618,194	337	404,643	230	297,660	217	312,869

It will be seen that in 1913 France was responsible for 37·83 per cent. of the total inward and outward tonnage, Germany for 30·96, England for 30·44. If, instead of taking the tonnage of ships as a basis of comparison, we take the value of the goods they carry, France had 26·47 per cent., England 23·74 per cent., and Germany, with 49·28 per cent., nearly as much as the other two together. The disappearance of German shipping at the outbreak of war was therefore a very serious matter for Dahomey, and it remains to be seen if the French mercantile marine can eventually make profit out of what was for the moment a disaster. It seems likely that the palm-crushing industry will never again be a German monopoly, and since the trade of Dahomey is largely in palm products, German

¹ From the *Bulletin de l'Office Colonial*, December 1915, December 1916, and September 1917.

² In the period before the outbreak of war.

shipping may be unable to regain its former percentage of the total trade.

The bulk of the trade flows through Kotonu, on account of its loading facilities and its railway. Kotonu receives maize, palm products, shea-nuts, copra, and cotton, from the centre and north of the colony, and also to some extent from Porto Novo and the Sakete district served by the tramway. Its exports in 1913 amounted in value to 7,120,010 francs and its imports to 7,176,070 francs. With regard to exports, however, Porto Novo is almost as important, for in 1913 the value of its exports was 6,597,569 francs, though its imports amounted to 4,526,729 francs only. For palm kernels, especially, it is the main channel of export: 10,499,878 kilograms were shipped from Porto Novo in 1913 as against 7,077,804 kilograms sent from Kotonu. The Mono valley trade goes through Great Popo, whose exports in 1913 amounted in value to 2,071,478 francs, while its imports totalled 1,526,088 francs.

(b) *Shipping Lines*

Before the war, Dahomey was well served by shipping lines. Kotonu was a port of call for the mail steamers of the Chargeurs Réunis, which left Havre for Matadi every twenty-one days. The Compagnie Cyprien Fabre had a monthly service between Marseilles and the African coast, their vessels carrying both passengers and cargo. Another monthly service from Marseilles, of the same kind, was maintained by the Compagnie Fraissinet.

Elder, Dempster & Co. had a weekly mail service between Liverpool and Lagos by their two lines, the African Steamship Company and the British and African Steam Navigation Company. The Dahomey ports were served by these lines and also by the cargo boats of the company, which after the outbreak of war started a direct cargo service between New York and West Africa.

The Woermann Line, Hamburg, had three cargo

services calling monthly at Whydah, Kotonu, and Great Popo. Their mail steamers passed Kotonu twice a month, and would call to take up passengers if there were a sufficient number.

The seaports are linked with the interior by the lagoon service of the Chargeurs Réunis (see p. 16).

(c) *Cable and Wireless Communications*

A French cable connects Kotonu westward with Grand Bassam on the Ivory Coast and south-eastward with Libreville in Gabun. The African Direct Telegraph Company has a cable from Kotonu to Lagos. Cablegrams for Europe are sent by this latter route as far as Konakri in French Guinea, and from that point can, if the senders wish, be dispatched by the French cable to Brest *via* Dakar.

Dahomey has no wireless station.

(B) INDUSTRY

(1) LABOUR

Dahomey is the most populous of the French West African colonies, and hitherto as much labour as was needed has been forthcoming at a cheap rate. Smiths are paid from 2 to 4 francs per day, masons 2 frs. 50 to 4 francs, carpenters 3 francs to 4 frs. 50, and navvies 1 franc to 1 fr. 50 on the coast, and 50 to 60 centimes in the interior. When the railway was being built, there was no difficulty at all in obtaining workmen in sufficient numbers.

Agricultural labour is supplied chiefly by the Fong or Jej race of Lower Dahomey, who are strong, energetic, and obedient, and have applied themselves to agriculture since the French occupation with increasing zeal and success. In this they are contrasted with their neighbours the Minas, along the banks of the Mono. The Minas also have a fine physique, but dislike steady work, though they are skilful in managing surf-boats or handling cargo. The Nagos, in the centre of

the colony, are indolent and cowardly, and the immigrant Yorubas settled among them are attracted to trade rather than to manual labour. The fighting races of the north, the Baribas and Dendis, have no liking for the arts of peace. The former, having submitted to French rule and lost the slaves they used to obtain by raiding, are obliged to do a certain amount of cultivation of the ground, but do as little as possible. Fulbes have settled among them in large numbers, and are intelligent and good traders, but like agriculture no better than the Baribas. The Dendis are stock farmers and horsemen, but are dangerous and suspected of disloyalty. Clerical work for the Government and private firms is done mainly by mulattoes, who are numerous in the coastal region.

Emigration from Dahomey, as well as the movement of labourers from one part of the colony to another, is only effected by permission of the Lieutenant-Governor, and under strict regulations laid down by a decree of October 1902.

(2) AGRICULTURE

(a) *Products of Commercial Value*

(i) *Vegetable products*.—Botanically, Dahomey falls into three zones. The coastal belt, including the Abomey plateau, but excluding the narrow strip of barren shore, is covered with mangrove swamp and tropical forest. In the centre, from the Abomey plateau to the Atakora, there is savanna with dry forest and bush. In the extreme north is a region of steppe and thorn-bush.

The most important vegetable product of Dahomey is the oil-palm (*Elaeis guineensis*), which grows wild and is also cultivated. It is estimated that between the coast and Carnotville these trees occupy about 570,000 acres, of which 173,000 are already exploited. North of Carnotville the trees occur only in isolated groups. They give two crops annually, at the end of the two rainy seasons. They are not much affected by

the character of the soil in different districts, but are very dependent on the rainfall.

The natives extract the oil from the pericarp by primitive methods, which prevent them from securing more than about 70 per cent. of the possible yield. The nuts are cracked by hand to obtain the kernels. This is a slow process, and mechanical crackers are gradually coming into use. There are openings for small factories able to prepare oil in a cleaner and more efficient way.

The shea-nut tree (*Butyrospermum parkii*) grows freely in Upper Dahomey, but has not as yet been exploited to any considerable extent. It is hoped that the natives will bring more of the produce to market now that motor transport is available. The 'butter' extracted from the nuts easily becomes rancid, and so has disadvantages for export purposes, but it is hoped that the nuts themselves may be dried and exported, at any rate from districts near the railways and motor-roads.

Ceiba pentandra and *Bombax buonopozense*, both fibre-yielding trees, are represented in Dahomey, but are at present used only locally.

Tobacco and indigo are grown in Upper and Middle Dahomey.

A good many food-stuffs are grown, chiefly for local-consumption. These include maize, yams, manioc, a large and a small millet, beans, and rice in the north. The cultivation of maize is extending rapidly, especially in Lower Dahomey. Native methods of clearing ground for cultivation involve, unfortunately, the destruction of a good deal of virgin forest, and in view of this practice the active development of maize-growing is rather to be deprecated. The crops are already big enough to meet immediate needs, provide a store against a bad season, and still leave a surplus for export. Ground-nuts are cultivated, but are not of much importance for local consumption, and hardly repay export under present conditions, because they flourish best in the regions most remote from the coast. Pine-apples,

oranges, bananas, limes, guavas, and sugar-cane occur in various parts.

Besides the plants which are indigenous, or widely cultivated, various experiments are being made in the introduction of new kinds. Some cotton is grown in the north for local use, and in Middle Dahomey, where the climate is favourable and communications good, cultivation is extending and there is every likelihood of the development of a considerable industry. Of the total amount exported, Savalu zone furnishes about 70 per cent., Save 15 per cent., Abome 10 per cent., and Zanyanado 5 per cent., so that the crop is very unevenly distributed. There are ginneries in Savalu.

The coco-nut palm was introduced many years ago by Portuguese merchants, and of recent years plantations have been made all along the coastal lagoons, especially near Great Popo and Whydah. It was estimated in 1915 that the dense plantations contained about 33,500 trees one year old, 27,000 from two to five years old, and 11,500 of five years old and upwards. The little copra that has hitherto been exported has been badly prepared. The export, however, is no indication of the extent of cultivation, for a large number of the green nuts are sold in the coast markets for local consumption. Seed is distributed by the Government, prizes are awarded, and every effort is made to induce the natives to make plantations.

Climate and soil seem suitable for growing cocoa, and a good many plantations have been made, largely by men who have lived in the Gold Coast and seen the possibilities of the industry there. Near the rivers, in the zones of Mono, Allada, Zanyanado, and Porto Novo, especially between Pobe and Sakete, experiments have been made on a fairly large scale, and there are also many little native plantations hidden by the bush. It was estimated that in 1915 there were about 100,000 cocoa plants in Dahomey, and that the number in 1916 would be raised to 140,000.

There is also plenty of land suitable for growing kola-nuts. These are often planted between the rows of

cocoa plants. The Guinea kola (*Cola vera*) is being introduced to supplant the less valuable indigenous variety, but is not as yet plentiful.

Rubber is extracted, in small quantities only, from the vine *Landolphia owariensis* near Carnotville and Allada, and the Government has made a few experiments with plantations.

To sum up, it may be said that Dahomey is rich in vegetable products of commercial value, and that they have not as yet been by any means fully exploited. To that end it will be necessary on the one hand to make markets more accessible by improved means of transport and communication, and on the other to instruct and encourage the natives so that they may increase their output and adopt modern methods of cultivation.

(ii) *Live-stock*.—Domestic animals are scarce near the coast owing to the prevalence of the tsetse fly, but in the centre and north stock-raising is carried on extensively. In 1913 the numbers were estimated as follows :

Horses 1,046	Sheep 126,682
Donkeys 112	Goats. 186,968
Oxen 117,378	Pigs 63,200

The cattle of Upper Dahomey are mainly of the small West African type, but near the Niger a more powerful zebu breed exists. The sheep are bred not for their wool, but for their meat, which in some cases is excellent. Goats are not so subject to tsetse attacks as other animals, and can be reared even in Lower Dahomey. They are exported in large numbers to Lagos. Two kinds of horses are bred in Upper Dahomey. Those of Gurma and Mossi are small but robust, while those of the Niger are larger animals, but have less power of endurance. Donkeys are common.

Wild animals are found chiefly in the north. There are a few elephants, eagerly hunted by the natives, but the amount of ivory obtained is negligible.

(b) Methods of Cultivation

Native methods of cultivation are still primitive, and a good many mistakes are made through rashness and inexperience. The wastefulness of the natives is illustrated by their reckless treatment of palm-trees ; the manufacture of palm-wine has now been prohibited, because the trees were destroyed in order to obtain it. The Government has five agricultural stations in the colony, at Porto Novo, Sakete-Bokutu, Kotonu, Tohue, and Niauli. The officials make experimental plantations, distribute seeds and plants, and give advice to the native farmers. The latter, though hard to convince of the desirability of any change, seem to be beginning to appreciate the merits of scientific treatment, and have shown a certain aptitude for agriculture. The district round Porto Novo, for example, is very well cultivated, and in the Whydah coco-nut plantations the natives, in dry seasons, cheerfully perform the regular waterings which are necessary, and in consequence lose very few plants.

(c) Forestry

The most important of the forest trees is the oil-palm, but there are also various trees which furnish hard timber, and an abundance of bamboos. Since the natives turned their attention to maize-growing, a danger has arisen that the clearings will become too numerous and the rainfall be diminished as the forest shrinks. This is particularly noticeable in the Allada zone. In 1900 a decree was issued to regulate forest affairs in Senegal and Dahomey, limiting the number of clearings permitted, providing that in place of trees cut down others of equally valuable kinds must be planted, and prohibiting the felling of trees or the making of clearings on slopes of 35 degrees or more.

(d) Land Tenure

Certain defined portions of the land, such as the sea-shore, the course of navigable streams, railways and roads, fortifications, &c., are public domain. This

may be occupied and built upon by the permission of the Lieutenant-Governor under certain specified conditions. Vacant lands, or lands apparently without an owner, are also the property of the State. For the rest, the land is held by the native chiefs on behalf of their tribes, and cannot be alienated to private owners except with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

(3) FISHERIES

Both the sea and rivers of Dahomey abound in fish; and oysters, of large size but poor flavour, are obtained in the lagoons. The natives of the south are eager fishermen, though their methods are primitive. The value of the fish annually exported to Nigeria and Togoland is more than half a million francs; and enormous quantities of smoked fish are consumed in the colony itself. The northern rivers also contain fish, but the natives there are not such keen fishermen.

(4) MINERALS

Iron ore is found in several forms, especially in Upper Dahomey; there are deposits of titanomagnetite and haematite at Mardaga and Firu in the Atakora, and limonite is worked on the western slopes of the Atakora and in Borgu. From the point of view of European colonists, however, the value of these deposits is highly problematical. They lie at a considerable distance from the coast, and there is no coal in Dahomey. There are deposits of haematite near Abome and of magnetite at Carnotville.

The Atakora also contains bauxite, kaolin (near Jugu), jasper, tourmaline, and garnets. It is not at present known in what quantities these exist or what other minerals may be present.

There is a transverse belt of limestone south of Abome, with which is connected a deposit of phosphate north-west of Whydah.

Building stone (gneiss and grit) is quarried in several parts of Lower Dahomey, especially near Porto Novo, Whydah, Abome, and Zanyanado.

(5) MANUFACTURES

There are no considerable native industries in Dahomey. In the north cloth is woven and dyed, though less of this will be done as European ways are adopted and the *pagnes*, or native waistcloths, go out of use. Leather, which also is dyed, is made into boots and other articles. The women make soap from palm oil or shea butter. In Lower Dahomey, seats, calabashes, and fetishes are made. The fibres of the colony are utilized for making ropes and mats.

(6) POWER

Porto Novo has electric lighting in the streets, the Government offices, and a few public buildings. The current is 230 volts, and the station at present has a Gnôme motor of 22 horse-power, an old Gnôme motor of 11 horse-power, and two Fabius Henrion dynamos, each of 14,400 watts. A much bigger installation will be necessary if the use of the light is to be extended to private consumers.

(C) COMMERCE

(1) DOMESTIC

(a) Principal Branches of Trade

Trading activity is naturally confined at present chiefly to the south, where the best means of communication exist. In Middle Dahomey the immigrant Yorubas show a good deal of business capacity, and peddle goods for the European merchants. Hausa traders travel all over Upper Dahomey, where their speech is the regular trade language. Traffic from across the Niger is not considerable; but some caravans come to Ilo and Gaya from Dosso, Fogha, Mahouri, and Sokoto, and proceed to Jugu, while others, from north of Sokoto, cross the river at Say or Niamey and

visit Gurma. They bring an inferior sort of salt, potash, leather goods, ostrich feathers, native stuffs, horses, donkeys, and sheep, and carry back kola-nuts, cloths, and sometimes spirits.

(b) *Towns, Markets, &c.*

Besides the ports, of which particulars have been given on pp. 18-20, no town is specially noticeable except Abome, which used to be the capital of the kingdom of the same name. Its population in 1915 was 12,000. Decauville lines connect the town with the railway station at Bohikon, 12 km. south-east.

In the interior, every station on the railway and every road junction has a certain commercial importance, as forming a centre to which produce can be brought. Jugu is at present the most important caravan centre of Upper Dahomey, and is likely to develop considerably when a motor service is inaugurated on the Route de l'Ouest, and still more when the railway extensions are carried out.

(c) *Organizations to promote Trade and Commerce*

There is a Chamber of Commerce at Porto Novo. Its operations extend over the Porto Novo, Kotonu, Whydah, Mono, Great Popo, and Abome zones.

(d) *Foreign Interests*

Contrary to the rule obtaining in most French possessions, British trade in Dahomey (and in the Ivory Coast) is given equality of treatment with French, for a period of thirty years from the treaty of June 14, 1898. Among the more notable British firms established in Dahomey before the war were John Holt & Co., of Liverpool, and John Walkden & Co., of Manchester. There was before the war a considerable sprinkling of German firms, among the more prominent

being J. K. Vietor & Co., and Noltenius & Paul, both of Bremen, and C. Goedelt of Hamburg. Great Britain has taken advantage of the gap left by the disappearance of the German factories. Among important newcomers to Dahomey are G. B. Ollivant & Co., textile merchants, of Manchester.

(e) *Methods of Economic Penetration*

There seems at present to be little opening in Dahomey for the small capitalist. It is necessary to grant the natives long credit, without which commercial transactions would be almost impossible. The usual method is to supply a native agent on credit with large quantities of trade goods, of which he disposes in the markets of the interior. It may be months before he delivers to his employer the equivalent in palm or other products, and it is not until these reach Europe that the merchant realizes on his transaction.

All the large firms in the past used to have their houses in the coast towns only, but with the extension of the railway branches have been opened farther inland.

Native requirements are rather specialized, and have to be studied carefully. A bale of 100 pieces of cotton must contain at least ten different designs, especially designs varying in shades of colour. Moreover, special widths and lengths are demanded. In supplying the African market, brightness and cheapness are wanted rather than durability.

(2) FOREIGN

The aggregate trade of Dahomey had been steadily on the increase from 1905 onwards, but in 1913 there was a decrease, which naturally was emphasized after the outbreak of war in the following year. The total value had risen from 18,366,673 francs in 1905 to

41,761,415 francs in 1912. In 1913 the total was 31,629,877 francs, which dropped to 25,486,196 francs in 1914.

(a) *Exports*

Quantities and Values.—The total value of the exports from Dahomey in 1913 was 16,477,473 francs. This was lower than the total for any of the three preceding years, in which the amounts were 17,886,254 francs (1910), 21,958,301 francs (1911), and 21,451,317 francs (1912). There was a further decline in 1914 to 13,420,675 francs. During the last twenty years, there have been some notable fluctuations, most of the marked decreases being due probably to bad seasons. As long ago as 1895 the exports amounted in value to 10,521,868 francs, while so recently as 1905 they stood at 7,634,149 francs. There was no very sudden increase from 1900, when railway construction began, but there was a succession of good years between 1908 and 1912. The following table shows the distribution and value of the exports from 1904 to 1914: ¹

<i>Year.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>French Colonies.</i>	<i>Other Countries.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
	<i>Francs.</i>	<i>Francs.</i>	<i>Francs.</i>	<i>Francs.</i>
1904	3,757,851	24,043	7,374,115	11,156,009
1905	2,709,656	17,672	4,906,821	7,634,149
1906	2,856,010	25,201	5,625,191	8,506,402
1907	3,906,654	47,952	5,716,377	9,670,983
1908	4,192,213	29,074	7,958,243	12,179,530
1909	4,834,013	14,631	11,501,970	16,350,614
1910	4,564,822	29,687	13,291,745	17,886,254
1911	5,419,872	26,035	16,512,394	21,958,301
1912	4,529,856	73,480	16,847,981	21,451,317
1913	4,109,119	313,591	12,054,763	16,477,473
1914	3,592,408	552,084	9,276,183	13,420,675

The principal articles exported are palm kernels, palm oil, maize, cotton, dried fish, copra, shea-nuts, and shea butter. In 1913 palm products represented more than 87 per cent. of the total export. The

¹ *Statistiques du Commerce des Colonies françaises*, 1914.

following table shows the quantities and values of the principal exports in 1913 and 1914:

<i>Product.</i>	<i>1913.</i>		<i>1914.</i>	
	<i>Quantity.</i> <i>Kg.</i>	<i>Value.</i> <i>Francs.</i>	<i>Quantity.</i> <i>Kg.</i>	<i>Value.</i> <i>Francs.</i>
Cocoa	7,182	10,651	6,520	9,782
Copra	236,071	82,625	199,237	74,998
Cotton	171,193	213,991	134,586	168,233
Dried fish	308,758	169,816	278,096	152,954
Kola-nuts	11,862	23,724	11,652	23,304
Maize	13,256,163	1,060,493	4,763,137	381,051
Palm kernels	26,371,438	10,103,939	21,238,379	7,655,336
Palm oil	7,971,220	3,886,515	6,622,121	3,593,300
Shea butter	169,841	76,429	78,238	35,208
Shea-nuts	136,850	32,981	340,435	78,029
Smoked shrimps	44,249	52,282	75,362	90,120
Miscellaneous	—	362,648	—	496,636
Totals	—	16,076,094	—	12,758,951

In comparison with palm products, other exports are at present quite secondary, but several products promise well for the future. Maize, for example, reached in 1913 a larger total than in any year since 1908. The figures are as follows: ¹

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Kg.</i>	<i>Year.</i>	<i>Kg.</i>
1908	19,974,000	1911	72,038
1909	9,333,539	1912	4,062,947
1910	2,055,349	1913	13,256,163

The export of raw cotton seems likely to increase. In 1913 Dahomey exported 171,193 kg., value 213,991 francs, as against 132,343 kg., value 165,430 francs, in 1911. There had been a fall to 123,386 kg. in 1912. With regard to the copra export, it should be noted that this is not all local produce, but includes copra prepared from coco-nuts sent in from Nigeria.

Countries of Destination.—Germany was in the past the chief market for Dahomey exports, particularly for palm kernels, as Hamburg had practically a monopoly of the machinery for crushing these and extracting the oil. Palm oil, on the other hand, prepared from the pericarp, was and is exported chiefly to Marseilles.

¹ *Rapport d'Ensemble Annuel*, 1913.

Great Britain has under war conditions taken most of the trade which used to be German, and nut-crushing mills have been set up at Hull and Liverpool. France, on the other hand, has not greatly improved her position. Her share of the export trade has risen from 24 per cent. to 26 per cent., whereas England's has risen from 7 per cent. to 18 per cent.

(b) *Imports*

Quantities and Values.—The total value of imports for 1914, viz. 12,065,521 francs, was not much higher than the total of twenty years earlier, viz. 10,771,789 francs in 1894. However, in 1912 the imports had reached the record total of 20,310,098 francs, and this was the highest of an ascending series from 1908. Full details are given in the following table:¹

<i>Year.</i>	<i>France.</i> <i>Francs.</i>	<i>French</i> <i>Colonies.</i> <i>Francs.</i>	<i>Other</i> <i>Countries.</i> <i>Francs.</i>	<i>Total.</i> <i>Francs.</i>
1904	1,776,275	360	8,904,603	10,681,238
1905	2,461,276	—	8,271,248	10,732,524
1906	3,762,829	1,239	6,750,145	10,514,213
1907	3,199,537	—	8,455,775	11,655,312
1908	2,598,841	694	8,137,843	10,737,378
1909	2,358,911	1,440	11,855,645	14,215,996
1910	3,841,197	2,326	13,995,230	17,838,753
1911	4,207,116	—	15,466,423	19,673,539
1912	4,389,795	299	15,920,004	20,310,098
1913	3,333,994	114,658	11,703,752	15,152,404
1914	3,197,519	200,473	8,667,529	12,065,521

Among the articles imported are cotton and other textiles, spirits, tobacco, paraffin, sugar, matches, yarn, machinery, glass and crystal, salt, and ready-made garments. Cotton tissues take the first place. The import of ready-made clothing is increasing as the natives adopt European ways. The following table² shows the value of the imports in 1913:

¹ *Statistiques du Commerce des Colonies françaises*, 1914.

² *Rapport d'Ensemble Annuel* for 1914.

<i>Article.</i>	<i>Value.</i> <i>Francs.</i>
Cotton tissues	3,468,723
Flour	129,569
Galvanized and corrugated iron	241,602
Gin and trade spirit	1,271,323
Glass and crystal	229,108
Kola-nuts	180,258
Machinery	271,866
Maize	57,482
Matches	305,884
Paraffin	715,918
Rice	93,818
Salt	214,025
Ships' biscuits	59,034
Soap	154,330
Sugar	316,099
Timber	174,994
Tobacco	893,698
Yarn	292,754
Miscellaneous	6,081,919
Total	15,152,404

Countries of Origin.—Cotton textiles come mainly from Great Britain, which in 1913 supplied goods to the value of 2,884,070 francs. Germany came next, with 214,913 francs, Nigeria third, with 173,519 francs, and France fourth, with 108,740 francs. Cotton imports from Togoland in the same year amounted to 27,214 francs only, but if it had not been for German restrictions they would have been much larger, and in 1914 their value rose to 86,310 francs. Silks and velvets are mainly of German manufacture. Foodstuffs for European consumption, sea salt, and gunpowder, are supplied mainly by France.

(c) Customs and Tariffs

The heaviest import duties are charged on tobacco, wines, and spirits. On the 100 kg., leaf tobacco is charged 75 francs, cigars 500 francs, cigarettes 350 francs, and other kinds of manufactured tobacco 230 francs. The duty on wines and spirits varies according to the amount of alcohol they contain, the maximum, for pure alcohol, being 220 francs per hectolitre. On each 100 kg., rock-salt pays 1 fr. 50 c.,

sea salt 1 franc, gunpowder 50 francs. An *ad valorem* duty of 10 per cent. is charged on Guinea cotton, coffee, bananas, and other articles not specifically taxed or exempted, and a 20 per cent. *ad valorem* duty is charged on fire-arms. Among the articles exempted from import duty are living animals, fresh meat, fish, fruit, and vegetables; Government stores; spices, palm kernels, sesame, ground-nuts, kola-nuts, gum copal, and rubber; agricultural machinery and seed corn; building materials; coal; books and scientific instruments.

The only export duty is 7 per cent on rubber.

(D) FINANCE

(1) *Public Finance*

The Local Budget for Dahomey was created in 1889, and in 1904 the financial position was more satisfactory than in any other colony in French West Africa. In that year, however, a general budget for the whole group was superimposed upon the local budgets, and to this were diverted such substantial sources of income as customs duties and railway receipts. Grants can be made from the general to the local budget, however, and Dahomey in this way receives an annual subvention, which amounted in 1913 to 2,000,000 francs. The official return¹ gives the colony's total receipts for that year as 4,923,201 francs, so that 2,923,201 francs came from local sources.

The main source of revenue in Dahomey is a poll-tax, which has been in force since 1899, and in 1913 brought in 1,299,941 francs, or more than 44 per cent. of the total receipts. Every native over ten years of age has to pay this tax, which varies from 1 fr. 25 c. to 3 francs per head according to the district. The receipts from the Porto Novo-Sakete tramway figure in the local budget. Other large items on the credit side were patents and licences (200,000 francs), receipts

¹ *Rapport d'Ensemble Annuel*, 1913.

from the motor transport service (95,000 francs), charges for the right to carry fire-arms (90,000 francs), receipts from Kotonu wharf (80,000 francs), and profits from the sale of domain lands (60,000 francs).

The total expenditure for 1913 was 4,541,769 francs, so that there was a credit balance of 381,432 francs.

(2) *Currency*

Coin is in general use in Dahomey, and even in the interior barter is falling into disfavour. The natives for some years showed a preference for English coin, which was imported in large quantities from Lagos. In 1902, however, a duty of 25 per cent. was imposed on all foreign money entering Dahomey, and the result is that to-day the only currency in circulation is French gold, silver, and copper, and notes of the Banque de l'Afrique Occidentale Française. A decree of 1903 forbade the sale of piastres and other coins likely to be mistaken for French money.

Cowries are also used as a medium of exchange. At Whydah, 50 cowries make a string, 50 strings a head, 4 heads a dollar. Inland the value of the cowrie is lower.

(3) *Banking*

The Banque de l'Afrique Occidentale Française has had a branch at Porto Novo since 1903. The bank is supported by the French Government, and is under Government supervision.

(E) GENERAL REMARKS

There seems no reason why the economic development of Dahomey should not proceed rapidly, if means of transport and communication are provided. The colony has a fertile soil and varied products of considerable value, the output of which can probably be greatly increased as the natives are encouraged by the Government and are given opportunities of learning better agricultural methods. The people of the colony

live peaceably together in spite of differences of race and religion, and there is little serious resistance to French authority. The Government has already done much for trade in starting the railway scheme, improving Kotonu wharf, and getting two roads prepared for motor transport. Communications, however, must be still further improved, if the commercial activity of the coast is to be extended to the interior, and Upper Dahomey brought into closer touch both with the south of the colony and with the caravan routes to the Niger.

APPENDIX

I

ARRANGEMENT CONCERNING THE DELIMITATION OF THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH POSSESSIONS ON THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA

Signed at Paris, August 10, 1889

Art. IV.—Sec. 1. On the Slave Coast, the line of demarcation between the spheres of influence of the two Powers shall be identical with the meridian which intersects the territory of Porto Novo at the Ajarra Creek, leaving Pokrah or Pokéa to the English Colony of Lagos. It shall follow the above-mentioned meridian as far as the 9th degree of north latitude, where it shall stop.

To the south it shall terminate on the sea-shore after having passed through the territory of Appah, the capital of which shall continue to belong to England.

II

CONVENTION BETWEEN FRANCE AND GERMANY CONFIRMING THE PROTOCOL OF JULY 9, 1897, FOR THE DELIMITATION OF THE GERMAN POSSESSION OF TOGO AND THE FRENCH POSSES- SIONS OF DAHOMEY AND THE SUDAN

Signed at Paris, July 23, 1897

Art. I.—La frontière partira de l'intersection de la côte avec le méridien de l'Île Bayol, se confondra avec ce méridien jusqu'à la rive sud de la lagune qu'elle suivra jusqu'à une distance de 100 mètres environ au delà de la pointe est de l'Île Bayol, remontera ensuite directement au nord jusqu'au midistance de la rive sud et de la rive nord de la lagune ; puis suivra les sinuosités de la lagune à égale distance des deux rives jusqu'au thalweg du Mono, qu'elle suivra jusqu'au 7^e degré de latitude nord.

De l'intersection du thalweg du Mono avec le 7° degré de latitude nord, la frontière rejoindra par ce parallèle le méridien de l'Île Bayol, qui servira de limite jusqu'à son intersection avec le parallèle passant à égale distance de Bassila et de Penesoulou. De ce point, elle gagnera la Rivière Kara suivant une ligne équidistante des chemins de Bassila à Bafilo par Kirikri et de Penesoulou à Séméré par Adeljo, et ensuite des chemins de Sudu à Séméré et d'Aledjo à Séméré de manière à passer à égale distance de Daboni et d'Aledjo ainsi que de Sudu et d'Aledjo. Elle descendra ensuite le thalweg de la Rivière Kara sur une longueur de 5 kilom. et de ce point remontera en ligne droite vers le nord jusqu'au 10° degré de latitude nord, Séméré devant dans tous les cas rester à la France.

De là, la frontière se dirigera directement sur un point situé à égale distance entre Djé et Gandou, laissant Djé à la France et Gando à l'Allemagne et gagnera le 11° degré de latitude nord en suivant une ligne parallèle à la route de Sansanné-Mango à Pama et distante de celle-ci de 30 kilom. Elle se prolongera ensuite vers l'ouest sur le 11° degré de latitude nord jusqu'à la Volta blanche de manière à laisser en tout cas Pougno à la France et Koun-Djari à l'Allemagne, puis elle rejoindra par le thalweg de cette rivière le 10° degré de latitude nord qu'elle suivra jusqu'à son intersection avec le méridien 3° 52' ouest de Paris (1° 32' ouest de Greenwich).

III

CONVENTION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE FOR THE DELIMITATION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE POSSESSIONS TO THE WEST OF THE NIGER, AND OF THEIR RESPECTIVE POSSESSIONS AND SPHERES OF INFLUENCE TO THE EAST OF THAT RIVER

Signed at Paris, June 14, 1898

Art. II.—The frontier between the British Colony of Lagos and the French Colony of Dahomey, which was delimited on the ground by the Anglo-French Boundary Commission of 1895, and which is described in the Report signed by the Commissioners of the two nations on the 12th October, 1896, shall henceforward be recognized as the frontier separating the British and French possessions from the sea to the 9th degree of north latitude.

From the point of intersection of the River Ocpara with the 9th degree of north latitude, as determined by the said Commissioners, the frontier separating the British and French possessions shall proceed in a northerly direction, and follow a line passing west of the lands belonging to the following places, viz. Tabira, Okuta (Okouta), Boria, Tere, Gbani, Ashigere (Yassikéra), and Dekala.

From the most westerly point of the lands belonging to Dekala the frontier shall be drawn in a northerly direction so as to coincide as far as possible with the line indicated on Map No. 1 annexed to the present Protocol, and shall strike the right bank of the Niger at a point situated 10 miles (16·093 metres) up stream from the centre of the town of Gere (Guiris) (the port of Ilo), measured as the crow flies.

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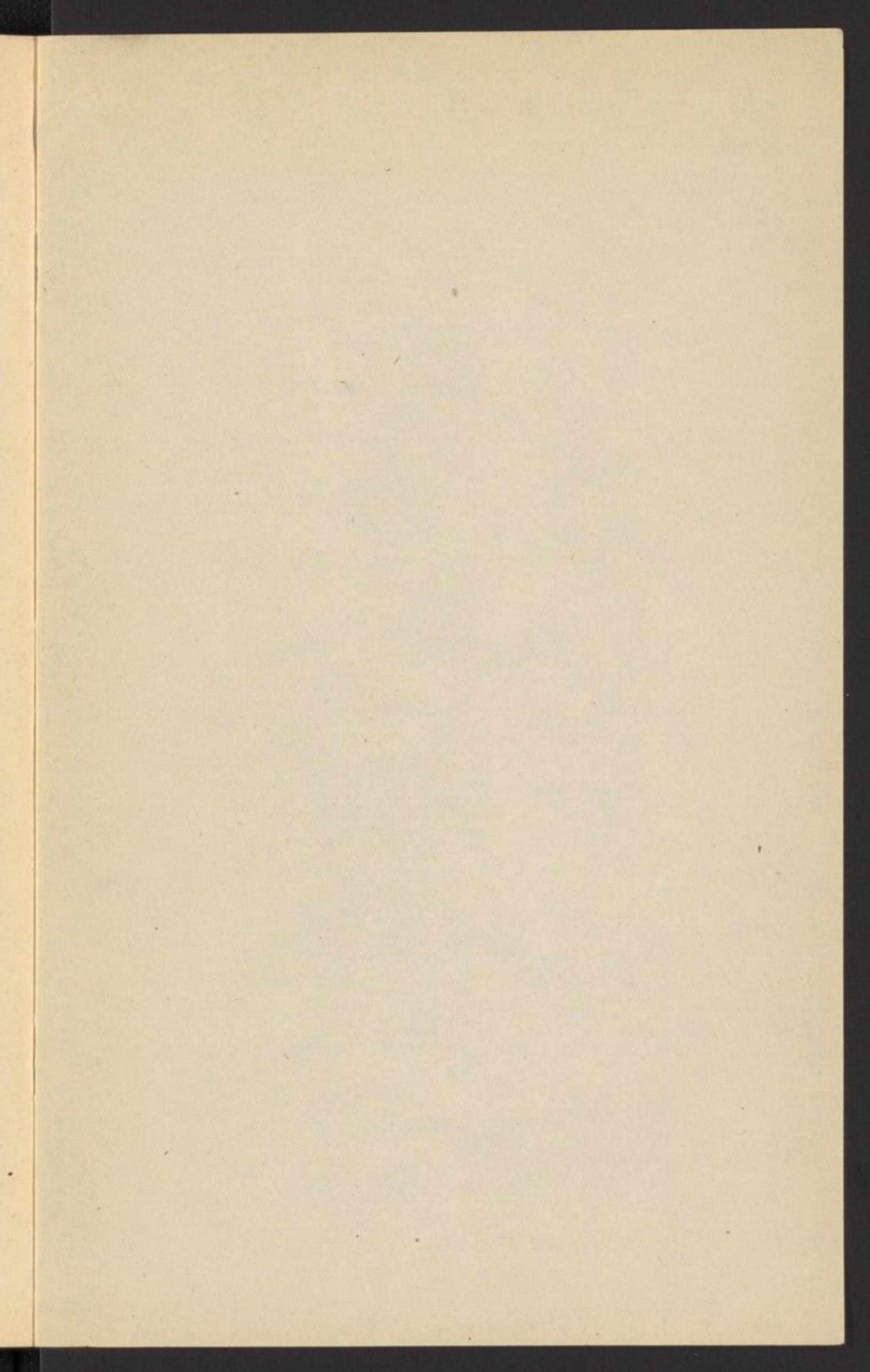
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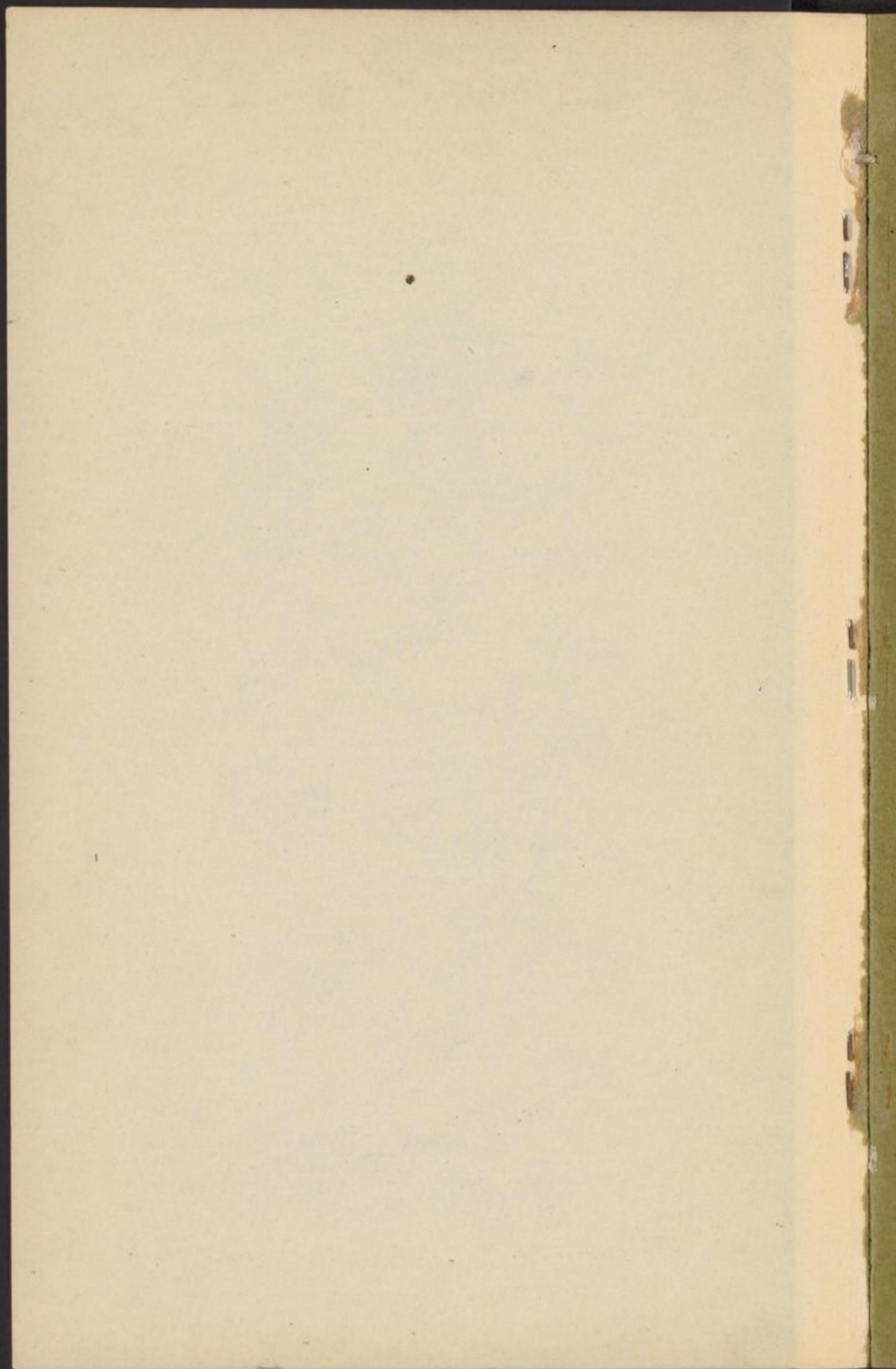
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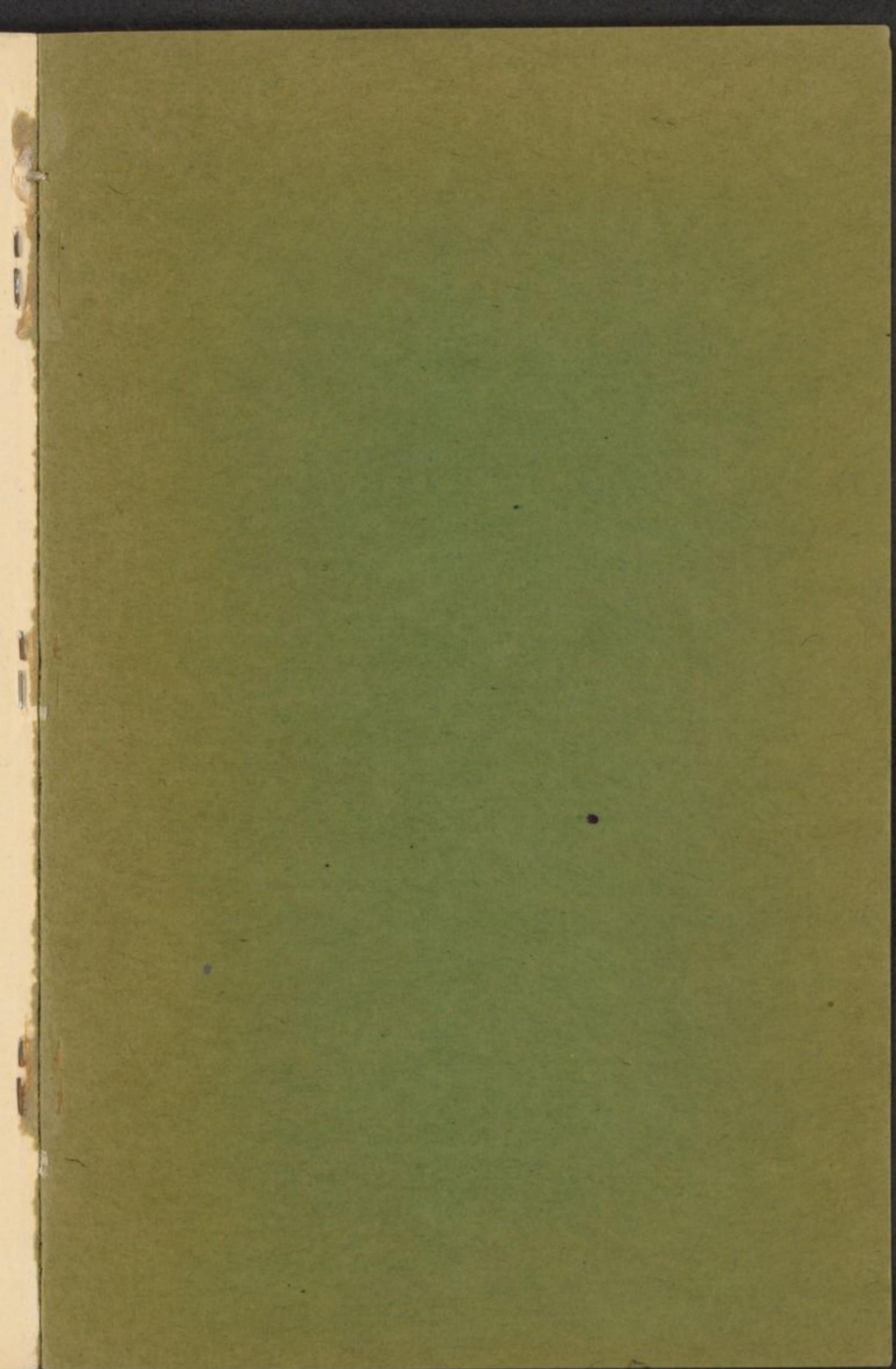
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MAPS

Dahomy is covered by the War Office map 'West Africa' (G.S.G.S. 2434), on the scale of 1 : 6,336,000, 1903 (additions 1914, boundaries corrected 1919); also by the map 'Anglo-French Boundary from the Gulf of Guinea to the Niger' (T.S., G.S. No. 2075), scale 1 : 1,000,000, revised 1906; and by sheets 61 and 73 (old numbering) of the War Office map of Africa (G.S.G.S. 1539), on the scale of 1 : 1,000,000. The southern part of Dahomey is covered by 2 sheets (73 B and 73 F) of the G.S.G.S. map on the scale 1 : 250,000.







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