

AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

A report from the Secretary of State, together with the correspondence of George W. Slacum, relative to the African slave trade.

DECEMBER 22, 1845.

Read, and laid upon the table.

To the House of Representatives:

I communicate to the House of Representatives, in reply to their resolution of the 25th of February last, a report from the Secretary of State, together with the correspondence of George W. Slacum, late consul of the United States at Rio de Janeiro, with the Department of State, relating to the African slave trade.

JAMES K. POLK.

WASHINGTON, *December 19, 1845.*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, December 8, 1845.

The Secretary of State, to whom has been referred the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 25th of February, 1845, requesting the President to cause to be communicated to that House, "if not incompatible with the public interest, the correspondence of George W. Slacum, late consul of the United States at Rio de Janeiro, with the Department of State, relating to the African slave trade," has the honor to submit to the President the accompanying copies of the correspondence requested.

The greater portion of this correspondence was, in compliance with a resolution of the Senate of the 21st February, 1844, transmitted to that body, and forms part of the printed documents of the 1st session of the 28th Congress.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

List of accompanying papers.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster, (one enclosure,)	September 4, 1841—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster, (two enclosures,)	September 13, 1841—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster, (one enclosure,)	September 13, 1841—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster, (one enclosure,)	September 14, 1841—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster,	October 5, 1841—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster, (two enclosures,)	November 24, 1841—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster,	May 1, 1842—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster, (two enclosures,)	July 1, 1843—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Upshur, (two enclosures,)	October 6, 1843—ext't.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster, (one enclosure,)	June 10, 1843—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Upshur, (two enclosures,)	February 12, 1844—copy.
Mr. Slacum to Mr. Upshur, (one enclosure,)	April 1, 1844—copy.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster.—[COPY.]

[No. 35.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, September 4, 1841.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, a document, relating to certain proceedings on the part of Matthew Hale and W. P. Sumner, master and mate of the brig "Sophia," of New York.

Sumner sailed about three weeks since for Philadelphia, his native place, and Hale embarked five days ago for New York, in the barque "Nahant," Huffington, master.

It seems that the "Sophia" arrived at this port during my visit to the United States, under command of Augustus W. Krook, who, by the register, appeared to be the owner, and sailed hence for the coast of Africa, under charge of the said Matthew Hale, the former mate, on the 21st of February last. Krook, I believe, returned to New York.

Whether the "Sophia" was sold here, deliverable on the coast, or sold upon her arrival there, I have not yet been able to ascertain. My impression, however, is, that she was sold here. But be this as it may, on her arrival at Benguela, coast of Africa, she was at once transformed into a slaver, put under the Montevideo or Banda Oriental flag, and loaded with a full cargo of slaves—as near as I can learn, seven hundred and fifty.

When the vessel sailed from this port, two Portuguese were *shipped as seamen*, who, upon her arrival on the coast, took charge as captain and mate, to navigate her to Brazil—Matthew Hale and William P. Sumner returning in her as *passengers*.

On the voyage, the Portuguese captain and mate died, when, I understand, Hale took command.

They escaped the British vessels of war, reached the coast, landed about *five hundred* slaves, to the north of this port, and burned the vessel.

Hale and Sumner found their way to Bahia, there took passage in a steamer, and arrived here—the former having half the American register in his possession, which he delivered to me.

The document now transmitted is the deposition of Hale and Sumner to the fact of the death of the Portuguese captain, which they made at the request of some members of his family; and although it refers principally to that event, it yet contains the fact, that Hale and Sumner were on board.

I have for some time been endeavoring to ascertain the fate of the American crew left on the African coast, and had hoped that some of them would have found their way back; but, from information received this morning, I regret to say, all have perished, with the exception of one man, who is on board the brig "Ceylon," of Salem, Dodgley, master, now on the coast.

The "Ceylon" may be expected at Salem in December or January.

I am obliged to give this hasty and imperfect sketch, as the vessel will sail early in the morning, and I am in hopes she will reach home before the "Nahant."

Should you deem it proper to order the arrest of Hale and Sumner, it would be well that the collector or other officer at Salem look out for the arrival of the "Ceylon," as the only witness may be on board.

I much fear that a repetition of the scenes at Havana will be attempted here, but I feel confident I shall be enabled to prevent it. At all events, I will do my duty fearlessly and faithfully.

By Commodore Ridgely, who knows all my views upon these matters,

I will do myself the honor to make a full communication upon the subject of the American trade from this place to Africa, accompanied by such suggestions as may appear to me to be worthy of your consideration.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,
Secretary of State, Washington.

Translation of a certified copy of evidence taken before the Portuguese Vice Consul at Rio de Janeiro, proving the death of Joaquim Pedro de Ferreira, a seaman on board the brig Bella União.

Most Illustrious Vice Consul of Portugal:

Donna Henriqueta Emilia de Almeida Ferreira declares that she desires to obtain a certificate of the evidence which she produced in this consulate general of the death of her husband, Joaquim Pedro Ferreira; and, with that object, she prays that you will favor her by ordering a certificate thereof to be made out for her. Let the certificate be delivered, as requested.

MONIZ, *Vice Consul.*

CONSULATE GENERAL OF PORTUGAL, *July 10, 1841.*

I, Francisco João Moniz, vice consul, having charge of the consulate general of Portugal, at Rio de Janeiro, do certify, that in the archives of this consulate general is the document of evidence, of which the following is a copy:

YEAR 1841—*Consulate General of Portugal at Rio de Janeiro.*

Donna Henriqueta Emilia de Almeida Ferreira, justifying Joaquim Pedro Ferreira, a Portuguese subject, deceased, husband of the witness, being the object of the testimony.

PETITION.

Most Illustrious Vice Consul, charged with the Consulate General of Portugal at Rio de Janeiro:

Donna Henriqueta Emilia de Almeida Ferreira, widow of Joaquim Pedro Ferreira, who, for the sake of justice, appears to prove the death of her husband before this consulate general, prays you to order her testimony to be taken in favor to her.

ORDER.

Let the testimony be received, as requested.

MONIZ, *Vice Consul.*

RIO DE JANEIRO, *July 6, 1841.*

Testimony produced by Donna Henriqueta Emilia de Almeida Ferreira, respecting the death of her husband, Joaquim Pedro Ferreira.

On the 6th of July, 1841, at the chancery of this consulate general of

Portugal, in Rio de Janeiro, before the vice consul charged with the same consulate general, Donna Henriqueta Emilia de Almeida Ferreira appeared, to give testimony; as also the witnesses whose names, ages, and places of birth, appear in the following:

I, José Francisco de Borja Xavier Socin, wrote it.

First witness.—G. W. Sumner, a bachelor, aged 24 years, a pilot, (probably mate,) born in Philadelphia, being sworn on the Holy Gospels, and being questioned as to the contents of the above requisition, which was read to him by me, declared and said: That he, the witness, being a passenger in the Oriental brig *Bella Uniao*, knows, from his having been present, that Joaquim Pedro Ferreira, a Portuguese subject, husband of the person justifying, died in sight of the island of Trinidad, of an attack of fever, in the month of June last past. And his evidence having been read to him, he found it correct, and signed it.

I, José Francisco de Borja Xavier Socin, wrote it.

FRANCISCO JOAO MONIZ, *Vice Consul.*

G. W. SUMNER.

Second witness.—Matthew Hale, a bachelor, aged 27 years, a native of New York, being sworn on the Holy Gospels, and questioned as to the contents of the above requisition, which was read to him by me, declared and said: That he, the witness, being a passenger in the Oriental brig *Bella Uniao*, knows, from having been present, that Joaquim Pedro Ferreira, the husband of the person justifying, died on board the said brig, in the month of June last, in sight of the island of Trinidad, of an attack of fever. And his evidence having been read to him, and found correct, he signed it.

I, José Francisco de Borja Xavier Socin, wrote it.

FRANCISCO JOAO MONIZ, *Vice Consul.*

MATTHEW HALE.

Third witness.—Manuel Escorcio, aged 39 years, born in the island of Madeira, a Portuguese subject, by profession a seaman, being sworn on the Holy Gospels, and questioned respecting the contents of the above requisition, which was read to him by me, declared and said: That he, the witness, had been a seaman in the crew of the Oriental brig *Bella Uniao*; that he knows, from having been present, that Joaquim Pedro Ferreira, the husband of the person justifying, died on board the said brig, in the month of June last past, in sight of the island of Trinidad, of an attack of fever. And his evidence having been read over to him, and found correct, he signed it.

I, José Francisco de Borja Xavier Socin, wrote it.

FRANCISCO JOAO MONIZ, *Vice Consul.*

MANUEL ESCORCIO made a cross.

Done in compliance with the petition on the second page, after examining various witnesses. Let the person justifying receive the depositions as she asks, and let the present evidence be placed in the archives.

FRANCISCO JOAO MONIZ, *Vice Consul.*

CONSULATE GENERAL OF PORTUGAL AT RIO DE JANEIRO, *July 8, 1841.*

And nothing more is contained in this document of evidence, of which

I caused the present copy to be made, signed by myself, and sealed with the seal of the consulate of Portugal, at Rio de Janeiro, on the 10th of July, 1841.

FRANCISCO JOAO MONIZ, *Vice Consul.*

[Seal of the royal arms.]

And nothing more is contained in this document, which I deliver to the person requiring it, through the undersigned notary, well and faithfully extracted, and signed by myself, in this court, and city of Rio de Janeiro, on the 26th of August, 1841.

I, Joaquim José de Castro, wrote and signed it.

[A flourish, and name illegible.]

JOAQUIM JOSE DE CASTRO.

[COPY.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

I, the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, hereby [certify] the signature opposed to the foregoing document to be that of Joaquim José de Castro, notary public of this city, and that faith and credit ought to be given to the same.

In testimony whereof, I hereunto set my hand, and affix the seal of this office, this 4th day of September, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster.—[COPY.]

[No. 36.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, September 13, 1841.

SIR: With reference to my last despatch, No. 35, duplicate enclosed, I have the honor to transmit two depositions in regard to the American crew of the brig "Sophia," Hale, master.

By these documents you will perceive that four of the unfortunate seamen are accounted for; the fifth, I am told, died on shore at Benguela, and the sixth and last was taken on board the brig "Ceylon," of Salem.

I hope both Hale and Sumner may be arrested, as it will be for them to show in what capacity and under what circumstances they made the voyage in the slaver "Bella Uniao," formerly the "Sophia," of New York.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,
Secretary of State, Washington.

[COPY.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

Personally appeared before the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, Andrew Beauvais, master of the brig "Him-

maleh," of New York, who, being duly sworn, deposed as follows: That while said brig was at anchor in Benguela bay, coast of Africa, on or about the 1st of June last past, he found two seamen on the beach in a destitute condition; that the deponent was induced, from a feeling of charity, to take them on board, when they represented themselves to be a part of the crew of the brig "Sophia," of New York, Matthew Hale, master; that they, with the rest of the crew, had been put on shore, the "Sophia" having been sold for a slaver. And deponent further said, that one of the seamen so taken on board the "Himmaleh" died while the vessel remained at Benguela, and the other at Angola; that the aforesaid seamen declared to deponent that the said brig "Sophia" did take in a cargo of slaves at Benguela, and sailed for the coast of Brazil, under the Banda Oriental flag, the aforesaid Matthew Hale, and William P. Sumner, the mate, being on board at the time of her departure.

A. BEAUVAIS.

Sworn before me, this 11th day of September, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

I, the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and faithful copy of the original on record at this consulate.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this 13th day of September, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

[COPY.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

Personally appeared before the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, W. E. Newcomb, master of the brig "William Jones," of New York, who, being duly sworn, declared as follows: That while said brig was at anchor in Benguela bay, coast of Africa, on or about the 1st of July last past, he (declarant) was solicited to take on board two destitute American seamen, found on the beach, and who stated they were part of the crew of the brig "Sophia," of New York, Matthew Hale, master; that they, with the rest of the crew, were landed at that place, the "Sophia" having been converted into a slaver. And declarant further said, that he did take the aforesaid seamen on board the "William Jones," as an act of humanity, and with the intention of conveying them to Rio de Janeiro, to be placed under the protection of the American consul; that, at the time of receiving the aforesaid seamen on board, they were in a weak and sickly condition, and, notwithstanding all care and aid on the part of the declarant, they both died, the one on the 14th and the other on the 23d day out.

W. E. NEWCOMB.

Sworn before me, this 10th day of September, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro*:

I, the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and faithful copy of the original on record at this consulate.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this 13th day of September, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster.—[COPY.]

[No. 37.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, September 13, 1841.

SIR: Herewith I have the honor to transmit the deposition of Benjamin Lombard, Nicholas Lasher, and John Brown, late seamen on board the brig "Solon," of Baltimore.

This vessel, per register, belonged to Messrs. Benjamin C. Buck & Son, of Baltimore. She arrived at this port, from Baltimore, on the 23d of February last, under command of Charles Brown, and sailed hence for the coast of Africa on the 4th of April following, under charge of W. C. Wright, former mate.

From the deposition of the seamen, I think there can be no doubt she was at one time intended for and actually commenced fitting as a slaver. Indeed, Captain Beauvais, of the brig "Himmaleh," whose name appears to the deposition in the case of the "Sophia," and is referred to in the one now enclosed, intimated a confirmation of the statement made by Lombard, Lasher, and Brown; and I have no doubt, were he brought before a competent tribunal, he would prove much more.

The "Solon" returned here but a few days after her arrival; and while I was endeavoring to trace her proceedings, she was ostensibly sold by her consignee, transferred to a Brazilian, and her register surrendered. There can be but little doubt, however, that she was sold *secretly* before she went to Africa, and sailed under a charter-party.

An investigation of the case at home, and a reference to the books of Buck & Son, will, I think, prove the fact that the proceeds of the "Solon" were remitted when Brown left the vessel. W. C. Wright sailed two days since, in the brig "Fabius," for Baltimore, and Captain Beauvais will soon sail for New York.

Should the testimony of Beauvais be required, he may be heard of at the counting-house of Messrs. Goodhue & Co., of New York.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,
Secretary of State, Washington.

[COPY.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro*:

Personally appeared before the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, Benjamin Lombard, John Brown, and Nich-

olas Lasher, seamen on board the brig "Solon," of Baltimore, W. C. Wright, master, who, being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposed and said as follows: That they (deponents) sailed from the port of Rio de Janeiro on board said brig, in capacity aforesaid, on or about the fourth day of April last past, on a voyage to the coast of Africa; that they arrived at the port of Angola on or about the 28th day of May following; that the second or third day thereafter, they commenced discharging cargo, consisting of pipes of aqua ardente, or brandy, casks of wine, bales and boxes of dry goods, tobacco, and rice. And deponents further said, that, on the departure of said brig from Rio de Janeiro, on the aforesaid intended voyage, there went as passengers two Portuguese, Salquir and José; that these two persons lived in the cabin during the outward voyage, but, on the arrival of the vessel at Angola, the said Salquir left the vessel and lived on shore, for the purpose, as deponents heard and believe, of furnishing and arranging fixtures for the vessel as a slaver; that the said José remained on board, giving directions for stowing the hold, and placing the large water butts when they were brought on board; that he (the said José) went to market for the ship, and acted otherwise as though he had authority.

And deponents further declared and said, that while at anchor in the aforesaid port of Angola, four large water butts, supposed to contain four common hogsheads of water each, were brought on board upon two different occasions—that is, two on one night and two on the succeeding night; that great secrecy was observed, the awning let down on one side, and the butts taken in on the same side, to prevent being seen from Portuguese vessels of war lying near; that the crew of the said brig Solon were not called to assist in taking in the butts on the first night, that work having been done by negroes from the shore.

And deponents further declared, that the said brig was measured from the butts up to the beam by an iron hoop straightened, and the hatches measured fore and aft and thwartships, all under the direction of the said José; and, further, that the said John Brown was ordered by the said Wright to make a number of bungs for water casks, and several boxes for pumps; and that, in obedience to such order, he (the said Brown) did make boxes sufficient for eight pumps, and, with the rest of the crew, about fifty bungs for water pipes.

That these indications and preparations left no doubt on the minds of deponents that the said brig "Solon" was being fitted for a slaver, especially as the said José told deponent, (John Brown,) who understands Portuguese, that such was the fact.

And deponent (John Brown) further declared, that the said José told him that the brig was to be sent down the coast to Cabinda, to take in a cargo of slaves, and that the aforesaid Salquir was to take command, and he (the said José) to act as mate of the said brig "Solon" on her return voyage to Brazil. * * * That they, (deponents,) with the remainder of the original crew, were to be put on shore at Cabinda, and their places supplied by a Portuguese crew, to be sent down from Angola.

And deponents further declared, that, during the time of the preparations before described, the American flag was flying on board said brig, and that she retained her American character. And deponents further said, that they heard and believe that the preparations and fittings were suspended, and the slave voyage abandoned, by the advice of Captain Beauvais,

of the American brig "Himmaleh," just arrived on the coast. And further deponents said not.

BENJAMIN LOMBARD.
NICHOLAS LASHER.
JOHN BROWN, his + mark.

Witness to signature of John Brown.
C. FEARON.

Sworn before me, this 27th day of August, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

I, the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and faithful copy of the original on record at this consulate.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this sixth day of September, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster.

[No. 38.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, September 14, 1841.

SIR: The communications which I had the honor to address to you yesterday had reference to the cases of the "Sophia" and "Solon." I will now take leave to submit to your consideration the case of the brig "Pilgrim," of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. By the date of the enclosed correspondence between our chargé d'affaires, Mr. Hunter, and myself, you will perceive that it took place a short time before my departure for the United States; and I think, had Mr. Hunter taken the same view of the matter that I did, a stop would have been put to these secret sales and open charter-parties; and that our flag would no longer be prostituted to the interests of foreigners.

The "Pilgrim" arrived here in the year 1840, consigned to Mr. James Birkhead, of this city, merchant; she was the property of Mark Sheafe, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Theodore Sheafe came out as supercargo. The vessel sailed hence for the river Platte with her original outward cargo on board.

At Montevideo, Theodore Sheafe fell dead in the street, and the consignees of the "Pilgrim" at that port despatched her to Rio de Janeiro; on her arrival here, she was again consigned to Mr. Birkhead, and loaded for the coast of Africa. When her lading was completed, the master, a young man named Hill, called at the consulate, and stated that he had purchased the vessel; that she was then loaded on freight; and that he wished the register and vessel transferred to him, as he was ready to clear. I remarked to him, that it would be necessary, in the first place, to show me his authority to sell, as I was aware of the sudden death of Mr. Theodore Sheafe, and supposed the power he held ceased upon that event.

The master then produced authority, given to him in case of accident to Mr. Sheafe; but upon reading his letter of instructions from Mark Sheafe, the owner, I observed he, (the master,) was upon monthly wages of \$45; and as the brig had been out from Portsmouth only five months, I expressed my surprise at his good fortune, and requested to see the consignee.

Mr. Birkhead soon appeared, and confirmed the sale; upon which, I asked if he had any objection to make oath to the fact. This he declined; and, after some conversation, admitted that the vessel was sold to a foreigner; that he had received the purchase money; that the vessel was fitted out, and her expenses paid, by the foreign purchaser; and that she sailed at his (the foreigner's) risk; but added, that the purchase was not complete, as no bill of sale or transfer had been made, and none would be made until the vessel's return. I replied, that, under these circumstances, I could not give up the register and clear the vessel; that the sale was complete, the equitable interest being vested in the foreigner; that she was to all intents and purposes his vessel, and that he had given a valuable consideration. The case was then submitted to Mr. Hunter, who, aware of all the facts and arguments here related, decided against my position.

An interview was then had by Mr. Hunter with the foreign purchaser and Mr. Birkhead, at the counting-house of the latter; after which, Mr. Hunter informed me the sale had been cancelled, and a charter-party entered into; and that I would not be justified in withholding the papers of the vessel. She was accordingly cleared for Africa; returned here after my departure; was sold to an American captain, named Haley; loaded, I understand, by the first purchaser, cleared for St. Thomas, coast of Africa; but found her way to St. Thomas, West Indies, where Haley sold vessel and cargo—the vessel to his brother, who reached New Orleans, and there obtained a new register; and the "Pilgrim" sailed some time since from Boston, on a foreign voyage.

Haley, no doubt, covered the property for the foreigner; and, as all the papers were in his name, the foreigner, who I believe to be Brazilian, has lost vessel and cargo.

During my absence two other vessels, the brigs "William Jones" and "Himmaleh," owned by Messrs. Goodhue & Co. New York, have been chartered, and made the voyage to Africa. They returned a few days ago, and have surrendered their registers, under a sale alleged to have been made since their arrival.

I present these cases for your consideration, as well to show the plan that has been pursued during my absence, as to suggest those measures which, in my opinion, will enable me to check it:

1. To oblige, by law, every master and consignee, or agent, upon clearing a vessel from any port in Brazil for the coast of Africa, to make oath before the consul, that the persons named in the register are the true and only owners of the vessel at that time, and for the said intended voyage; and that no other person has any interest, direct or indirect, in her.
2. To oblige, in like manner, the master to present to the consul his manifest, and make oath to the truth of it.
3. To oblige, in like manner, the master to swear that the vessel is actually bound to the port cleared for.

It occurs to me, that something like the above would go far to prevent these abuses of the American flag and register.

I understand that very high prices are paid for an American vessel by

Brazilians and Portuguese, whenever they can induce the master to give them the use of the register; and in some cases they even give security for the forfeiture of the bond at home. Of course, I cannot detect these bargains; for, while the sale is secret and confidential between the parties, a charter-party is always ready to be exhibited.

In conclusion, allow me, sir, to apologize for troubling you with so much matter at one time—but the truth is, all these cases, with the exception of the “Pilgrim,” have come upon me at once, which, added to the ordinary occupations of my office, have left me scarcely a moment’s leisure for the last three weeks.

My anxiety to place within your knowledge transactions so derogatory to our national character must be my excuse for any imperfections you may discover in the communication now made.

It may be proper here to remark, that I do not believe either the “William Jones” or “Himmaleh” to have been engaged in the slave trade, nor do I charge upon the merchants here such a design. I have only stated facts, and drawn such conclusions as I think the facts will warrant.

At foot you will find the names of the consignees of each vessel, who are among our most respectable commercial men.

Commodore Ridgely, who sails in the frigate Constitution to-morrow morning, has politely offered to convey these despatches to you, and to him I refer you for any explanations.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM, *Consul U. S. A.*

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,

Secretary of State, Washington.

Names of consignees.

Brig Sophia, Maxwell, Wright, & Co.

Brig Pilgrim, } James Birckhead.

Brig Solon, }

Brig William Jones, } Forbes, Valentine, & Co.

Brig Himmaleh, }

[COPY.]

[No. 38.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, April 13, 1840.

SIR: In the communication which I held with you respecting the sale of the brig Pilgrim, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, I stated the admissions of the consignee and master, and submitted the question to your consideration. On the first point, the illegality of the sale, we had one and the same opinion. Upon the second point, I would now respectfully ask, if the vessel again reverts to the original owners, upon the statement of the master and consignee that the sale has been annulled? Or whether such a sale as had been made within the view of our laws, deprives the vessel of the use of her American register?

Respectfully, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. WILLIAM HUNTER.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
April 14, 1840.

SIR: In reply to your query respecting the sale of the brig Pilgrim of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, my opinion is, that the master can repent him of the incomplete verbal sale, annul it, and, restoring himself and vessel to his and her primary condition, be entitled to the American register and every other American privilege.

You will therefore, in my opinion, be justified in the delivery of the vessel's papers, and granting the usual certificate to facilitate her clearance from this port.

Respectfully, yours,

WILLIAM HUNTER.

GEORGE W. SLACUM, Esq.,
Consul United States, Rio.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster.—[COPY.]

[No. 42.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, October 5, 1841.

SIR: Respectfully referring to my despatch No. 35, I have the honor to inform you that Victor Alexander, late steward on board the brig Sophia, Matthew Hale, master, arrived here a few days since, from the coast of Africa. He says he is the only survivor of the unfortunate crew, and confirms the fact that the "Sophia" was fitted as a slaver immediately on her arrival at Benguela, and while Captain Hale continued in command. That she did receive on board a cargo of slaves, and sailed for the coast of Brazil, under command of two Portuguese, who went from this place in her. Alexander further states, that the American flag was hoisted on board the "Sophia" during the time she was being prepared as a slave ship, and up to the night on which the slaves were embarked, and the American crew put on shore, when the Portuguese assumed the command and hoisted the flag of Montevideo.

I have not been able to take the deposition of this man, owing to the weak state in which he arrived; but, as his physician thinks he will be sufficiently restored in a few days, I will forward the proper document, and detain him to be sent home as a witness, should Hale be arrested.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,
Secretary of State, Washington.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster.—[COPY.]

[No. 43.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, November 24, 1841.

SIR: Respectfully calling your attention to my despatch No. 42, I have the honor to transmit herewith the deposition of "Victor Alexander," in the case of the brig "Sophia." This man is now quite recovered, and it is my intention to send him to the United States in the barque "Hortentia," to sail in a few days for Baltimore. I also beg leave to enclose a certified copy of the list of crew on board the "Sophia" when she sailed from this place, as well as her ports of destination according to her clearance.

In my despatch No. 38 I omitted to state that I had received a letter from the owner of the brig "Pilgrim," in which he says an improper use has been made of the register of that vessel.

I am aware, sir, that the course I have pursued, and intend to pursue, in the discharge of my public duty, will cause me the loss of some friends in this quarter. Such a result is certainly unpleasant; but I cannot consent to retain the friendship or good-will of any man at the high cost of an abandonment of official duty, and the sacrifice of self-respect; nor can I be induced to wink at or pass over acts which in my opinion reflect dishonor and discredit upon our common country.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,
Secretary of State, Washington.

[COPY.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

Personally appeared before the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, "Victor Alexander," late steward of the brig "Sophia," of New York, Matthew Hale, master, who, being duly sworn, deposed as follows: That he (deponent) shipped on board said vessel, in capacity aforesaid, on or about the 21st of February last past, on a voyage to the coast of Africa and back to Rio de Janeiro; that two Portuguese, "Ferreira" and "Joaquim," sailed in said vessel from the aforesaid port of Rio de Janeiro as passengers; that they lived in the cabin during the voyage, but upon the arrival of the vessel at Benguela, coast of Africa, Ferreira lived on shore, while Joaquim remained on board and directed the fitting of the vessel as a slaver. And deponent further said, that, during the time of her being so fitted, Matthew Hale, the American master, and William P. Sumner, the American mate, with the original crew, remained on board; that soon after the arrival of the vessel at the port of Benguela, eight Portuguese were put on board, and while the said Joaquim directed the fixtures in the hold, and the erection of the galley, false decks, gratings, storage of water casks, provisions, &c., Hale and Sumner directed the American crew in their work on deck, setting up and repairing rigging, &c.; that when the vessel was completely fitted as a slaver, he (deponent) with the rest of the original crew were put on shore and paid off by the said Hale,

and their places supplied by a Portuguese crew; that during all this time, that is to say, from the arrival until the departure of the vessel from Benguela, Hale and Sumner remained on board giving directions as aforesaid, while the American flag was kept flying up to the evening of the sailing of the vessel, when a cargo of slaves was put on board during the night, the said Ferreira having taken charge of the vessel as master, and the said Joaquim as mate.

And deponent further said, that he was on the beach, and saw many of the slaves so embark; that, while on board as steward, he saw the Montevidean flag and a set of Montevidean papers; but, as the vessel sailed in the night, deponent does not know what flag, if any, was hoisted. And deponent further said, that the said Matthew Hale and William P. Sumner did leave the port of Benguela in the aforementioned vessel. And further deponent said not.

VICTOR ALEXANDER, his + mark.

Witness: E. FEARON.

Sworn before me, at Rio de Janeiro, this 11th day of November, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro*:

I, the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and faithful copy of the original on record at this consulate.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this 16th day of November, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM.

[COPY.]

List of crew on board the brig "Sophia," of New York, Matthew Hale, master, cleared for Cape de Verds, via the coast of Africa.

William P. Sumner, first mate; Joaquim José dos Santos, second mate; Victor Alexander, Thomas Frost, William Cavalier, David Lewis, Henry Augustus Miller, Hirman Rirck, Charles Myers, F. Lopes, José Feugeira Pinto, Manuel de Lima, seamen.

MATTHEW HALE.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro*:

I, the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and faithful copy of the original list of crew of the American brig "Sophia," at the time of her departure from this port, and also her destination, according to her clearance, taken from the record in this consulate.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this 25th day of November, 1841.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster.—[COPY.]

[No. 44.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, May 1, 1842.

SIR: Since I last had the honor to address you, under date 24th November, No. 43, the following American vessels have loaded at, and cleared from this port, for the coast of Africa: Brig "Roxbury," of Baltimore, 215 tons, returned, and loading again; brig "General Pinckney," of Baltimore, 194 tons, returned, and sailed for the United States; brig "Odessa," of New York, 181 tons, returned, and loading for the United States; ship "Robert Bowne," of New York, 504 tons, on her way to India; barque "Sagamore," of New York, 285 tons, expected; barque "John A. Robb," of Baltimore, 273 tons, expected; ship "Whitmore," of New York, 281 tons, sailed lately; brig "Independence," of New York, 149 tons, sailed lately. Two other vessels, viz. the barque "Mary" and brig "Garafilia," both of Baltimore, and owned by E. Robinson, cleared lately, at the custom-house here and at this consulate, for the river Platte, but, from information since received, I am inclined to believe they sailed to the coast of Africa, and I fear that the barque "Mary" is the property of foreigners navigating with the American flag and register.

Reflecting upon the course of our trade to that country, in connexion with important questions now under consideration or discussion at home, I feel induced, by a sense of duty as well as anxiety for our national character, to trespass upon your attention with a few observations upon this delicate subject. Presuming that the right of search will never be granted to Great Britain, but that our government will establish and maintain its own maritime police, and do all else that the national dignity requires; while at the same time it will go as far as may comport with the national feeling and interest to evince to other Powers its determination to meet them in the humane work of abolishing the slave trade, I would respectfully suggest, that, with an efficient naval force on the coast of Africa, we should prohibit, by law, all trade or commerce to American vessels between any foreign place and that country. In support of this suggestion, I will endeavor to show, that while the odium attaches to us, no advantage results to the country, if we except the cases wherein a few merchants may be paid for their infamy by high prices for slave *vessels*, or large freights for slave *cargoes*. In the first place, I would call your attention to the indirect commerce of Great Britain with the coast of Africa; and fix the point where it stops, and where it is taken up by our own countrymen. Of the vast amount of capital invested, and the great number of English houses supported and enriched by the African trade, this city furnishes abundant proof; samples of "coast goods," as they are called, are sent home to Manchester, where orders are constantly filled, goods manufactured to suit the *taste* or *fancy* of the negroes, sent here, and sold by English agents to notorious slave dealers. But, so far as England is concerned, this trade stops here—no English vessel being permitted to carry to Africa such a cargo as she brought from home.

The Portuguese, who were the great *carriers*, have suffered so extensively by British captures, that few or none are willing to undertake such voyages. Brazilian vessels being treated in like manner, the slave dealer has now to look to the commercial marine of the United States, to supply

his factories on the coast with British manufactures and other products, (articles of exchange for slaves,) or vessels in which to transport the victims of his cupidity and avarice.

Thus, if not prevented by some strong measure, we shall ere long become the common carriers in this shocking traffic. And where, let me ask, (if such a thing should for a moment be taken into the account,) where goes the profit? It accrues to the British manufacturer, the British merchant, and the slave dealer.

That our trade to Africa is increasing, and becoming more important, I am well aware; but let it be bona fide, and direct from the United States. There all proper checks and guards may be put upon it; while here, along this whole coast, and in Cuba, no such thing can be done. And among these checks and guards, I would propose, first, that any vessel cleared from the United States for Africa should be obliged by law to return direct, bringing with her the proceeds of her outward cargo, unless it could be established that the vessel had been lost, or rendered unseaworthy.

Secondly. To make it *felony* for any master, owner, or agent, to sell an American vessel, at any time, or in any place, deliverable on the coast, or to sell such vessel while there, except under an act of condemnation for unseaworthiness.

Once confine the African trade to a direct intercourse between that country and the United States, and, my word for it, a severe blow will be given to the British manufacturer of "coast goods," and the Portuguese and Brazilian slave trader. Their supplies would, not only, be nearly stopped, but they would be deprived of the means of transporting the slaves.

It certainly is to be lamented, but yet it is true, that many of our vessels are sold on the coast and fitted out as slavers, and some, I have no doubt, have been sold here, deliverable there.

It is but a few days since the question was asked me by an American merchant of high standing, "What is your opinion of the legality of a sale of an American vessel here, deliverable on the coast?" My answer was, "Could I ascertain the fact of such a sale, I would seize her at all hazards." He replied, "The question is yet an unsettled one." This may be so, but it is settled in my mind. No man could convince me of his ignorance of the object of the purchaser or the innocence of his own intentions.

In all sales of vessels here (I mean bona fide open sales) I cut the register, giving one half to the master, to cancel his bond, at home, and retain the other, safely locked up. By this measure, I deprive the vessel of her national character, and although she may be used as a slaver, the disgrace attaches to the flag and papers with which she sails.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,
Secretary of State, Washington.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Webster.—[COPY.]

[No. 65.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, July 1, 1843.

SIR: By reference to my despatch No. 44, under date of 1st May, 1842, you will observe the number of American vessels cleared at this port for the coast of Africa, up to that date. In continuation, I have now the honor to transmit a list of vessels for the same destination since that period. Time and observation have but confirmed the opinions and suggestions I ventured to express in that despatch; and I am entirely convinced that no effectual check can be put upon the slave trade until our vessels are prohibited by law from all commerce between foreign countries (at least where the trade exists) and the coast of Africa. The American vessels engaged in the trade between this port and Africa are invariably chartered to *slave dealers*; and I have no doubt many of them are the property of those dealers, sailing with the American flag and register, under a charter-party. Some, as the masters inform me, are chartered by the month for an indefinite time; others for a fixed period of one year; and when they have served the purposes for which they were intended, in some cases, after several trips to the coast, I am suddenly informed the vessels are just sold, and the registers are then delivered up. In some cases negroes are brought over in these vessels, say six to ten at a time, with passports from some Portuguese authority on the coast, as free men and passengers—the master reaping his share of passage money. Captain Ezra Foster, of Beverly, Massachusetts, has in two instances brought negroes over under these circumstances, and I am induced to believe they were slaves, from information, received at the time, that they spoke only their native language. He (Foster) informed me that the passage money was one hundred dollars per head.

In respectfully urging the adoption of the suggestions which I have made, I would add that, were the trade prohibited to the extent proposed, it would not only deprive the slave dealer of his supplies, but would increase the export direct from the United States of our own produce and manufactures, in a bona fide and lawful commerce, and obviate in a great degree the necessary exposure of valuable lives in our national marine to that insalubrious climate.

In this connexion, permit me to enclose a certificate, which I am obliged by this government to give, whenever an American vessel is cleared. By it, you will perceive that I officially certify the vessel to be *at that time* the property of a citizen or citizens of the United States, as well as his or their place of residence.

Well, it may be said there is the register. True; but the register, under the most favorable circumstances, is only *prima facie* evidence of ownership; and, from my knowledge of the uses to which it has been applied, I have little or no confidence in that document.

My object in submitting this paper for your consideration is to ask, if, upon the clearance of a vessel for the coast of Africa, I have just grounds to suspect that she has been secretly sold, I am not authorized to require proof—that is, the oath of the master to the fact which I am called upon to attest? It certainly so appears to me, although Mr. Hunter, our minister here, has declared a contrary opinion. Surely, it is not *exacting* or unnecessarily multiplying oaths, (a system to which I am as much averse as

any one,) but merely requiring proof from the competent party, to enable me to certify a fact which at the time I may doubt.

In conclusion, allow me again respectfully to call your attention to my despatches Nos. 35, 36, 37, 38, 43, and 44; and, should you deem any thing herein contained, worthy of notice, to ask your opinion upon the points submitted.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,
GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,
Secretary of State, Washington.

—
CONSULADO DOS ESTADOS UNIDOS DA AMERICA,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Certifico que — American — de que é Mestre — é propriedade de
Cidadão dos Estados Unidos da America, residente em —.

Rio de Janeiro, — de — de 18—.

— *Consul E. U. A.*

List of American vessels cleared for the coast of Africa since 1st May, 1842.

Date of clearance.	Class.	Name of vessel.	Tons.	Owners, as per register.	Place of residence.	Consignees at Rio de Janeiro.
May 9, 1842	Brig	Roxbury	215	R. W. Allen	Baltimore	Forbes, Valentine, & Co.
May 21, 1842	Barque	Rosalba	201	Thomas Batelle	New York	Forbes, Valentine, & Co.
August 20, 1842	Brig	Duan	218	Bryant & Foster	Beverly	James Birckhead
January 14, 1843	Brig	Kentucky	223	Willis & Hart	New York	Maxwell, Wright, & Co.
January 26, 1843	Brig	Porpoise	160	G. F. Richardson	Brunswick	Maxwell, Wright, & Co.
February 18, 1843	Barque	Hualco	279	W. G. Furber	Belfast	Schroder & Co.
February 23, 1843	Schooner	Rosario	155	Jed. Fry and others	New York	James Birckhead
February 25, 1843	Brig	Duan	218	Bryant & Foster	Beverly	James Birckhead
May 27, 1843	Schooner	Pamela	151	E. G. Kimball	Salem	James Birckhead
June 30, 1843	Barque	Lucy Penniman	270	J. P. Keller and others	Machias	James Birckhead
	Brig	Duan	218	Bryant & Foster	Beverly	Jamc: Birckhead
	Brig	Porpoise	160	G. F. Richardson	Brunswick	Maxwell, Wright, & Co.

N. B.—The last two are about to sail.

Mr. Slacum to Mr. Upshur.—[COPY.]

[No. 71.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, October 6, 1843.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, the deposition of three seamen, late of the brig "*Pamelia*," of Salem, Massachusetts, thus furnishing another case for the consideration of our government. This statement, confirmed as it was by the chief mate, goes to show the almost direct manner in which our citizens are "aiding and abetting" the slave trade, and confirms my previous communications upon this subject.

I well remember, before the "*Pamelia*" sailed for Africa, and before her destination was known to me, Ingalls, the master and part owner, transferred the command to Pratt, the chief mate, on the plea of delicate health, and returned to the United States, taking with him, I have now no doubt, the proceeds of the sale of his vessel.

Another case, which occurred at Bahia, has been brought to my notice. It appears that the brig "*Yankee*," owned somewhere to the north, sailed from that port for Africa as an American vessel, under command of the original master, "Goodrich," (I believe of New Haven,) was there delivered up, and returned to Brazil in charge of Portuguese, having on board a cargo of nearly seven hundred slaves. That vessel is now in this port, under the name of the "*Seventeenth of March*." This statement I had from one of the crew, an Englishman, who returned in her. The records of the department over which you preside, will show the extent to which this business is carried on by our countrymen; and while I find myself powerless to prevent such practices, I feel that I but fulfil my duty in continuing to call attention to the subject.

Another American merchant here, Mr. John Gardner, informed me a day or two since that a very high price had been offered for an American vessel consigned to him, by a notorious slave dealer, if she could be sent to the coast with the American *flag* and *papers*, and there delivered up to his agents. The offer was promptly declined.

To the inquiry, why American vessels are preferred and sought after by the slave dealers, and why they are willing to pay such high prices for them, it may be answered, no other flag carries with it the same immunities. The flag of the Powers parties to the quintuple treaty affords no protection against detention, search, and capture. So with Brazil and Portugal. Hence the slave dealer looks to our commercial marine to enable him to carry on the trade, I mean so far as regards the transportation hence to Africa of the necessary equipments, provisions, water, and *vessels*. Having once got these indispensable adjuncts to the traffic to the coast, half the risk is over. He must then take his chance for the other half—that is, the return voyage—and in which he is very often successful.

I hope you will not misunderstand me, sir, and think I can for a moment entertain the idea of surrendering the right of "visit and search." No, sir; upon that point, no man can be more firm than myself. I am but endeavoring to show the necessity of further legislative action, if we are to check effectually this infamous trade, and free our common country from the reproach to which it is subjected by a few unworthy citizens.

I will detain you but a moment, to indicate the inutility of the best efforts of our African squadron to prevent this state of things. For exam-

ple: a vessel is *chartered* or *secretly* sold here to a slave dealer, to be delivered on the coast; she carries as cargo (and in some instances the very persons as *passengers*, who are to navigate her back,) all the slave dealer requires; she clears and sails regularly documented as an American vessel; she is overhauled and examined by an American man-of-war; every thing appears to be in order and in due form—the cargo, be it what it may, except slaves, (as I understand,) affords no just ground of capture; she passes on, delivers her freight and returns for another cargo, or is then transferred to new masters, takes in slaves, waits a propitious moment, makes her escape from the coast under any and all flags, with other papers and a new crew, and runs the hazard for her destined port. It is not long since, that an American vessel sailed hence for the coast, having a part of her cargo cleared and shipped as *wine*, but on her arrival there it turned out to be ninety pipes of *fresh water*—a much more valuable article than wine. This vessel was the brig “*Duan*,” of Beverly, Massachusetts, Captain Ezra Foster, also consigned to Mr. Birkhead; and the fact was stated to me by the captain himself on his return, alleging that he had been deceived.

The truth is, all these vessels are either owned by, or are in the service of, the slave dealers, and the trade will continue until some other measures are adopted by our government to put an end to it. The question then arises, what are the measures to be adopted? To make a schedule or tariff of prohibited article, after the manner of the English and French; or to prohibit all trade to our vessels between any *foreign* country and Africa. The latter, to my mind, is decidedly to be preferred, for reasons stated in my former despatches, and these reasons are but strengthened and confirmed by daily experience.

In making this communication, I trust, sir, you will perceive no other motive than a sincere desire to fulfil truly and honorably my public duty, and, so far as I may, maintain unimpaired our national character.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,
 GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

Hon. A. P. UPSHUR,
Secretary of State, Washington.

NOTE.—I beg leave to enclose a copy of my letter to Elbridge G. Kimball, one of the owners of the “*Pamelia*.”

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

Personally appeared before the undersigned, consul of the United States, Edward Hoppe, Samuel Moses, and Jonathan Patch, late seamen on board the brig “*Pamelia*,” of Salem, Massachusetts, who, being duly sworn, declared: That they sailed in capacity aforesaid on board said vessel, on or about the 27th of May last, hence to the coast of Africa; that, after their arrival at Benguela, they (declarants,) with the rest of the crew, were transferred to a French brig, called the “*Etna*,” in which vessel they arrived in Rio de Janeiro on or about the 7th instant. And declarants further said, that when they sailed hence, as aforesaid, there went in said brig “*Pamelia*,” as passengers, four Portuguese, whose names declarants do

not recollect, one of whom was the purchaser of said vessel, and two of the others captain and mate—the occupation of the third declarants do not know, but he appeared to be part owner of the cargo, which consisted of farinha, beans, iron crowbars, unusually long, spikes, nails, sugar, a quantity of pipes, (seventy perhaps in number,) dry goods, such as coarse cloths, flannels, and cottons. And declarants further said, that when they were transferred as aforesaid, the Portuguese captain and mate, who went to the coast as passengers, took charge of the “Pamelia,” and the other took possession as owner.

EDWARD HOPPE.
SAMUEL MOSES.
JONATHAN PATCH.

Sworn at Rio de Janeiro, this 22d of September, 1843, before me.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

I, the undersigned, consul of the United States, hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original, now on record at this consulate.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this fourth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and forty-three.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

[COPY.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, September 17, 1843.

SIR: At the request of Captain Pratt, I beg leave to inform you that I have demanded and received from him the wages due the crew of the brig “Pamelia,” of which you are owner, up to the day of their discharge at this port.

The Pamelia cleared hence for the coast of Africa, about the 27th of May last; and, as Captain Pratt informs me, was sold and delivered up to a Portuguese at Benguela, about the 9th August. The crew returned here in a French brig, chartered, as I am informed, by Captain Pratt, by the Portuguese purchaser of the “Pamelia.” Captain Pratt wished to pay the men up to the time of sale, but I contended for their pay up to the time of their discharge, making a difference of one month in favor of the crew.

I make this statement as well to exonerate Captain Pratt, as to show that I acted in accordance with *law* and *justice*.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

ELBRIDGE G. KIMBALL, Esq.,
Salem, Massachusetts.

[COPY.]

[No. 64.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, June 10, 1843.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, a copy of a letter addressed by me to the master of the barque "Lucy Penniman," of Machias, in answer to certain inquiries made.

Should you approve the construction of our laws as applied by me, I would respectfully ask a confirmation of it, as it would enable me to speak and advise by authority.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,
Secretary of State, Washington.

[COPY.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, May 16, 1843.

SIR: I have received your letter under date 13th instant, in which you say, "being unacquainted with what may be the description of goods or articles which, in the event of my vessel (the 'Lucy Penniman') being overhauled by vessels of war on the coast of Africa, would, if found on board, subject her to detention; and being desirous to avoid every risk, you will much oblige me by informing me, in writing, what description of articles, goods, or merchandise, I ought to reject."

I understand that your cargo for the coast of Africa was in part on board before you addressed your letter to me; but, as you appear anxious to be informed upon the subject-matter, I take leave to submit, for your consideration, the act of Congress in relation to the slave trade; which, when you have carefully perused, I will thank you to return. Of whatever value my opinion may be, you shall have it with frankness and freedom.

In the first place, my opinion is, that any citizen of the United States, who may sell an American vessel in this port to a "slave dealer," deliverable on the coast of Africa, such citizen is "aiding and abetting" the slave trade. Secondly, that any citizen of the United States, who may charter an American vessel to a *slave dealer*, to deliver at his factory, or to his agents on the coast of Africa, articles of exchange for slaves, food with which to supply them, or implements with which to confine them, such citizen is "aiding and abetting" the slave trade. Under such circumstances, no person could convince me of his ignorance of the intentions of the parties, or the object of the voyage.

In giving these opinions, I am influenced as well by my construction of the law, as an earnest desire to maintain, unimpaired, our national character, holding it to be the first duty of the citizen to support and preserve the honor and dignity of his country.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

Captain KELLER, *Barque "Lucy Penniman."*

[No. 74.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
- Rio de Janeiro, February 12, 1844.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a deposition in the case of the brig "Hope," of New York, Driscoll, master.

The deponents are now on board the United States ship "Columbus;" and it is my intention to send them home as witnesses, in the event of the arrest of Driscoll, who left this place clandestinely a few days since in the barque "Hebe," for Baltimore, where he has a family.

The brig "Duan," of Beverly, Massachusetts, alluded to in the deposition, and mentioned in my former despatches, also landed a cargo of slaves to the southward of this port. The "Porpoise," a small brig belonging to Brunswick, State of Maine, brought back the masters and part of the crews of the "Hope" and "Duan," and is a regular trader to the slave dealers. She is said to be chartered for twelve months. The papers of both the "Hope" and "Duan" have been returned to me and cancelled.

The "Porpoise" sailed again yesterday for the coast, I suppose to bring back the crews of the "Gannecliff" and "Montevideo;" the former having sailed from this port a short time since: the latter sailed yesterday.

I also transmit a copy of the shipping articles of the "Duan," by which it appears that the voyage had its "incipiency" in the United States. These cases require no comment; and I feel that I discharge my duty by laying the facts before you.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,
GEO. W. SLACUM, *Consul U. S. A.*

HON. ABEL P. UPSHUR,
Secretary of State, Washington.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.—[COPY.]

"It is agreed between the master and seamen, or mariners, of the brig 'Duan,' of Beverly, whereof Ezra Foster is at present master, or whoever shall go for master, now bound from the port of Boston to Portland; from thence to Rio de Janeiro; from thence to the coast of Africa; thence back to Rio. Term of time not to exceed twelve calendar months."

The above is a true copy of the heading of the articles of agreement of the brig "Duan," of Beverly, Ezra Foster, master.

GEO. W. SLACUM, *Consul U. S. A.*

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro*:

Personally appeared before the undersigned, consul of the United States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, Joseph Carroll, David Henderson, (seamen,) James Lewis, (cook,) and Abrah Post, (boy,) all late of the brig "Hope," of New York, Cornelius F. Driscoll, master, who, being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposed as follows:

That they, deponents, sailed hence on or about the 4th of August last past, in said brig "Hope," in capacity aforesaid, on a voyage to Bahia and the Cape de Verd islands. That they arrived in said vessel at the port of Victoria, in the bay of Espirito Santo, coast of Brazil, on or about

the 7th of same month of August. That in five or six days after their arrival as aforesaid, they commenced discharging sand ballast, by order of the said Driscoll. That when all the ballast was discharged, they commenced to take in a large quantity of firewood. That after the wood was on board, they commenced taking in a large number of pipes, by order of the said Driscoll; the pipes so taken in said to be of rum, but deponents declare they contained fresh water, and were in number upwards of two hundred—said pipes being stowed in the lower hold by a Portuguese crew sent from the city of Rio de Janeiro. That after said pipes were stowed and chocked off, they, deponents, took in a large quantity of black beans, farinha, rice, and jerked beef, which were stowed forward and aft by the Portuguese crew, all acting under the orders of the said Driscoll. That after the articles above described were stowed, they, deponents, took in about one hundred casks of rum, which were also stowed by the Portuguese crew. That deponents then took in, by order of the said Driscoll, two or three large beams, which were represented to be for a frame house, but which deponents declare and believe to have been for flying beams of a berth-deck, from various circumstances; and particularly from the fact, that one of the Portuguese who appeared to act as the head of the stevedores, measured the hold of the vessel, forward and aft, and thwartships, to see if the beams would answer. And deponents further said that at the time above described beams were taken on board, a number of boards were also taken in. That they, deponents, then, by order of the said Driscoll, took on board two boxes said to contain soap, but which deponents declare and believe to have contained hand-cuffs, from the fact that while being taken in, the boxes struck against the side of the vessel, and they, deponents, heard the rattling of iron; and from another fact, that it required two men to move the boxes fore and aft, although they were not more than two feet and a half square. And deponents further said that they took on board said vessel, by order of the said Driscoll, a large box, about four feet and a half square, said to contain hats, but which deponents declare and believe to have contained cooking apparatus, or caboose, from the fact that it was made of wrought iron, and had the appearance of a cooking machine. That deponents also took on board a quantity of provisions (fresh) which were cut up and salted on board. That after the articles aforesaid were all on board, they waited some days for the arrival of a coaster from Rio de Janeiro, belonging to a Mr. Socito, to whom the vessel was consigned. That deponents then, that is, after the arrival of the coaster, by order of the said Driscoll, took on board about twenty-six cases containing muskets and bayonets. That a quantity of water for the crew and passengers was taken in and stowed in the usual place. That being now ready for sea, a Portuguese crew, consisting of ten persons, came on board as passengers, being the same who stowed the cargo. That they, deponents, under the orders of the said Driscoll, got the vessel under way on or about the 23d of September, and sailed for Africa. That they arrived in said vessel, at the mouth of the river "Congo," (coast of Africa,) on or about the 27th November. That after the ship was brought to an anchor, one of the Portuguese went up to "Ponta Linha" in a canoe, he being the same person who was at the head of the stevedores, in stowing the cargo at Victoria. That the next morning, the Portuguese returned to the vessel, when, soon after, a black man arrived from above, went into the cabin, and had some conversation, at which the said Driscoll was present.

When the black left, the vessel, in the same afternoon, weighed anchor, and sailed out of the river Congo for Cabinda, a place about forty miles to the northward, where they arrived the next afternoon about five o'clock, and came to anchor. That they immediately commenced discharging, under the orders of the said Driscoll, assisted by the Portuguese who went out as passengers, and a number of blacks and whites from the shore. That about nine o'clock, deponent, Joseph Carroll, complained of being overworked, when the chief mate, John Ulrick, told deponents to knock off, at this time the said Driscoll having gone on board the American brig "Porpoise" to see the master of the "Duan," who was on board ill at the time. That the work of discharging was continued by the blacks and Portuguese, until the cargo was discharged, with the exception of the two hundred pipes of water, beans, beef, farinha, rice, boards, beams, cooking-machine, and boxes of soap, (or hand-cuffs,) all which remained on board as they were stowed. The next morning, Sunday, the cargo, with the exceptions aforesaid, having been discharged, a part of which was sent on board the "Porpoise," the Portuguese crew commenced laying a temporary deck, with the before-described beams and boards, when a black laborer on board said to the deponent, Carroll, "there comes your cargo," pointing at the same time to the beach, when deponent, Carroll, together with the other deponents, looked in the direction pointed out, and saw a large drove of negroes hurrying along to the landing place, where canoes and launches were waiting to receive them. That at this moment the said Driscoll approached and said, "Those are the King's men coming to take the cargo into the country." That on reaching the landing place about nine o'clock, a. m., the negroes were instantly embarked, and soon alongside the said brig "Hope," to the number of six hundred, as near as deponents could judge. That when alongside, they began to take them on board, the said Driscoll ordering deponents to get ready to leave the ship. That, before the said Driscoll and deponents left the vessel, a great many of the negroes were on board, and stowed away. That deponents and the said Driscoll, with the mates, having left the "Hope," were carried on board the "Porpoise," lying not far off; and while so there, a sail was discovered in the offing, when the said Driscoll called deponents and the officers of the "Hope" to make haste on board said vessel, in order to save her, as he thought the strange sail a man-of-war. That deponents, (excepting the cook,) with the said Driscoll and chief mate, immediately jumped into the boat of the brig "Porpoise," and were soon on the deck of the "Hope," where they found the Portuguese disembarking the negroes with all haste, and breaking up the temporary berth-deck. That while in the boat approaching the "Hope," the said Driscoll exclaimed "Old Hope, I have you here!" placing his hand on his pocket, in which he had the ship's papers. That when deponents reached the "Hope," the said Driscoll ordered the deponent, Carroll, to hurry on board the "Porpoise" for the ensign of the "Hope," which he had forgotten in the haste, and which had been taken from on board the "Hope" when they, deponents, and the officers, left her. That deponent, Carroll, went on board the "Porpoise," and returned with the ensign of the "Hope," and the second mate, Mansfield, and cook; when the said Driscoll ordered him to bend it and hoist it up, which he did; at which time some of the slaves were on their way to the beach, some alongside, and others still on board the "Hope." The strange sail still standing in, the said Driscoll

coll ordered deponent, Carroll, to deface or paint out the name of the "Hope" on the stern, which he did, assisted by the chief mate, while the said Driscoll was looking out of the cabin windows giving orders to deface the ship's name. That the strange sail proving to be a Brazilian merchant vessel, and the alarm groundless, the slaves were immediately re-embarked, the deck laid, and preparations made to get the vessel under way. And deponents further said, that while on board this last time, the said Driscoll ordered deponent, Lewis, to cook dinner for the crew, which was done; and ordered deponents, Carroll and Henderson, aloft, to secure the yardarms of the sails. That while the slaves were coming on board the second time, the said Driscoll, with deponents and officers, were still on board, and the American flag flying at the peak of the "Hope;" and before they left the "Hope," all the cargo of slaves was on board, except one large launch load, which was alongside, and the ship hove short; the American flag flying up to the moment of their leaving the ship. And deponents further said, that during all the time they were on board the said brig "Hope," they received all their orders from the said Driscoll, and knew no other person as master. And deponent, Carroll, further said, that after the "Hope" was under way, about half an hour after they left her, and while she was passing the "Porpoise," the said Driscoll cried out, "Boys, let us give her three cheers!" which was done; and he, deponent, was sent on board for a spy-glass, when he saw the box of "hats" converted into a caboose, which they, the Portuguese, were setting up. And deponents further said, that since their arrival at this port, in the "Porpoise," they have seen several of the Portuguese crew of the "Hope," who informed them they had safely landed their cargo of slaves on the coast of Brazil.

And further deponents said not.

JOSEPH CARROLL,
DAVID HENDERSON,
JAMES LEWIS,
ABRAH POST.

Sworn at the city of Rio de Janeiro, this sixth day of February, 1844,
before me.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, *Rio de Janeiro:*

I, the undersigned, consul of the United States, hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original deposition on record at this consulate.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this twelfth February, 1844.

GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

[COPY.]

[No. 75.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, April 1, 1844.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit, herewith, duplicate deposition in the case of Cornelius F. Driscoll, late master of the brig "Hope;" duplicate

despatch No. 74, and copy of my letter to the marshal for the New York district.

I would here observe, that the deponents, of their own accord, gave the information upon which the deposition is founded; and I would hope that no unnecessary restrictions may be put upon them. They have had liberty on shore frequently, and are quite willing to appear as witnesses in behalf of the United States.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,
 GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

Hon. ABEL P. UPSHUR,
Secretary of State, Washington.

[COPY.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Rio de Janeiro, April 1, 1844.

SIR: You are hereby requested to receive from Captain Cooper, commanding United States ship "Columbus," Joseph Carroll, David Henderson, James Lewis, and Abrah Post, seamen, late of the brig "Hope" of New York.

These men are sent home as witnesses on the part of the United States against Cornelius F. Driscoll, master of said vessel, charged with being engaged in the slave trade. The proper documents and despatches have been transmitted to the Hon. Secretary of State, and you will therefore keep the men in safe custody until you receive instructions from the proper department at Washington.

It may be well to remark that the witnesses came forward voluntarily and gave their testimony.

I am, very respectfully, sir, your most obedient servant,
 GEORGE W. SLACUM,
Consul U. S. A.

The MARSHAL OF THE UNITED STATES
for the New York district, city of New York.