beds of red sandstone, the disintegration of which has given a dark­coloured ferruginous soil of moderate fertility. Sugar Loaf is timbered to the top, and the peninsula is verdant with abundant vegetation.

*Climate.—*The coast lands are unhealthy and have earned for Sierra Leone the unenviable reputation of being “the white man’s grave.” The mean annual temperature is above 80°, the rainfall, which varies a great deal, is from 150 to 180 or more inches per annum. In 1896 no fewer than 203 in. were recorded. In 1894 , a “ dry ” year, only 144 in. of rain fell. In no other part of West Africa is the rainfall so heavy. December, January, February and March are practically rainless; the rains, beginning in April or May, reach their maximum in July, August and September, and rapidly diminish in October and November. During the dry season, when the climate is very much like that of the West Indies, there occur terrible tornadoes and long periods of the harmattan—a north-east wind, dry and desiccating, and carrying with it from the Sahara clouds of fine dust, which sailors designate “ smokes.” The dangers of the climate arc much less in the interior; 40 or 50 m. inland the country is tolerable for Europeans.

*Flora.—*The characteristic tree of the coast districts is the oil­palm. Other palm trees found are the date, bamboo, palmyra, coco and dom. The coast-line, the creeks and the lower courses of the rivers are lined with mangroves. Large areas are covered with brushwood, among which are scattered baobab, shea-butter, bread fruit, corkwood and silk-cotton trees. The forests contain valuable timber trees such as African oak or teak (*Oldfieldia Africana),* rose­wood, ebony, tamarind, camwood, odum—whose wood resists the attacks of termites—and the tolmgah or brimstone tree. The frankincense tree (*Daniellia thurifera)* reaches from 50 to 150 ft., the negro pepper (*Xylapia Aethiopica)* grows to about 60 ft., the fruit being used by the natives as pepper. There are also found the black pepper plant (*Piper Clusii),* a climbing plant abundant in the moun­tain districts ; the grains of paradise or melegueta pepper plant (*Amomum Melegueta)* and other *Amomums* whose fruits are prized. Of the Apocynaceae the rubber plants are the most important. Both *Landolphia florida* and *Landolphia owariensis* are found. Of several fibre-yielding plants the so-called aloes of the orders Amaryl- lidaceae and Liliaceae are common. The kola *{Cola acuminata)* and the bitter kola *{Garcinia cola),* the last having a fruit about the size of an apple, with a flavour like that of green coffee, are common. Of dye-yielding shrubs and plants camwood and indigo may be mentioned; of those whence gum is obtained the copal, acacia and African tragacanth (*Sterculia tragacantha).* Besides the oil-palm, oil is obtained from many trees and shrubs, such as the benni oil plant. Of fruit trees there are among others the blood-plum (*Haematostaphis Barteri)* with deep crimson fruit in grape-like clusters, and the Sierra Leone peach (*Sarcocephalus esculentus).* The coffee and cotton plants are indigenous; of grasses there are various kinds of millet, including *Paspalum exile,* the so-called hungry rice or Sierra Leone millet. Ferns are abundant in the marshes. Bright coloured flowers are somewhat rare.

*Fauna.—*The wild animals include the elephant, still found in large numbers, the leopard, panther, chimpanzee, grey monkeys, antelope of various kinds, the buffalo, wild hog, bush goat, bush pig, sloth, civet and squirrel. The hippopotamus, manatee, crocodile and beaver are found in the rivers, and both land and fresh-water tortoises are common. Serpents, especially the boa-constrictor, are numerous. Chameleons, lizards and iguanas abound, as do frogs and toads. Wild birds are not very common ; among them are the hawk, parrot, owl, woodpecker, kingfisher, green pigeon, African magpie, the honey-sucker and canary. There are also wild duck, geese and other water fowl, hawk’s bill, laggerheads and partridges. Mosquitoes, termites, bees, ants, centipedes, millipedes, locusts, grasshoppers, butterflies, dragonflies, sandflies and spiders arc found in immense numbers. Turtle are common on the southern coast-line, sand and mangrove oysters are plentiful. Fish abound; among the common kinds are the bunga (a sort of herring), skate, grey mullet and tarpon. Sharks infest the estuaries.

*Inhabitants.—*Sierra Leone is inhabited by various negro tribes, the chief being the Timni, the Sulima, the Susu and the Mendi. From the Mendi district many curious steatite figures which had been buried have been recovered and are exhibited in the British Museum. They show considerable skill in carving. Of semi-negro races the Fula inhabit the region of the Searcies. Freetown is peopled by descendants of nearly every negro tribe, and a distinct type known as the Sierra Leoni has been evolved; their language is pidgin English. Since 1900 a considerable number of Syrians have settled in the country as traders. Most of the negroes are pagans and each tribe has its secret societies and fetishes. These are very powerful and are employed often for beneficent purposes, such as the regulation of agriculture and the palm-oil industry. There are many Christian converts (chiefly Anglicans and Wesleyans) and Mahommedans. In the protectorate are some Mahommedan tribes, as for instance the Susu. The majority of the Sierra Leonis are nominally Christian. The European population numbers about 500.

*Towns.—*Besides Freetown (*q.v.)* the capital (pop., 1901, 34,463), the most important towns for European trade are Bonthe, the port of Sherbro, Port Lokko, at the head of the navigable waters of a stream emptying itself into the Sierra Leone estuary, and Songo Town, 30 m. S.E. of Freetown, with which it is con­nected by railway. In the interior are many populous centres. The most noted is Falaba, about 190 m. N.E. of Freetown on the Fala river, a tributary of the Little Searcies. It lies about 1600 ft. above the sea. Falaba was founded towards the end of the 18th century by the Sulima who revolted from the Mahommedan Fula, and its warlike inhabitants soon attained supremacy over the neighbouring villages and country. Like many of the native towns it is surrounded by a loopholed wall, with flank defences for the gates. The town is the meeting-place of many trade routes, including some to the middle Niger. Kambia on the Great Searcies is a place of some importance. It can be reached by boat from the sea. On the railway running S.E. from Freetown are Rotifunk, Mano, and Bo, towns which have increased greatly in importance since the building of the railway.

*Agriculture and Trade.—*Agriculture is in a backward condition, but is being developed. The wealth of the country consists, however, chiefly in its indigenous trees of economic value—the oil-palm, the kola-nut tree and various kinds of rubber plants, chiefly the *Land­olphia owariensis.* The crops cultivated are rice, of an excellent quality, cassava, maize and ginger. The cultivation of coffee and of native tobacco has been practically abandoned as unremunerative. The sugar cane is grown in small quantities. The ginger is grown mainly in the colony proper. Minor products are benni seeds, pepper and piassava. The oil-palm and kola-nut tree are especially abundant in the Sherbro district and its hinterland, the Mendi country. The palms, though never planted, arc in practically unlimited numbers. The nuts are gathered twice a year. Formerly groundnuts were largely cultivated, but this industry has been superseded by exports from India. Its place has been taken to some extent by the extrac­tion of rubber.

The cotton plant grows freely throughout the protectorate and the cloth manufactured is of a superior kind. Exotic varieties of cotton do not thrive. Experiments were made during 1903-1906 to intro­duce the cultivation of Egyptian and American varieties, but they did not succeed. Cattle are numerous but of a poor breed; horses do not thrive. The chief export is palm kernels, the amount of palm oil exported being comparatively slight. Next to palm products the most valuable articles exported are kola-nuts—which go largely to neighbouring French colonies—rubber and ginger. The imports are chiefly textiles, food and spirits. Nearly three-fourths of the imports come from Great Britian, which, however, takes no more than some 35% of the exports. About 10% of the exports go to other British West African colonies. Germany, which has but a small share of the import trade, takes about 45 % of the exports. The value of the trade increased in the ten years 1896-1905 from £943,000 to £1,265,000. In 1908 the imports were valued at £813,700, the ex­ports at £736,700.

The development of commerce with the rich regions north and east of the protectorate has been hindered by the diversion of trade to the French port of Konakry, which in 1910 was placed in railway communication with the upper Niger. Moreover, the main trade road from Konakry to the middle Niger skirts the N.E. frontier of the protectorate for some distance. Sierra Leone is thus forced to look to its economic development within the bounds of the protectorate.

*Communications.—*Internal communication is rendered difficult by the denseness of the “ bush ” or forest country. The rivers, however, afford a means of bringing country produce to the seaports. A railway, state owned and the first built in British West Africa, runs S.E. from Freetown through the fertile districts of Mendiland to the Liberian frontier. Begun in 1896, the line reached Bo (136 m.) in the oil-palm district in 1903, and was completed to Baiima, 15 m. from the Liberian frontier—total length 221 m.—in 1905. The gauge throughout is 2 ft. 6 in. The line cost about £4300 per mile, a total of nearly *£1,000,000.* Tramways and “ feeder roads ” have been built to connect various places with the railway; one such road goes from railhead to Kailahun in Liberia.

Telegraphic communication with Europe was established in 1886. Steamers run at regular intervals between Freetown and Liverpool, Hamburg, Havre and Marseilles. In the ten years 1899-1908 the tonnage of shipping entered and cleared rose from 1,181,000 to 2,046,000.

*Administration, Revenue,* &c.-The country is administered as a crown colony, the governor being assisted by an executive and a legislative council; on the last-named a minority of nominated un­official members have seats. The law of the colony is the common law of England modified by local ordinances. There is a denomina­tional system of primary and higher education. The. schools are