

LOWER GUINEA.

45. The name of *Lower Guinea* has been applied, by way of distinction, to several separate kingdoms on the South Western coast of *Africa*, lying between the *Gulf of Guinea* and that long line of sterile coast, just described as stretching between them and the colony of the *Cape of Good Hope*: the whole of the interior is called *Congo* by the natives, and the same language, the same laws, and the same customs, prevail through every part of it. The *Portuguese*, in 1847, were the first to discover these regions, and their government subsequently sent over several large bodies of troops to conquer the country, together with numbers of missionaries to convert the natives. They have been unable, however, to effect any permanent establishments, excepting a few forts and factories for carrying on the slave trade; nor is there left the smallest trace of those numerous conversions, such long accounts of which were published by the missionaries of the Church of *Rome*. The principal kingdoms or states included under the appellation of *Lower Guinea*, are *Benguela*, *Lubolo*, *Matamba*, *Angola*, *Congo*, and *Loango*; these contain a superficial extent of about 295,200 square miles, and a very doubtfully estimated population of about 4,000,000 souls.

46. *Benguela* is the Southernmost of these kingdoms, and extends along the coast from *Nourses River* to the N. of the country of the *Damara's*, (a name given to various *Hottentot* and *Kaffir* tribes dwelling between it and *Orange River*), and the *Coanza*: its chief town *New Benguela*, or *St. Philip de Benguela*, as it is also called, stands about midway down its coast; it was built by the *Portuguese*, has an excellent harbour, and a population of about 3,000, which, being principally dependent on the slave trade, has been decreasing for some years. The valley in which it is situated, as well as the entire coast of *Benguela*, is extremely fertile. *Novo Redondo*, situated further North, was built by the *Portuguese*, on a lofty rock, and still further N. is the remains of *Old Benguela*, the former capital; they had other settlements both on the coast and in the interior. The two states of *Lubolo* and *Matamba* lie to the N. E. of *Benguela*, near the sources of the rivers *Coanza* and *Barbela*, or *Eastern Congo*: the latter is inhabited by a bold race of savages, called *Giagas* or *Cassanges*, who are also to be met with in some of the other states, and whose adroit ferocity has rendered them the terror of this part of *Africa*. *Angola* lies between the rivers *Coanza* and *Danda*, being bounded on the S. by *Benguela*, on the E. by *Matamba* and *Lubolo*, on the N. by *Congo*, and on the W. by the *Atlantic*: but the name of *Angola* is sometimes applied by the traders to the whole coast of *Lower Guinea*. Its chief town is *St. Paul de Loando*, which is situated on the coast, and contained 18,000 inhabitants; it was the capital of all the *Portuguese* possessions in *Lower Guinea*, and a well-built, handsome town, though now almost in ruins; its harbour is excellent, being sheltered by the island *Loando*. The *Coanza* is a large river flow-

ing through a fertile country, and having its rise in an elevated table land near the source of the *Zambeze*. Between *Angola* on the S. and *Loango* on the N. lies *Congo* properly so called, the largest of all the states in this part of *Africa*; it is bounded on the N. and E. by the two arms of the *Zaire*, or *Congo*, a great river 4 miles miles wide, 90 leagues from the sea, having its middle course through fertile valleys, and its lower through plains covered with abundant vegetation; on the S. by the *Danda*, and on the W. by the *Atlantic Ocean*. The country of *Loango* lies to the N. of *Congo*, extending as far as the Equator. *Loango*, or *Booali*, as it is likewise named, the chief town and the residence of the sovereign, is situated on the sea-coast, and is stated to contain 15,000 inhabitants; it was formerly a place of great consequence, from the trade carried on there in slaves.