

duced to replace traditional hand processing in the primary industries. The cultivation of field and tree crops forms the basis of Nigeria's wealth — 50 per cent of the national income and 85 per cent of the exports. The principal products are yams, cassava, guinea corn, millet, palm products and groundnuts. Nigeria provides 50 per cent of the world's trade in palm kernels, over 30 per cent in palm oil, and 30 per cent in groundnuts. Livestock, fisheries and forestry contribute over 10 per cent of the national income. Minerals produced on a significant scale are limestone, tin and columbite (used in alloys requiring a high degree of heat resistance). Sources of energy are coal (there are reserves of 240 million tons), water-power and petroleum. Schemes exist for hydro-electric dams on several Nigerian rivers, including the Niger itself. Other advantages of the Niger project would be improved navigation and irrigation and flood control. The search for petroleum began in Nigeria in 1937; there have been discoveries in twelve different areas, mainly in the coastal portions of the Eastern Region. Nigerian oil was exported for the first time in 1958, and exports are expected to exceed one million tons in 1960.

European contact with what is now Nigeria began with Portuguese traders in 1472. British ships appeared off the coast in 1553. With the growing demand for labour in the New World, Nigeria, like other parts of West Africa, became the great source of slaves. The slave-trade continued for 200 years or more. Although outlawed, the traffic persisted until the mid-nineteenth century. It was about this time that penetration of the interior of Nigeria by Europeans began. By then the country had been inhabited by peoples of Negroid and Berber stock for a considerable period. The most advanced peoples were the Yorubas and Binis in the south and the Hausas, Fulanis, and Kanuris in the north. In the nineteenth century the Yoruba Kingdom, which is believed to have extended from the Niger to Accra, disintegrated. During this period, the Yorubas, seeking a secure site, establishing their colony of Lagos on islands near the coast. Another result of the Yoruba decline was the rise of the powerful Kingdom of Benin to the east. Pressure from the Fulani is believed to have contributed to the fall of the Yorubas. Over many years Fulani rule was spread through most of the north except the northeastern area known as Bornu.

The suppression of the slave-trade and its replacement by legitimate commerce were important factors in the extension of British interest from the ports to the interior, and in the spread of British administration. Lagos was occupied in 1861. The United Africa Company, formed in 1879, with its successors controlled trade and local administration in the Niger and Benue river basins for twenty years. Meanwhile, British influence spread inland from Lagos to the heart of the old Yoruba Kingdom, and east of the Niger Delta into what became the Niger Coast Protectorate. At the Conference of Berlin (1885) British representatives were able to claim, successfully, that British interests were supreme on the lower Niger and the British claim to Nigeria generally, although its boundaries were as yet undefined, received international recognition. In 1900 the Colonial Office