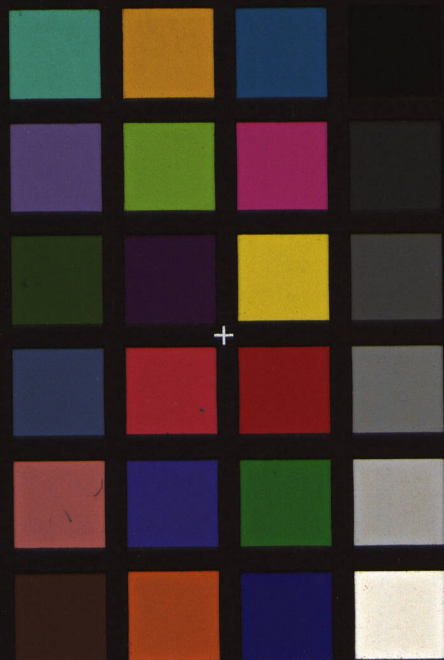


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THE ANTI-SLAVERY AND ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY:

Being the amalgamation, effected on 1st July, 1909, of the

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY
and the
ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY.

THE ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY was founded in 1837 (mainly at the instigation of Dr. THOMAS HODGKIN, with THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON, afterwards the first Baronet, as President), as the outcome of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed in 1835, "to consider what measures ought to be adopted with regard to the native inhabitants of countries where British settlements are made, and to neighbouring tribes, in order to secure to them justice and the protection of their rights."

Its fundamental purpose was "To assist in protecting the defenceless and promoting the advancement of uncivilised tribes." Among the beneficent measures in the procuring of which the Society had a share, may be mentioned the establishment of native Indian Reserves in the Dominion of Canada; the starting of Aborigines Protection Boards in Australia; the substitution of order for uncurbed lawlessness in Fiji and other islands of the South Pacific; while in recent years the course of events has compelled the Society to give most attention to African affairs.

Almost the earliest work of the Society took the form of protests against the wrongs inflicted on South African natives, and there is still need for vigorous continuance of its championship of the cause of justice and right treatment for the natives of that country.

The Society's opposition to the recruitment of Polynesian labour, known as the Kanaka system; the persistence of its efforts on behalf of the natives of the Congo State since 1897, when their wrongs were first discussed in the House of Commons at its instigation; its insistence on the duty of ending the servical system of slave labour in operation on the cocoa growing islands

of Portuguese West Africa, and the intolerable methods practised on the mainland upon which that vicious system depends, are among the many matters which have engaged its attention, as well as that of the Anti-Slavery Society, in later years.

The undisguised attempts of political leaders and others in South Africa to deprive the natives of Parliamentary and social rights, and the constant endeavours of unprincipled colonists to exploit native labour for their own advantage, cast upon the Committee the grave responsibility of safeguarding native interests under the Act of Union which was passed by the Imperial Parliament in 1909. That the value of this Act is marred by clauses which no member of any Party sought to defend, makes it incumbent on the new Society to watch the working of the Union of South Africa, the position of the native and coloured races under that Union, and the attitude of South African statesmen towards the Protectorates, especially as and when their inclusion is effected.

THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY was founded in 1839, after Emancipation had been brought about in the British dominions, the first President being the venerable THOMAS CLARKSON. Its object was to secure "the universal extinction of slavery and the slave trade," and the protection of freed populations in British possessions.

Great Britain abolished her slave trade in 1807, and slavery itself in her Colonies in 1834, at a cost of twenty million pounds sterling. In spite of the Berlin and Brussels Acts raiding is still carried on in the interior of Africa. Slaves are still exported from the coasts to supply the demands from Mahomedan and other countries, the risks involved in the trade enhancing the value of the human merchandise.

While much has been done, *e.g.*, in Uganda, British East and Central Africa, Nigeria, Egypt and the Soudan, much still remains to be done. An active trade in slaves is carried on in French and Anglo-Egyptian territory in the Central Soudan by that mysterious people, the Senoussi, who deal in men and women in exchange for fire-arms, and convey their victims across the desert along well-worn slave routes to Tripoli, where they are sold or exported to Turkish ports with the connivance of officials, in defiance of the Brussels Act.

Slave-traffic by sea goes on in the Indian Ocean, and especially on the shores of the Persian Gulf. In Morocco, the Anti-Slavery Society has in the past done useful work against the slave trade, but the present conditions of anarchy in that unfortunate country have recently made anti-slavery work impossible.

Slavery, unhappily, still exists, and these are but a few examples of the survival of an evil the extent of which is seldom appreciated at the present day. While the instincts and customs of slavery, so deeply ingrained in the African and Arab natures, remain, its practices are—at least ostensibly—reprobated by civilised nations.

A more subtle and widespread danger which confronts the Society to-day is the desire to exploit and coerce the native African and Asiatic labourer, for the benefit of the White man, under the pretext of "civilising" him, regardless of humanitarian considerations, whether by compulsory service or by forced labour on plantations, or in mines, or by oppressive taxation. This lies at the root of the systematic cruelty which is taking place to-day in the Congo and elsewhere, as well as of the San Thomé-Angola traffic, against which both the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Societies have persistently striven, both by making the abuses widely known and urging the need of reform upon our own Government and that of Portugal.

It is in the direction of opposing these forms of thinly-disguised slavery that the future work of the ANTI-SLAVERY AND ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY is likely more and more to lie. There is great need that the facts should be known, and that public interest should be kept alive on these difficult questions, so as to maintain what has been well called "THE CONTINUITY OF ENGLAND'S MORAL POLICY."

The income of the ANTI-SLAVERY AND ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY is uncertain and wholly inadequate for the important work which it might do with larger means, and fresh Subscriptions are urgently needed.

Contributions, WHICH ARE EARNESTLY SOLICITED, may be sent to the Secretary, or to the

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