

The Anti-Slavery Reporter

and

Aborigines' Friend.

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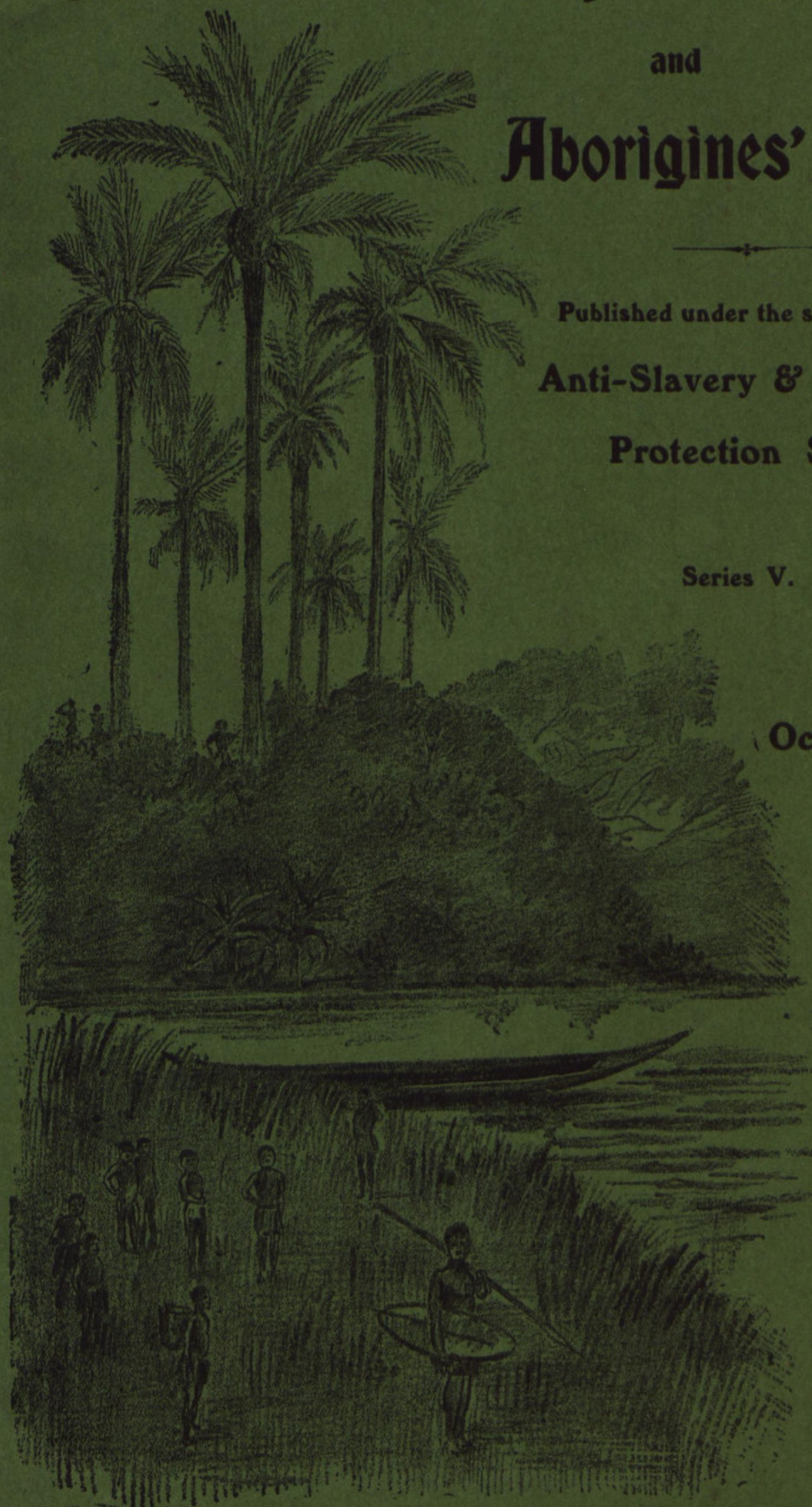
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Anti-Slavery Reporter and Aborigines' Friend.

OCTOBER, 1910.

[The Editor, whilst grateful to all correspondents who may be kind enough to furnish him with information, desires to state that he is not responsible for the views stated by them, nor for quotations which may be inserted from other journals. The object of the journal is to spread information, and articles are necessarily quoted which may contain views or statements for which their authors can alone be held responsible.]

This Majesty the King.

WE have the great satisfaction of publishing the following letter received from the King's Private Secretary, intimating His Majesty's willingness to accede to the request of the Committee, conveyed in the letter written on the occasion of King Edward's lamented death, that King George should become Patron of the Society, and so continue the Royal connection with which the Anti-Slavery Society has been honoured since 1884:—

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, PALL MALL, S.W.,

19th July, 1910.

DEAR SIR,—I am commanded by the King to inform you that His Majesty is graciously pleased to become Patron of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) W. H. P. CARINGTON.

The Secretary to the Anti-Slavery Society.

The following acknowledgment of the Committee's letter of condolence on the death of His late Majesty has also been received from the Home Secretary:—

HOME OFFICE, 12th July, 1910.

SIR,—I am commanded by the King to convey to you hereby His Majesty's thanks for the Loyal and Dutiful Address of the Committee of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society on the occasion of the lamented death of His late Majesty King Edward VII.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.

SIR T. FOWELL BUXTON, BART.

THE NEED FOR OUR SOCIETY.

“Native interests are even more important (than Imperial), because there are fewer people to look after them. . . It is the fact that one has to watch very carefully the action of all companies in remote parts of the world to see that natives are properly treated. Experience has shown that natives are ill-treated at times, not only by natives of this country but of other countries, and one must watch over them.”

These words of Colonel Seely, recently used in connection with the question of concessions granted to a certain company in the Pacific Islands, serve as an admirable motto, showing the need for, and justifying the work of, such a Society as ours. Human nature being what it is, it is hardly a matter for surprise than when syndicates are formed, whether in this country or elsewhere, to develop the resources of new territories remote from the centres of civilisation, the methods used to obtain the indispensable native labour required should often be those of unscrupulous exploitation if not of cruelty. It is unfortunately a tendency of all of us, where our pockets are concerned, too often to become singularly disposed to forget the claims of humanity, and to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the means employed to produce the desired result; hence the constant need for a Society such as the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society to keep watch over such questions. In one case, that of the outrages reported from the remote Putumayo-Amazon Valley, the Society can congratulate itself on an initial success in having urged it upon the attention of the Government to some purpose. The importance which Sir E. Grey attaches to this matter may be estimated from his decision to send out Mr. Roger Casement, whose name is so well-known for his splendid work in investigating the Congo abominations a few years ago, and reporting thereon in a White Paper, which may be said to have become historic.

Portuguese Slave Labour.

DEPUTATION TO SIR EDWARD GREY.

A DEPUTATION arranged by the Society on the above question was received by the Secretary of State at the Foreign Office on the 1st July, when those present included Sir T. Fowell Buxton (president), the Earl of Mayo, Sir Albert Spicer, M.P., and Lady Spicer, Sir Henry Cotton, Canon Scott Holland, Dr. Scott Lidgett, Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., Mr. C. R. Buxton, M.P., Mr. J. C. Wason, M.P., Mr. J. Wedgwood, M.P., Mr. J. King, M.P., Professor Westlake, K.C., Mrs. King Lewis, Mrs. Cobden Unwin, Dr. Hodgkin, Messrs. J. St. Loe Strachey, F. W. Fox, W. A. Albright, G. P. Gooch, A. W. Oke, E. W. Brooks, H. W. Nevins, Henry Gurney, Travers Buxton (secretary), and Mrs. Buxton, the Rev. J. H. Harris and Mrs. Harris (organizing secretaries).

Sir T. FOWELL BUXTON, in introducing the deputation, said that it referred to a matter which did not come before the Foreign Office or their Society as a new one. For many years they had had seriously impressed upon them the great evil of the slave trade in connection with San Thomé.

The Secretary (Mr. TRAVERS BUXTON) said that letters of apology for absence has been received from a number of gentlemen who were in full sympathy with the objects of the deputation. Among them were the Bishop of Hereford, Lord Weardale, Lord Peckover, Sir James Reckitt, Sir Alfred Pease, Mr. George Cadbury, Mr. Joseph Rowntree, and Mr. R. C. Lehmann, M.P.

Mr. John Holt who had had very great experience as a merchant in West Africa, wrote :—

“ I have known of the abominable methods of obtaining labour for these islands during the last half century, but until the report of the Inquiry instituted by Mr. Cadbury came out, I had no full conception of the miseries that had to be endured by the cocoa workers on those islands, miseries for which there is no necessity whatever. As you are aware we have a cocoa plantation in Fernando Po, and we have no difficulty in getting all the labour we require because we treat the men fairly and give them proper wages.”

Sir Alfred Pease had quite hoped and expected that he would be able to attend that day, but had written and telegraphed that other engagements prevented his being present. He desired to be associated with the Society's efforts and had written as follows :—

“ From my experience of Portuguese officials in East Africa I fear the difficulty will be not in obtaining satisfactory assurances, for these are almost always forthcoming and often *bona fide*, but their Colonial officials even if they were anxious to abolish slavery in the Colonies appear to be without the means and organisation to root out the hideous system under which labour has for generations been obtained.”

Mr. H. W. NEVINSON said that although he had first hand experience he would not go into details which were already familiar. A regular price was paid for the workers exported from the interior who were taken to the islands to work. The death rate there was very high, and, with very few exceptions, none of them had ever returned. The Portuguese Government had been induced to issue new regulations, and, as far as paper regulations went, there was nothing to complain of. If the regulations of 1889, 1899, and still more those of 1903, had been really acted upon, that deputation would not be there and the islands would have entirely free labour. But as a matter of fact those regulations had been entirely vain. When he was in the islands none of them were acted upon. There was only one other point on which he wished to dwell, and that was the treatment of the natives upon the islands. No one had said that that treatment was really cruel. But it appeared to him that slavery did not merely mean ill-treatment, but the purchase of men and women for money, and the compulsion to work without

consent. He had visited many of the plantations and he believed it was impossible to trust the control of men and women to one superior person, however good he might be, when he had these men and women entirely in his own hands and was really responsible to no one, although there was a nominal right of appeal to an inspector at the Capital of the Island.

The EARL OF MAYO said that in 1883 he had seen some of these negro labourers aboard the Lisbon mail boat. They looked like hunted animals bound for the Zoo. Actual cruelty did not exist upon the plantations, but the negroes were like animals confined amidst uncongenial surroundings. They became homesick and they pined and died. He was surprised that this Society and kindred societies had not taken decided action before. Every traveller knew the cruelty that took place when natives were being brought to the coast. As regarded remedies, they would be hard to apply, but he wished to say something with reference to those referred to in the Society's memorandum. In the first place the petty officials in Angola were in many cases officials who had not behaved themselves in Portugal and were sent to Angola to purge their iniquity. Those men did not care very much for rules and orders that came from Lisbon. They were in a position absolutely to act as they liked, and he was sorry to say some of them were interested in this traffic. In reference to repatriation he would like to point out that the negroes even if repatriated were only landed on the coast and had no money to get back to their own villages. He felt most strongly that if they had a Consul at San Thomé they would have independent reports which would tell exactly what was going on.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S LETTER.

CANON SCOTT HOLLAND said he was there to represent the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had written him the following letter :—

"My dear Holland,—I rejoice to hear that you are taking up this terrible matter of the San Thomé cocoa plantations. If the allegations made are substantiated, and I have seen no real refutation of them, it seems to be the clear business of those who have at heart the well-being of the less civilized races of the world, to sound a vigorous protest and to invoke every aid that can be interested for bringing such dark deeds to an end."

The Canon said that the Archbishop was a Scotsman, and measured his words. He was there to say that the Church of England was with this work. That deputation was not there in any mood of self-complacency to interfere with or dictate to another nation, but they were deeply conscious of their own moral peril. The nations of Europe had undertaken in common the government of dark races, and everything depended on the common standard of conduct set up in this matter. That standard was very low still, and very insecure, but the nations could not afford to let any one nation lapse from that standard. They were all concerned in indentured labour, and they knew how difficult it was to mark the line between that and slavery.

Therefore they pressed for earnest, unrelenting pressure from the Foreign Office.

THE MIND OF THE FREE CHURCHES.

The Rev. J. SCOTT LIDGETT, D.D., said it was his privilege to say a few words on behalf of the great Free Churches of the country. The mind of those Free Churches was being profoundly exercised by this particular problem of civilization and humanity in Africa. They had a strong conviction that all these crimes committed in the interests of greed against humanity were a danger to civilisation. Therefore they appealed that whatever resources the British Government might have, should be brought into prompt and decisive action to secure the amelioration of those conditions. The whole population of this country was involved in this evil, not only because of our treaty rights and declarations, but because of the great consumption of the commodities which were produced and brought to our markets at home through this terrible system of slavery.

Mr. J. ST. LOE STRACHEY said he wished to deal with the purely practical point. He assumed that they were all agreed that slavery was the worst of crimes. A man did not cease to become a slave because he was called an indentured labourer. In Angola they had slavery at its very worst. These horrible conditions prevailed because at the coast there were slave dealers ready to buy slaves and steamers ready to convey them to the islands. That was the ultimate cause of the slave hunting on the mainland. If they wanted to cut off slavery they must cut it off at the source. He could not see why they should not treat these steamers as they treated slavers in the Red Sea. He was asked by Mr. Nevinson to mention one fact which he forgot to mention in his speech, which was, that the evil was increasing every year. What he had called the slave ships were every year bringing bigger cargoes of slaves from the mainland, and last year the figures reached the enormous total of 6,000.

THE LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Sir ALBERT SPICER said he had been asked to attend as representing the London Chamber of Commerce. He was quite sure he was speaking in a way that would commend itself to the leaders of commerce when he said they were genuinely desirous that humanitarian and economic interests in all questions of commerce should be considered simultaneously. They did not want a trade that was the result of cruel and unnatural conditions. Even if they looked at the matter from the most selfish point of view, a system that produced an annual wastage of some 10,000 lives must be unsound and was certainly not economical. A decrease in population was inimical to the increase of production and commerce. As a Chamber of Commerce their relations with Portugal had been most friendly, and the trade of this country with Portugal amounted to some 8½ millions sterling per annum. They desired that those friendly relations should continue, and

they trusted that Sir Edward Grey might be able by his intervention, to put an end to the existing state of things.

Mrs. KING LEWIS said she wished to speak on behalf of the women and children. The evidence showed that women were taken from their homes and their husbands, and on the islands were transferred to other men. One woman when interviewed on the journey, said she had left behind her husband and three children. When she was asked where she was going, she said, "I don't know, but I suppose I am going to hell"—the only word that described in her mind what she expected to experience. Children were taken from their homes and made to travel hundreds of miles to the coast. One who had the management of them said he considered himself lucky if at the end of the journey he could transfer to the islands six alive out of every ten. Children born on the islands were the property of the plantation owners. It was necessary on account of the very high death rate that at least 4,000 adults and 500 children should be conveyed every year to these islands to fill up the gaps made by deaths. The most pathetic and distressing aspect of the whole thing was that the poor people deprived of everything that made life tolerable, and without any hope for the future, especially the women, died of broken hearts. She could believe that they were well fed and well treated on the islands, for they were valuable property and their death meant financial loss. She recalled that on one occasion Queen Victoria wrote to the King of Portugal "There is every disposition to make allowance for the difficulties of Portugal, but we must remember that allowance must be made for the feelings of the English people."

Mr. THOMAS HODGKIN, D.C.L., said no meetings had been called to express indignation against Portugal. He thought they should be permitted to remind Portugal of the friendship which bound together the two peoples in the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, when England was often fighting the battles of Portugal against strong foes. Without wishing to press the claim of obligation too strongly, it did seem to him that the Foreign Office might do wisely if it represented gently and in a forbearing manner the strong claims which this country had upon Portugal. International friendships were a precious asset, and no wise nation would treat them lightly. Portugal was one of the first nations to take part in the abolition of slavery, and they asked her to keep up that record.

THE FOREIGN SECRETARY'S REPLY.

Sir EDWARD GREY said: I think I have never known so many speakers placed on the Agenda paper of a deputation who have been so concise, and I have never known any who have been more to the point. Anyone who listened to the speakers must have been convinced of the strong feeling which was behind all the speakers, and at the same time, I think, must have been impressed, not only with the strength of feeling but the restraint of

language in which that feeling was expressed. Restraint and self-control in language is, in my opinion, very often evidence not of superficial but of definite feeling, and I feel that is the case with this deputation. The mere names of those who have spoken are evidence to the public how widespread this feeling is—because they are very representative names—and of **how much public feeling and moral force is behind those who have spoken.** That in itself would be a reason for receiving the deputation; but I thought it would be opportune that the deputation should come at the present moment because there has been what is undoubtedly, on paper, a new departure with regard to this question in the course of the last few months by the Portuguese Government, and what I trust will not only prove a new departure on paper, but will result in putting an end to at any rate the greater evils of which everyone who has known anything of the conditions of recruiting in Angola in recent years, has been so very conscious. Now first of all with regard to our responsibilities, let me say that I quite agree with what some speakers have said that civilisation must have in some sense a common level, and that if nations who are on the highest level of civilisation become conscious that things are going on in the world which are below the level which civilisation ought to attain, for them to remain entirely indifferent to it, even though it may not be within their power to do much, would be to risk lowering their own moral character. But as far as we are concerned all those,—even those whose trade interests might have led them to turn a blind eye to what was going on in this part of the world,—all those who have any knowledge of what has been going on, I think, have acted with a great sense of responsibility in bringing to light the facts which they knew. No selfish interest and no political susceptibilities have restrained our public opinion here from bringing the facts to light.

ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Now, when I came into office I knew the strength of the feeling but I had not known much of the subject myself previously, and I thought that the first thing to do was to get at the facts and to diagnose what was the real point of the evil. I came to the conclusion from all the information which reached me that the evil to be attacked was not that of the actual treatment of the servitors on the islands themselves. That is to say, assuming that the engagement had been voluntary and could be voluntarily terminated, there would be no great abuse or evil with regard to the actual treatment endured while the engagement lasted. Therefore, I eliminated that as the point to be attacked if one really wished to get at the root of the evil.

REPATRIATION.

There came next the question of repatriation, and that at first sight seemed as if it ought to be the point on which criticism should turn. There was apparently no repatriation, but when one came to know what the

actual conditions of recruiting in Africa itself were it became quite clear that until those conditions of recruiting were, I won't say radically changed, but entirely stopped, repatriation was really impossible. One of the speakers, I think, dwelt upon the fact that you have people on the islands nominally engaged for a term of years, but at the end of that term of years if they were to be repatriated when landed on the coast they would be unable to find their way back to where they had been captured by force originally, and once having got back to their homes, if they ever reached them, they would be in a place where there was no real control, no good administration, and where they might be recaptured. That led me to this point, that the root of the evil was in the recruiting itself on the mainland, not in the nominal terms of engagement because **voluntary engagement is not slavery but forcible engagement is slavery.** What laid this open to a charge of slavery was that **these people were captured by force on the mainland.**

Now, with regard to the action of the British Government, I have been active since I have been in office in bringing the facts to the notice of the Portuguese Government. The last thing we want to do is to derogate in any way from the sovereign rights of the Portuguese or hurt their political susceptibilities of sovereignty in any way whatever, and I was convinced that the facts were such that if they were really brought to the knowledge of the Portuguese, and the Portuguese Government was convinced that they were true, they would at once recognise that some action, and some stringent action, must be taken to change the state of affairs. It takes some time for any country to be convinced on foreign evidence that abuses are going on in its own country of which its officials at home have no first hand knowledge, but the Portuguese Government were convinced with regard to the state of recruiting and the abuses that did go on on the mainland, not in the parts where their own administration was settled, but sometimes outside their own territory, even in districts where administration practically did not exist, that is, where the captures took place.

PORTUGUESE REFORMS.

Well, now I should like to tell the deputation what we have actually done. In the first place, when they became aware of the facts, they suspended recruiting in Angola altogether. They suspended it in the end of July last year for three months and they continued the suspension till the 1st February, 1910. I think one of the speakers said that in spite of that, there had been an increase of the labourers imported. I am rather puzzled by that statement, as to how it can be, because I know that while recruiting was stopped in Angola, considerable numbers were imported from Mozambique, where regular recruiting goes on for the Transvaal or other places. So there was while recruiting was suspended, according to my information, a complete displacement of the source of supply which was transferred from

Angola to Mozambique. But in any case, that suspension of recruiting was only a temporary measure and recruiting has now been resumed under new regulations. I would like to read you the new regulations; the principal points in them are these. Recruiting centres are established in the Province of Angola, outside which no recruiting is allowed. A limited number of natives only may be recruited. Only licensed agents approved of by the Governor of the District may recruit labourers. Engagements must be entered into in the presence and with the consent of the native chief and under the direct supervision of the nearest administrative authority. The labourers must be taken to the coast by specified roads only, and the agent must accompany them and take every care of them on the journey. Well, those regulations are *qua* regulations, so framed that, if they were properly and effectively carried out, they must stop the abuses which have previously existed.

NOT REGULATIONS, BUT RESULTS WANTED.

But, of course, what we all desire in these things are not regulations, but results, and I have been most guarded with any deputation that has ever come to me, against arousing expectations, because I think every Foreign Secretary ought to be guarded against arousing expectations when he is talking of the affairs of another country, when he himself is not in a position to guarantee or control the working of regulations in foreign territory. To criticise the actual administration of such regulations in foreign territory is a delicate matter, and I do not know that there is any reason for criticism yet. They have only just begun. I was appealed to by one speaker on behalf of our friendship with Portugal, as giving us a pivot on which our influence might turn. That is quite true, and I wish to continue that friendship, but nothing is so apt to impair friendship as any want of delicacy in discussing the administration of another country. Therefore I am glad that the Portuguese Government themselves, in drawing these regulations, have taken what I think is the true course and invited publicity with regard to them. Not only are these their regulations, but they have said that the contracting will take place in public. Now, if contracting is to take place in public, I think it is clear that the Portuguese Government have taken a very wise step, because it will enable not only our own Consuls, but any persons who are interested in this question, to attend to see actually what is being done and to prove, as I trust it will be possible in the next few years by unofficial reports which private individuals like to make, to prove as conclusively in the next few years that a change has taken place, as it was conclusively proved in past years that these very great abuses existed. So with regard to repatriation, which does now become a very practical question if these new regulations are thoroughly enforced. If there is re-engagement on the islands it ought to be voluntary re-engagement. Now the Portuguese Government have laid it down that traders and others who wish to renew contracts must obtain permission

from the Governor, who will obtain a report from the Curator-General of Natives as to the behaviour of the traders. Re-engagement will have to take place in public, and all who wish may be present. The Curator-General must be present with one of his staff, two independent witnesses and an independent sworn interpreter. There are to be four periods of repatriation in each year, when those labourers who have served their time shall be shipped to the proper port on the mainland. Half the labourer's wages are to be deposited monthly for the first part of the contract with the Government Agent to form a bonus, which the labourer receives when he lands on his return to the mainland. There, again, the regulations seem to me to effect what is desired, and the publicity which is invited should enable us and any who are interested in the question, to make sure that the working of the regulations is effecting the changes which are desired.

CONSULAR APPOINTMENTS.

The practical suggestion made to me this afternoon by one speaker was that we should establish a Consular Agent on the island as well as on the mainland. **I have already taken steps to do that, and we are going to appoint a Vice-Consul, who will be a British subject, on San Thomé.** We have a Consul on the mainland. The regulations with regard to recruiting on the mainland are that it is to be publicly worked. Contracting on the mainland is to be public and provisions with regard to repatriation are to be public. We shall have a Consul on the mainland and a Vice-Consul on the island. The instructions I gave a little time ago to the Consul on the mainland were that he was to arrange to be present from time to time at the engagement of labourers, to make journeys on the steamers conveying labourers to the island, and get to know at first hand from them all the circumstances, and to undertake, later on, a journey into the interior, to visit the centres of recruiting and the routes followed on the way to the coast. I trust that the Portuguese Government, having been convinced by all the evidence which has accumulated, that really stringent regulations were required, and, having issued those stringent regulation, and having invited publicity, will recognise that it is in the best interests of friendship between the two countries and that they have nothing themselves to lose, but everything to gain, by inviting anyone who is interested in this question, especially those who have been most conscious of the evils which went on on the mainland before, to avail themselves to the fullest extent of the publicity which the Portuguese Government themselves have offered. I have told you the regulations, I have given you the gist of the instructions we have given to the Consul, and I can assure you I trust the reports which we may receive from our Consul, and which, of course, **we shall in any case make public**, and which we shall be only too delighted to make public, if they are as satisfactory as I hope they will turn out to be, will give the best guarantee which it is possible for us to obtain, that, at any rate, full information shall be forthcoming, and, I trust, in the course of the

next few years, all the members of this deputation and all those interested in the question, will have really substantial evidence before them, which will enable them to judge how far our hopes have been realised.

Mr. NOEL BUXTON, M.P., thanked Sir Edward Grey for the sympathetic way in which he had received the deputation, and for his statement of what had taken place and of the intentions of the Government. They would look forward most eagerly to the publication of reports. That deputation represented a vast body of public opinion, which, though not able closely to follow the details of such an intricate matter, supported the efforts which were being made in this great task.

The deputation then withdrew.

The Society has reason for encouragement in connection with the above interview and the sympathetic reception accorded to its deputation by the Foreign Secretary, who has made it clear that the traffic in *serviçaes* for the cocoa plantations is a subject to which the British Government has given and will continue to give serious attention. Sir E. Grey is aware of the strong public feeling which exists in the country upon the question, and while he is hopeful that the new regulations will prove practically effective, he frankly recognizes that he is not in a position to control their working. It is good news that a British Vice-Consul is to be appointed at San Thomé, and we shall eagerly await the Consular reports which are promised, and which ought to be of very great value.

In an article which was published in *The Friend* of July 22nd, Mr. Joseph Burt summed up the present position, and contended that the fact of the slavery existing in connection with San Thomé is now fully established, and has received the consideration of the British and American Governments. The importation of Mozambique instead of Angola labourers into the islands on short contracts, is a point to which Mr. Burt attaches great importance; 2,373 of these were brought from the East Coast between July, 1908, and January, 1910, according to Senhor Francisco Mantero (*Manual Labour in San Thomé and Príncipe*), and of these 450 were repatriated. The main obstacles to reform at the present time are, says Mr. Burt, weakness and corruption in the Portuguese Colonial administration and the powerful interests on the side of forced labour; the remoteness of the country where the abuses occur, and the great profitability of the present system.

Mr. Burt is not sanguine as to the new regulations for so-called recruitment, etc., proving any more effective than previous ones; the British Consul at Loanda cannot watch the whole coast, and he recommends that English and American Commissioners should be appointed to act with a Portuguese, travel up and down the coast, and occasionally visit the interior.

Mr. M. Z. Stober, who is at present on furlough in this country, recently wrote in the *Angola Missionary Magazine* a description of a journey which he made in the highlands in the interior of Benguela, where the Lobito-Katanga Railway is being built, and already runs inland to a distance of nearly 200 kilometres.

"The region," he writes, "is also one of sad interest as the principal caravan route for the bringing to the coast from the interior the slaves who are taken to work on the cocoa plantations of San Thomé."

Of Benguela he wrote:—

"The native population, composed mostly of *serviçaes* (natives bought through the various trading firms), is very large, also large caravans of carriers, with loads from and to the interior, are constantly streaming in and out from this centre. The trading houses are important and wealthy. All strangers are impressed by the high walls, or Quintals, of these factories, admitting only of one entrance, passing the office and stores, so that entrance and exit are always under observation, the ostensible purpose being the prevention of escape of the men, women and children that are bought. I was surprised to see a number of little children locked up day after day in a place with a wire frontage. I could only explain it as their being newly-captured ones being made familiar with their present surroundings of slavery with hell-born tyrants—loathed and condemned."

Mr. Stober travelled by train to Cubal, and set out thence on his journey further inland. The party passed through the region, across the Catumbella, where the Government are introducing colonials as planters; the native labourers on these plantations are bought.

"It was sad on this route," he wrote, "to see the slave shackles still abundant, hanging on the trees. In places here the natives are moving all their towns to the most inaccessible parts in the mountains. What this involves in labour for the poor women, in the ground cultivation and water provision, is sad to contemplate!"

Senhor Francisco Mantero's book in defence of the existing system, entitled *Manual Labour in S. Thomé and Príncipe*, published in English (of which the author has been good enough to send us a copy), is marked by many of the characteristics common to volumes of its class and purpose. Handsomely got up and well illustrated, it shows the most favourable side of the lives of the *serviçaes* on the islands in glowing colours, and dwells on the care and attention bestowed on the labourers, while little or nothing is said as to the means by which they are obtained in the hinterland of Angola. They are represented, however, as living in their homes there in a savage state which is pure animalism—a condition of "idleness and moral and social wretchedness" from which it is an act of charity to rescue them.

The book is also marked by undisguised hostility to this country, which, we are told, has maintained a campaign against Portuguese enterprise for more than half-a-century, actuated by diverse base motives under

the pretext of humanity. The opponents of the San Thomé labour system see in it, we are told, "an obstacle to the exclusive dominion over Southern Africa, which has long been the aim of their unscrupulous actions," and while "the selection of the labourers of San Thomé among so many tyrannized people existing in the world for the exercise of philanthropy, who all admit are treated with exceptional kindness has no justification" and its causes are "enveloped in mystery," it is very plainly intimated that fear of competition with cocoa grown in Trinidad and Accra, the trade jealousy of English speculators in Brazilian cocoa, the "struggles of English internal politics," and—curiously enough—the desire to increase "the strength and dominion of the evangelical sect in Africa" are assigned as the real causes of opposition to the system. But this English attitude of hostility is traced much further back to the time when the English protested against the slave trade which was carried on in Portuguese vessels, and continually placed difficulties in the way of the emigration of native labourers from Angola to San Thomé. It is intimated that the treaty of 1842 against the slave trade was a great obstacle to the development of the Island, and when after a "tenacious and energetic struggle against the pretensions of England," the law of 1875 provided for the abolition of slavery in all the Portuguese dominion within a year, and the authorities of San Thomé let all their slaves go, it seemed that the prosperity of San Thomé was doomed to extinction—an event which was averted by the energy of the planters. The attitude of the writer towards what English people persist in calling slavery is thus plainly shown, and great stress is laid in his pages on the indolent and turbulent lives led by the tribes of Angola and Guinea, and the immense benefit of transferring them to the milder climate and civilised conditions and discipline of the cocoa islands.

Another significant point in which the author lays great emphasis, is the difficulty and undesirability of repatriating the labourer—this would be inhuman and inequitable—"an arbitrary act," and (incidentally, of course), the enforcement of repatriation would double the cost to the planters of the conveyance of labourers which, as it is, forms their chief item of expense.

The writer takes a high patriotic line—"The Province of San Thomé and Principe is an indispensable factor in the economic existence of the nation, and we must preserve and develop it at all costs," and the Government of Portugal ought to make no "new concessions to the exigencies of morbid philanthropy which attacks and insults us"—with a great deal more to the same effect.

This book certainly tends to confirm those who believe that no real alternative in the *serviçal* system can be looked for from within, *i.e.*, from the the industry itself. Our hope is rather that Portugal as a nation, will awake to see that the so called "English campaign" is not based on national jealousy and other sordid motives, but springs from the hatred of

slavery, and that the system cannot be consistently maintained by a proud and free Christian nation in the interests of the planters, who are after all only a section, though a powerful section, of the community.

Parliamentary.

SLAVE TRADE INTO TRIPOLI.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *June 23rd, 1910.*

Mr. NOEL BUXTON asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention had been called to the instructions given by the French Government to their Consuls in Tripoli to take under their protection the natives who are brought there from the French Soudan; and whether he would give similar instructions to British Consuls in Tripoli as to the natives who are brought there from Anglo-Egyptian territory.

Sir E. GREY: His Majesty's Government have no knowledge of the instructions referred to as having been issued by the French Government. British Consular Officers abroad would afford such assistance and protection as would be right and proper to natives of the Anglo-Egyptian Soudan who are furnished with the usual passports.

June 20th.

THE PUTUMAYO VALLEY MURDERS CONFIRMED.

Mr. WEDGWOOD asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether His Majesty's Government had received information from either the Peruvian or Colombian Governments regarding the fate of David Serrano, of La Reserva, and Ildefonso Gonzalez, who, with a number of their employees, were reported to have been first tortured and then murdered by the agents of a British Company; and if such information had not been received, would His Majesty's Government direct enquiries as to these two cases to the Governments of Peru and Colombia; whether he was aware that the Colombian Foreign Minister publicly denounced, on June 3rd, 1908, the Peruvian Amazon Company for crimes committed in the Putumayo Valley, South America, and warned them that full compensation would be demanded on behalf of the surviving relatives for such crimes; and would he request the Colombian Government to place the information it possessed at the disposal of His Majesty's Government; whether he would ascertain the fate of the widows and children of David Serrano, Ildefonso Gonzalez, and some of their employees; and if they were still held prisoners by the agents of the British Company exploiting the Putumayo Valley, would he request the Peruvian Government to secure their early release from their captors, and take steps to compensate them for outrages to which they were reported to have been subjected by the agents of the Peruvian Amazon Company.

Mr. McKINNON WOOD: The Commission of Inquiry which is shortly proceeding to the Putumayo Valley will doubtless investigate this matter, with a view to ascertain to what extent, if any, the officials of the Peruvian Amazon Company were implicated in the alleged atrocities. As the persons who are said to have been murdered or held prisoners in the manner described are understood to have been Colombian citizens, the matter concerns the Colombian Government. We are inquiring whether they have any information. We are not aware of the action of the Colombian Minister for Foreign Affairs to which the hon. member refers.

June 27th.

Mr. WEDGWOOD asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government had yet received any information showing that David Serrano and Ildefonso Gonzalez had been murdered in the Putumayo Valley.

Mr. McKINNON WOOD, who replied:—We are informed by the Colombian Government that Serrano and Gonzalez were both murdered, although we are not aware of the circumstances in which they met their death. The Colombian Government know nothing respecting the fate of their families.

August 3rd, 1910.

Mr. KING asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the Commission to inquire into the alleged ill-treatment of natives, which is being sent out by the Peruvian Amazon Company to the Putumayo district, started on its mission; who are the members of that Commission; whether Mr. Julio Cæsar Arana, who is a manager of the Company, and related by marriage to a servant of the Company, against whom allegations have been made, will accompany the Commission; who the Special Commissioner is whom the Foreign Office is sending out; when the Commission is expected to finish its labours; and whether its Report will be presented to the Foreign Office?

Sir E. GREY: The Peruvian Amazon Company are sending out a Commission to the Putumayo district to report on the possibilities of commercial development of their properties, and also to enquire into the present relations between the native employees and the agents of the Company. His Majesty's Government, also, are sending Mr. Casement, His Majesty's Consul-General at Rio de Janeiro, to ascertain whether any British subjects have suffered, or are in distress, and, if so, from what cause, and whether they stand in need of relief.

The Commission sailed for Madeira on the 23rd ult., on their way to the Putumayo. The members of the Commission are: Colonel the Hon. Reginald H. Bertie, C.B., late Commanding Royal Welsh Fusiliers;

Mr. L. H. Barnes, tropical agriculturist ; Mr. W. Fox, rubber expert and botanist ; Mr. E. S. Bell, merchant ; and Mr. H. L. Gielgud, secretary and manager of the Peruvian Amazon Company. I have no information as to whether Mr. J. C. Arana will accompany the Commission, or when the Commission is likely to finish its labours.

Mr. Casement will forward his report to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, July 19th.

FORCED LABOUR IN JAVA.

Mr. WEDGWOOD asked the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands Government had called the attention of His Majesty's Government to the prospectus of the Anglo-Dutch Plantations of Java, Limited, and in doing so claimed the right to expropriate the estate ; and whether, in view of the advertised advantage in this company of the right to forced labour for private profit, His Majesty's Government would refrain from giving any diplomatic support to the company, in order that British shareholders might be saved from participating in a system indistinguishable from slavery ?

Mr. McKINNON WOOD : The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As no appeal has been made by the Anglo-Dutch Plantations of Java, Limited, for the support of His Majesty's Government, the second part of the question is based on a hypothetical case, which I am not prepared to discuss ; nor can I say without further information what is the true character of the labour referred to.

Mr. WEDGWOOD : Is the hon. gentleman aware that it is deliberately stated in the prospectus that one of the advantages of the company is that they have the power to compel the natives to work ?

Mr. McKINNON WOOD : They have not asked for our assistance.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, July 20th, 1910.

THE ANGOLA SLAVE TRAFFIC.

Mr. FELL asked the First Lord of the Admiralty how many vessels belonging to the Government were now stationed on the West Coast of Africa for the purpose of assisting in the suppression of the traffic in slaves.

Mr. McKENNA : One vessel is stationed on the West Coast of Africa. I am not aware that there is any traffic in slaves there to be suppressed, but she has the necessary authority if the occasion arose.

In answer to a further question from Mr. Fell,

Mr. McKENNA said : I could not tell the hon. gentleman at the moment where the vessel is.

Mr. FELL asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he proposed to invite the signatory Powers to the Brussels Act of 1892 to revise the stipulations contained in Article 22, that the right of search and capture at sea of vessels carrying slaves was limited to vessels of less than 500 tons, seeing that the experience of the conveyance of natives between Angola and San Thomé showed the necessity for such revision.

Mr. McKINNON WOOD: Chapter III. of the Brussels Act, which contains the Article referred to (Article 23), applies to the East Coast only, and its provisions have no reference to the conveyance of natives between Angola and San Thomé.

Mr. FELL: The territory of Angola is not comprised in this Convention.

Mr. McKINNON WOOD: No; I think that the Brussels Convention dealt with a different kind of traffic in slaves.

July 26th.

Mr. FELL asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the treaty with Portugal of April 29th, 1858, which provided that at the end of 20 years slavery should be altogether abolished in the Portuguese Dominions, was still in force, or whether it had been cancelled or annulled by either the Berlin or Brussels Acts.

Sir E. GREY: The instrument of April 29th, 1858, which provided for the abolition of slavery in the Portuguese Dominions was not a treaty but a Portuguese Royal Decree.

Mr. FELL asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, acting under the powers given in the Treaty of 1856, between the Governments of Great Britain and Portugal, Her Majesty's ship *Swallow* captured in 1878 a Portuguese brig carrying slaves, or so-called indentured labourers, from Angola, on the West Coast of Africa, and whether this capture was upheld.

Sir E. GREY: A Portuguese brig was boarded in 1878 by a boat from Her Majesty's ship *Swallow*, with a view to verifying the status of certain negro passengers who were being transported to San Thomé. The *Swallow* was acting under provisions of the Treaty of 1842, which, since the Brussels Act came into force no longer apply to the West Coast of Africa. There was no attempt to capture the brig, and the investigation led to no further action in the matter.

July 28th.

Mr. FELL asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the British Government had on several occasions declared that vessels engaged in the slave trade were pirates and could be captured as such,

irrespective of any treaties ; and if this declaration would by the Brussels Act be limited to vessels of under 500 tons.

Sir EDWARD GREY: Whatever declarations may have been made by the British Government in the past—and I am not aware of any—the right of visit, search, and detention is limited to vessels of under 500 tons by the Brussels Act.

Rubber Slavery in South America.

THE Putumayo Valley outrages have formed the subject of several questions in the House of Commons, which, with the answers, are reported on a previous page. From them it will be seen that His Majesty's Government is following up the matter, and has decided to send out Mr. Roger Casement to the Putumayo. Correspondence has passed between the Society and the Foreign Office, of which the most material parts follow. On July 7th a letter was addressed to Sir Edward Grey in the following terms by the Secretary :—

“PERUVIAN AMAZON COMPANY.

. . . In view of the information in the possession of the Society, my Committee regards the confirmation received by His Majesty's Government of the murder of David Serrano and Ildefonso Gonzalez on the Putumayo River as possessing a greater significance than may appear on the surface.

“In directing the attention of His Majesty's Government to these cases, my Committee realised that a confirmation of these particular murders would imply a confirmation of a large number of atrocities connected and contemporary with these two, and I am instructed to lay before you more fully some of those crimes connected with the incident, and certain observations of my Committee upon some of the issues involved.

“An investigation of the material in the possession of the Society shows that before the massacres took place Serrano was first robbed by the agents of the rubber company; he was then tied to a tree, his wife dragged before him and publicly outraged by the leading spirit of the outrages, who is to-day in the employ of the Putumayo-Amazon Company. The wife of Serrano is, we understand, still held captive for immoral purposes by —, the manager of —, one of the centres of the Peruvian Amazon Company, who also retains possession of the children of the murdered father, and we have reason to believe that the other women are sharing the same fate. Following upon this, Serrano with his friends and employees were themselves searched and their possessions divided between agents of the Peruvian Amazon Company. Orders were then given to

massacre them all, and the following are the names of fourteen people murdered in a brutal and horrible manner. Some fourteen more were also killed, whose names are not yet in the possession of the Society. (Here followed the names.)

"There was present at this massacre the Peruvian ex-sergeant Ricardo Caceres, who courageously protested against the perpetration of this crime. This protest was promptly met by—, the agent of the company, giving orders for Caceres to be murdered, an order which was immediately carried out. After this massacre, Commandant Juan R. Polack of the Peruvian army, recovered a portion of the stolen property, and detained some of the criminals, but on the visit to the scene of a Peruvian official in company with Julio C. Arana, the present local director of the Peruvian Amazon Company, the men detained were released.

"My Committee desire that I should emphasise to you the grave position of certain British subjects. It is apparent that this Company employs a considerable number of Barbados negroes to execute its criminal deeds. Arising out of the proceedings which presumably must promptly take place the full penalties may be expected to involve capital punishment for several individuals. My Committee beg to call attention to the danger of the superior officials in the employ of the Peruvian Amazon Company making scapegoats of the negro soldiery; it would, therefore, appear to be imperative that the interests of these British subjects should be watched by a responsible British official in order that justice may be meted out to the really guilty parties. Another and quite subsidiary reason is the position occupied by the British shareholders of this Company, some of whom, as we have reason to know, view the situation with alarm."

The Secretary again wrote Sir Edward Grey on August 12th expressing to him the appreciation of the Society at "the course which has been adopted by His Majesty's Government with reference to the allegations made against the Peruvian Amazon Company. The importance of instructing Mr. Consul-General Casement to proceed to the Putumayo Valley is materially increased by the unsatisfactory names and terms of reference of the agents appointed by the company itself."

The Peruvian Amazon Company originally gave to His Majesty's Government an assurance that the directors only "desire that more light might be thrown upon the matter, and that abuses, if they exist, may be done away with." This eminently satisfactory sentiment appears to be no longer the desire of the directors, for we now learn that these agents of the company are primarily "*to report upon the possibilities of commercial development of their properties.*"

The Society had hoped that a committee of gentlemen versed in British jurisprudence and acquainted with the administration of tropical

countries would have been appointed; that their terms of reference would have included a full inquiry into the actions of the agents of the company in the recent past; that plenary powers would have been given to dismiss any agents found to be implicated in the cruelties, some of which have been definitely confirmed by the Columbian Government; but none of these reasonable anticipations have been fulfilled, and the Society holds that any reports published by the agents of the Peruvian Amazon Company must fail to command any appreciable degree of public confidence as an independent investigation.

The East Africa Protectorate.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER.

THE annual report of British East Africa for the year 1908-9, which was issued a few months ago, states that the period was not marked by any salient events, but the Protectorate had made steady progress in spite of weather conditions somewhat unfavourable to agriculture. There had been little or no friction with native tribes. Labour difficulties still exist but show a tendency to diminish. European overseers of the native railway labourers have proved far more satisfactory than the Indians formerly employed.

The following paragraph occurs as to Slavery:—

“The Ordinance for the abolition of the legal status of slavery has worked well and without friction during the year. Altogether 3,593 cases have been settled by the District Courts, and compensation to the amount of £7,053 has been awarded.

“It is, however, an undoubted fact that the Arab community which has not been very prosperous of late, has suffered severely from the movement of emancipation. It is hoped that when the question of land titles at the coast is settled, an influx of fresh capital will bring about a better state of affairs.”

The reports from the various provinces on native affairs point to quiet and orderly conditions generally.

In Seyidieh the slavery cases have entailed a large amount of extra work, 1,704 applications for freedom having been made in the Malindi district, of which rather more than half were dealt with and settled, and over 62,000 rupees paid in compensation. In Tanaland over 1,800 cases came before the Slavery Court, and compensation was paid to an amount exceeding 80,000 rupees. The Arab plantations are said to have suffered somewhat from the dearth of labour resulting from the abolition of slavery, and generally there is very little labour in Lamu and Witu, but on the Tana river the natives are described as numerous and industrious.

In some remarks relating to Climate and Health, it is stated that the death rate has largely increased, and though the climate is "an ideal one for travellers and sportsmen," the high plateau seems to be unsuitable, owing to its effect on the nervous system, for continuous residence; fuller experience, however, may prove this conclusion to be inaccurate. An attempt has been made to form a segregation camp in Kavirondo in view of the widespread sleeping sickness, but the natives are very unwilling to leave their villages on the lake shores, where the danger of infection is greatest.

A list of land grants with full particulars for the year is given, the number of which amounts to 162, as against 208 in the previous year.

SLAVERY ORDINANCE.

During the year a further measure supplemental to the Abolition Ordinance of 1907 has been passed, by which Section 15 of that Ordinance, relating to the exclusion of concubines from its benefits, is repealed. The law in relation to these women is now put on the same footing in the Protectorate as in the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba by the Decree of last year with the same reservations as to concubines who leave their master without his consent. It will be remembered that when the Abolition Ordinance was passed in 1907 the Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society protested against the exclusion of women of the harem, and expressed, in a letter to the Colonial Office, the hope that the exception contained in Clause 15 was only a temporary one.

It is true that the Bishop of Uganda, whose experience of and deep interest in this question is well known, regards the reservation above referred to, viz., that women who leave without their master's consent shall sacrifice all their rights and privileges under Mahomedan law including the custody of their children by such master, as shocking and indefensible. The defence generally offered, that if a woman leaves her master she may go into evil surroundings and her children will suffer, he does not regard as valid, maintaining that if a woman having children wishes to leave her master it is because of his bad character and the children would be safer with the mother than with him. Even so, however, it is satisfactory to know that the clause by which all harem women were kept in virtual bondage to their masters is now repealed.

The Release of Dinuzulu.

On learning that the Union Government had resolved to release the Zulu Chief, the Committee of the Society resolved to address a letter of congratulation to General Botha, the Prime Minister of United South

Africa, to which he has replied in appreciative terms. The text of the letters follows:—

51, DENISON HOUSE, S.W.

June 7th, 1910.

SIR,—On behalf of the Committee of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, I beg leave to express to you the great satisfaction with which it has learned of the decision of the Union Government of South Africa to release the Zulu chief, Dinuzulu, from his imprisonment. In May, 1909, the Aborigines Protection Society (which in July last was amalgamated with the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to form the existing Society) addressed the Secretary of State for the Colonies asking that the severe sentence passed on the chief should be reduced, or the period of his imprisonment terminated, on the ground that he had been acquitted of all the more serious charges brought against him, and that the treason of which he had been found guilty was no more than technical. Lord Crewe, however, replied that he was not able to interfere with the discretion of the Governor of the Colony of Natal in the matter.

The Society, therefore, desires to convey to you, as Prime Minister of the Union Government of South Africa, its high appreciation of this action of the Government and of the fact that it is amongst its first measures that the Government has resolved that the remainder of the sentence upon Dinuzulu shall be forthwith remitted.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) TRAVERS BUXTON,

Secretary.

To the Rt. Hon. General LOUIS BOTHA,
Prime Minister's Office,
Pretoria.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA,

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE,

PRETORIA,

9th July, 1910.

SIR,—I have the honour, by direction of the Prime Minister, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, on the subject of the release of Dinuzulu, and to inform you that General Botha and his colleagues much appreciate your Society's message.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) W. E. Fox.

Secretary to the Prime Minister.

TRAVERS BUXTON, Esq.

Mexican Slavery.

THE Society has received a communication from Sir Edward Grey, containing the opinions of the British Consul in Mexico. Mr. Tower can find nothing good in any of those who have written upon this subject. The American and British articles are, he tells us, "highly coloured and overdrawn," and the archæologists were "poorly equipped." The unfortunate Yaqui Indians find no more mercy at the hands of Mr. Tower than the European and American writers. These miserable Yaquis, whether strong men, defenceless women, or helpless infants, deserve all they suffer because of their "turbulence and resistance to authority"; this is evidenced by the tenacity with which they cling to the upland homes.

The Rev. John Harris, replying to this despatch, rivetted the attention of the public to the admissions in Mr. Tower's letter: first, that a revolting system of peonage, indistinguishable from slavery, is not denied, and that the reports which have come to the Society with regard to the Yaqui Indians are confirmed, namely, that the Mexican Government had decided to "expropriate them and exile them to Yucatan" hemp, rubber, and tobacco plantations.

Mr. Harris continued:—

"I am asked to emphasize the important fact that several investigators, entirely ignorant of the presence of other parties in the territory, and travelling in different directions, and with different objects, all arrive at practically the same conclusions; that these conclusions coincide with the revelations made in the Mexican Press itself; that this independent and public testimony confirms the private information in the possession of the Society from many correspondents in Mexico—again unacquainted with each other. The whole of this testimony tends to show that a system of peonage is widely prevalent, involving many thousands of human beings in Yucatan in a bondage at once as cruel and hopeless as almost any form of slavery within the knowledge of the Society. This testimony, coming as it does from many sources, including different nationalities; from merchants, missionaries, travellers, and journalists; supported by photographic evidence; first from one, then from another part of Mexico, cannot—in the opinion of my Committee—be lightly dismissed as being 'highly coloured and overdrawn.'

"The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society views with grave concern the fact that Mr. Tower confirms the almost incredible report that the Mexican Government has decided to expropriate and exile the entire Yaqui nation to Yucatan.

"At the moment we are unable to recall any deliberate decision by any Government—civilized or barbarous—in modern history, involving such revolting consequences upon so large a scale.

"From time immemorial the Yaqui Indians have occupied in peace and prosperity their upland homes in the healthy and comparatively temperate regions of North-West Mexico. Their 77,000 square miles of valuable territory have been, until recent years, systematically and profitably cultivated. The decision to "expropriate them and exile them to Yucatan" apparently arises from the natural love they possess for the lands of their fathers.

"The work of hunting down thousands of people over an area larger than England must in itself be very sanguinary.

"The climate of Yucatan, to which the Yaquis are being expelled, is very different from that of their distant homes in the far North West, where it is fairly healthy. We are informed that those who survive the long overland and sea journeys from the western port of San Blas to Progreso on the east quickly succumb to the tropical conditions which prevail in the henequen and rubber plantations of Yucatan.

"My Committee is informed that there is a price per head upon the capture of the Yaqui Indians, and that they are finally disposed of for a financial consideration by the Mexican Government to the plantation owners of Yucatan.

"The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society trusts it may be possible for His Majesty's Government to publish official statistics of the rate at which the Yaquis are being captured and sent to Yucatan. The Society is in possession of two estimates: one of 6,000; the other (which includes peons) 12,000, men, women, and children within the year. The disparity between the two estimates may be accounted for partly because the former refers solely to Yaquis, and partly because these unfortunate people are being sent through Mexico City during the night.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient, humble servant,

"(Signed) JOHN H. HARRIS,

"Organizing Secretary.

"TO THE RT. HON. SIR EDWARD GREY, BART., M.P.,

"His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,

"Foreign Office, S.W."

The Race Problem in America.

THE racial feeling which was recently stirred up in the United States by the revolting incidents of the prize fight between a white and a black man at Reno, Nevada, is symptomatic of the urgency and reality of this problem, which, as *The Times* truly said in a leading article on the subject, is "perhaps

the most difficult political problem in the world." Recent reports of lynching cases are frequent from Southern States, such as Texas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi and Arkansas, and though the circumstances vary there is one feature common to almost all of them, that the victim was only *charged* with the crime for which he was put to death, and in some cases it



[By kind permission of Mr. FISHER UNWIN.]

DR. BOOKER WASHINGTON (of Tuskegee), who is being entertained by the Society at a Public Luncheon on October 6th, at the Whitehall Rooms, London, S.W.

was discovered all too late, but without apparently perturbing anyone very seriously, that the wrong man had suffered. Frequently the unfortunate negroes are tortured and burnt to death by a savage and excited mob; on the other hand in one case which we read of, the lynching of a negro in

Mississippi was carried out with extreme decorum, and as the *Washington Star* stated "without a sign of rowdyism." The ironical headline in this newspaper was "Best people of the Country give Function tone—hanged negro, that's all." Of the two kinds of lynchers, savage mob or "orderly assemblage," we incline to prefer the former. Another case reported by the Chicago correspondent of the *Daily News* is that of a negro who having shot a circus showman in Kentucky was hanged at night by a number of the circus people "aided by the riffraff of the town" amid a great noise and flare of torches. The Governor, on receiving a telephone message from the police at three in the morning, upbraided the police officer for awakening him, and for "troubling him" at an untimely hour, "about a purely local matter." All this is hateful and horrible enough to Englishmen, even while we always remember that, as *The Times* remarked in the article above referred to, it is easy for us who have no colour problem, to talk with indignation and abhorrence of these outrages. But we confess that we wonder that the problem is not more seriously viewed by humanitarians in the United States, many of whom must loathe these occurrences as much as we in this country do. These evils would seem to afford an excellent opening for the reforming energies of Ex-President Roosevelt, who we believe holds enlightened views on the negro question.

A significant incident occurred at Washington at the World's Sunday School Convention in May last, when the coloured Sunday Schools and workers were prohibited from taking part with whites in the demonstration, because of their colour. A strong protest from white Englishmen was aroused against this deplorable example of narrow racial prejudice in a religious gathering, and among the protesters against this treatment in Washington, was the Rev. John Dube, a native of Zululand, who is known for the good work he is doing for native education in Natal, and was last year the guest of our Society in London.

Slavery in China.

THE Peking correspondent of the *North China Herald* recently called attention to the issue of an edict by the Chinese Government in February last, abolishing slavery and prohibiting the buying and selling of human beings in China. The edict has aroused scarcely any comment, either Chinese or foreign.

The rescript begins by forbidding slavery generally, and then specifies that no maidservants or concubines are to be sold. Children may, however, be leased for any term of years up to the age of 25. (It is the sale of children which often saves families from starvation.) Finally the rescript points out that the sale of women for the purposes of prostitution has always

been contrary to Chinese law, and officials are warned that severe punishment will be meted out to them if they do not prevent such offences.

The correspondent says that the value of the edict is much lessened by the loopholes which exist for its evasion; but the Prince Regent is steadily trying to correct the greatest abuses in the Empire. It is some five years since an appeal was first made in China for the suppression of the girl-slavery. After the Shanghai riots of December, 1905, his Excellency, Chou Fu, then Viceroy at Nanking, memorialised the Court for the total abolition of this slavery. The daily Press warmly supported the movement, but the official named did not remain much longer in office and the agitation was dropped.

The *North China Herald* remarks that between the making of new laws and their being carried into action, especially in regard to such a long-standing practice as girl-slavery, there must inevitably be a considerable lapse of time, but when public opinion adjusts itself to such a reform, improvement will gradually come about.

A recent report of the Refuge for Chinese Slave Children in Shanghai, the object of which is the rescue and uplifting of persecuted little slave girls, described such children as having constitutions undermined by ill-treatment and by mal-nutrition, which sometimes prove fatal. One girl of twelve is mentioned who "was found in a most pitiable condition, wandering in the streets, her limbs and face black and swollen from the awful beatings received"; another child had been "strung up by the thumbs" for some trivial offence, and cruelly beaten. These poor little slaves were described by one of the Opium Commissioners as being the most miserable of China's depressed classes, without the smallest rights.

Slavery, it is said, has existed in China as a legitimate practice from very early times. The writer adds:—

"By far the greater number of farm labourers in China are slaves. They have been born in slavery, and it is not improbable that many of them will die without knowing that the Central Government has freed them; for the decree will travel into the interior along the official lines of communication, and many of the yaméns will not circulate news which Taotais and Magistrates may utilize as a new source of revenue. Slave holders will gladly pay the official runners a squeeze rather than lose their valuable human possessions. It is true that the Missionaries will learn the good news from the foreign papers and that they will circulate it among their people; but the Missionaries' influence is woefully restricted still."

Further, the ignorance and poverty of the people are likely to prove an even greater impediment to the application of the edict against slavery than corrupt officialdom. The remedy must begin by dealing with the lowest classes.

THE COMMITTEE.

WE have pleasure in stating that Mary, Lady Monkswell has consented to join the Society's Committee.

It has been resolved to ask several persons who are interested in the work of the Society to become provisional members of the Committee in the hope that by attending the monthly meetings and learning the details of its work they may feel disposed to become permanent members. The following gentlemen have accepted the invitation:—The Rev. H. R. Gamble, Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, and Rural Dean of Chelsea; the Rev. R. C. Gillie, Minister of Marylebone Presbyterian Church; the Rev. M. J. Elliott, of Daventry; Mr. W. Cecil Harris; Mr. P. A. Molteno, M.P.; Mr. J. H. Whitehouse, M.P.; and Mr. A. F. Whyte, M.P.

Mrs. King Lewis and Miss Cust, while retaining the deepest interest in the Society's work, have felt obliged to resign their seats on the Committee.

In accordance with a resolution passed by the Committee in June, that any member who is absent from 12 consecutive meetings shall automatically cease to be a member, unless specially resolved otherwise, the names of the following gentlemen drop out of the list:—Messrs. Cephias Butler, J. Edmund Clark, R. L. Outhwaite, W. C. Parkinson, and Arnold Pye-Smith.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

THE following gentlemen, hitherto members of the Committee, have been elected Vice-Presidents of the Society:—Rt. Hon. Sydney Buxton, M.P., Sir Harry Johnston, G.C.M.G., Mr. Francis Reckitt, and Mr. H. W. W. Wilberforce.



THE ANTI-SLAVERY & ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY has, at the present moment, an exceptionally large number of important matters, which have been brought to its notice, and with which it is endeavouring to deal as effectively as possible. This necessarily involves a considerable outlay, and **APPEAL** is, therefore, made to the friends of the Society to do their best to support it by their contributions and to interest others in its much-needed work.

¶ MEETINGS.—The Organizing Secretaries will be glad to have early notice from those who are willing to arrange meetings on the Society's behalf in the coming Autumn and Winter.

The Anti-Slavery & Aborigines Protection Society.

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