

H. R. FOX BOURNE

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SLAVE TRAFIC IN PORTUGUESE  
AFRICA

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# SLAVE TRAFFIC IN PORTUGUESE AFRICA:

An Account of Slave - Raiding and Slave -  
Trading in Angola and of Slavery in the  
Islands of San Thome and Principe.

BY

H. R. FOX BOURNE,

*Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society.*

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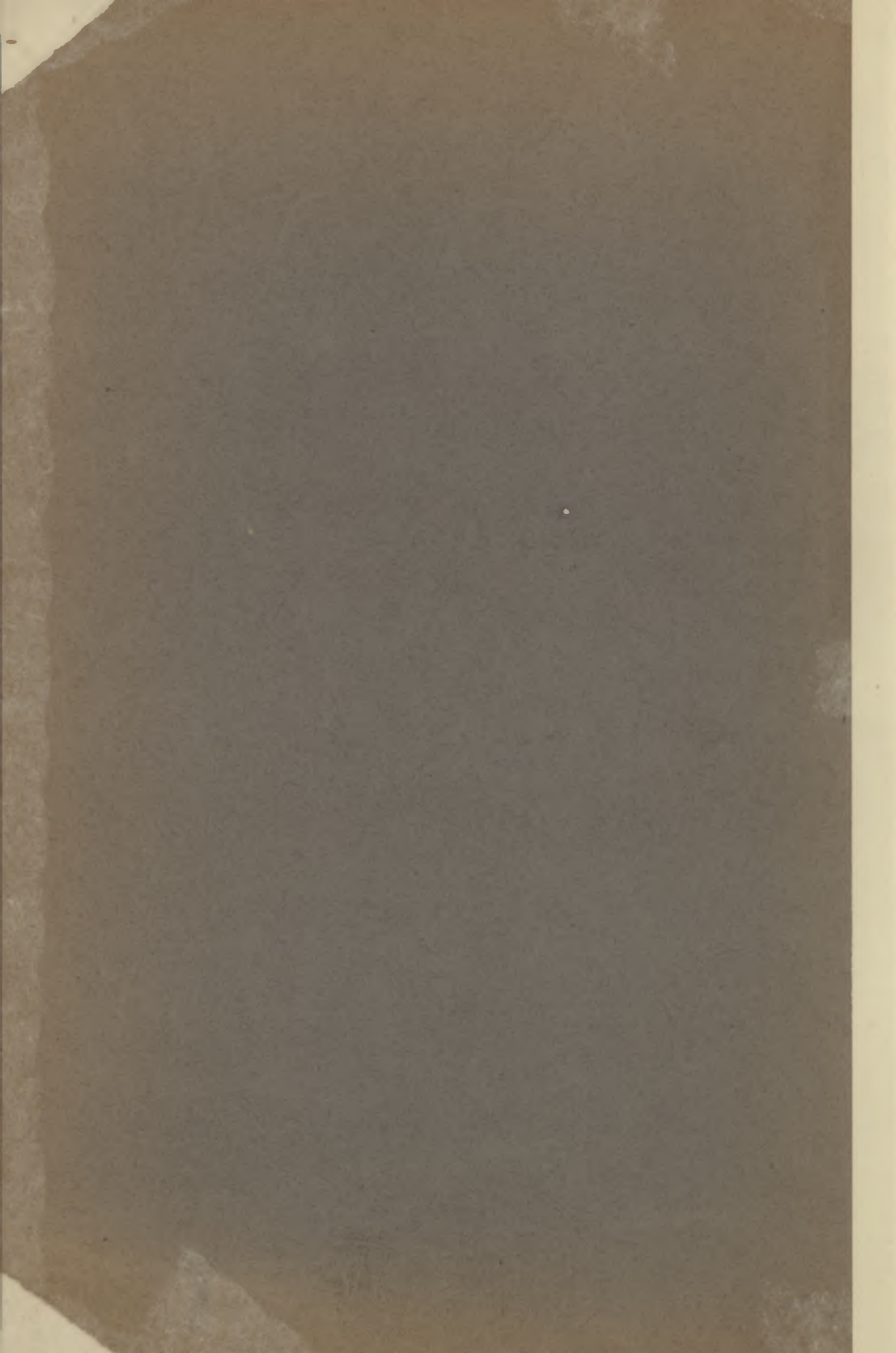
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## SLAVE TRAFFIC IN PORTUGUESE AFRICA.

THE recently published collection of 'The Letters of Queen Victoria contains, under the date of 17th May, 1838, the following "draft of a letter which it was suggested by Lord Melbourne that Her Majesty should write to the King of Portugal, with regard to the suppression of the Slave Trade" :—

"That you hope that the King and Queen of Portugal will not consider the strong representations made by your Government on the subject of the Slave Trade as arising from any desire to embarrass them. That there is every disposition to make allowance for the difficulties of Portugal, but allowance must also be made for the feelings of England. That those feelings are as strong as they are just. That England has made great sacrifices for the suppression of that crime; that she has made sacrifices to Portugal, and that she has been extremely indignant at finding that traffic so obstinately continued to be sheltered and protected under the flag of Portugal. That Portugal must not expect that England will much longer refrain from taking effectual measures for preventing these practices. That you have spoken thus openly because you wish them to be aware of the truth, and that you entreat both the Queen and the King to use their power and influence in procuring such a treaty to be concluded without delay as will satisfy England and exonerate Portugal from the reproach under which she now labours." (Vol. I., p. 146.)

**Queen Victoria's  
Protest.**

It is not on record that her late Majesty, acting on the suggestion of her Prime Minister, wrote to expostulate with her cousin Alexander of Coburg, the King Consort of Portugal, and with his wife Queen Maria da Gloria, on account of their subjects' persistent disregard and violation of a treaty dated 19th February, 1810, wherein the Portuguese Government pledged itself to co-operate with the British Government, "in the cause of humanity and justice, by adopting efficacious measures for gradually securing abolition of the slave trade in all Portuguese possessions." Nor if such a letter was written, as may be assumed, is there evidence as to its share, if any, in bringing about the ordinance, dated 30th September, 1839, by which the Queen of Portugal authorized the Governor-General of Angola to accept the co-operation of the naval forces of Great Britain in suppression of the traffic, which was at that time as rife as it had been for many generations before in procuring slaves from the Portuguese possessions in West Africa, especially for shipment to Brazil and other Portuguese possessions elsewhere.

But Lord Melbourne's suggestion of 1838 is noteworthy, not only as illustrating the humane sentiment—a sentiment proved to be real by the heroic deeds and the heavy self-sacrifices resulting from it—which then stirred British statesmen and the British public, but also as reminding us that “the reproach under which,” as it was and may still be truly said, “Portugal now labours,” in respect of the iniquitous and illegal slave-traffic which “so obstinately continues to be sheltered and protected under the flag of Portugal,” is to-day, as it was seventy years ago, a breach of faith with “the people of England,” who therefore have in 1908 as good reason as they had in 1838, and before that, to be “extremely indignant.”

The slave trade between Africa and America has, of course, been suppressed, and the stupendous evils of which it was a conspicuous part have been considerably modified and lessened. But how much still remains to be done may be seen from the following statement, as regards, at any rate, one important branch of the general question, which is made, as far as possible in the actual words of official documents, or of travellers and others competent to supply first-hand and authentic information.

The immediate occasion for the publication of this pamphlet is the summoning of an International Conference to meet in Brussels on the 28th instant to revise the articles of the Brussels General Act of 1892, which were intended to prevent the European supply of arms and ammunition for use in slave-raiding and inter-tribal wars among the natives of Central Africa. It was considered that the pamphlet, being already in type, would be a serviceable annex to the memorial dealing with the subject which it had been arranged to submit to the Conference, and a translation of which is given in an appendix.

The pamphlet would, indeed, have been issued earlier in the present year had it not seemed proper to await the result—if there were grounds for expecting any within a reasonable time—of promises made last November by the Portuguese authorities as regards at least partial reform of abuses which they admitted to exist. After nearly five months' delay, however, there is no sign of any serious attempt being made to fulfil the promises; and even their zealous fulfilment would probably be of little or no avail in lessening the gravest of the evils here complained of.

H. R. F. B.

Broadway Chambers, Westminster,  
21st April, 1908.

## I.—EXPLANATORY.

It may here be pointed out that the attention of the Aborigines Protection Society was first drawn to this subject, which may be considered to be more particularly within the province of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, in connection with inquiries as to the increase of abuses, for which the Congo State is especially responsible, within and near the vast portion of Central Africa known as the Congo basin, in defiance of the provisions of the Berlin General Act of 1885 and the Brussels General Act of 1892.

**Action of  
the A. P. S.**

At the two conferences which resulted in those international compacts, the Portuguese Government endeavoured to convince the delegates and the world at large that Portugal had always led the way in philanthropic legislation, and in the humane treatment of the coloured inhabitants of its foreign possessions; and, although the documents adduced were by no means convincing, there appears to have been hope that the philanthropic legislation would, in accordance with the intentions of the Berlin Act, be better enforced than before. But the futility of this hope was evident from, among other sources of information, the Annual Reports as to affairs in Angola forwarded to the Foreign Office by the late Consul Pickersgill, Consul Casement, and Consul Nightingale in 1896 and subsequent years, and it was chiefly on the bald statements of facts and figures made in these Consular Reports that the Aborigines Protection Society based its first appeal to the British Government, dated 10th June, 1902, "with reference to the systems of slavery, under the name of forced labour, in operation in Angola, which appear to be alarmingly increasing both in extent and severity."—(*The Aborigines' Friend*, July, 1902, p. 277.)

Later appeals have been frequent, and thus far of but little avail, although they have been courteously replied to, and to some extent complied with. It seems to have been at the Society's instigation, for instance, that Consul Nightingale was instructed in 1903 to visit the Portuguese islands of San Thome and Principe, with the special object of reporting as to the working of a decree issued early in that year, which purported to greatly improve the condition of "serviçaes," or contracted labourers, sent thither from Angola. But, unfortunately, Consul Nightingale was prevented by more urgent duties from paying this visit before November, 1905, and, presumably in deference to the

sensibilities of the Portuguese authorities, his report has been withheld from publication.

In the meanwhile, acting on behalf of the Aborigines Protection Society, besides collecting such printed information as was available, I sought and obtained valuable assistance from the late Mr. Thomas Reed, Mr. M. Z. Stober, Mr. Dugald Campbell, and other zealous missionaries who were in a position to furnish details of their own experiences and observations; and my friend Mr. Henry W. Nevinson, whose record of his journeys in Angola and the Portuguese islands in 1904 and 1905 is published in a notable volume entitled 'A Modern Slavery' (1906), states in his preface that "in choosing this particular part of Africa for investigation," he was partly "guided by the advice of the Aborigines Protection Society." Shortly after Mr. Nevinson had started on his expedition, moreover, a kindred enterprise was undertaken by Mr. Joseph Burt, as representative of four well-known firms of cocoa manufacturers who, to their great credit, were disturbed by reports that some of the cocoa manufactured by them was slave-grown.\* Mr. Burt reached San Thome in June, 1905, and, proceeding to Angola in the following December, spent the whole of 1906 in that and other parts of Central Africa. Going first to the mainland, Mr. Nevinson was there during the latter part of 1904 and the first half of 1905, and, arriving at San Thome at about the same time as Mr. Burt, had returned to England before the latter left the island.

The testimony of these two investigators, substantially agreeing, and really strengthening one another's evidence by their independent handling of facts and their occasional divergence as regards details, can leave no doubt in the minds of impartial readers as to the necessity for such prompt and drastic reforms as the pressure of public opinion can bring about. Mr. Burt's report has not been published; but free use of Mr. Nevinson's record will, with his consent, be made in this pamphlet after illustration has been given of earlier occurrences.

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\* The genesis of the enterprise was thus set forth by Mr. William A. Cadbury in an address read to a committee of Portuguese cocoa estate proprietors at Lisbon on 28th November, 1907:—"On the occasion of my first visit to Lisbon, in 1903, leading proprietors of San Thome, whom I had the honour to meet, questioned me as to the authenticity of reports I had heard, and repeated in their presence, as to the conditions of labour in the island cocoa estates, and the method of procuring that labour on the mainland. I was bound to admit that I had not first-hand proof of such statements, and therefore we more readily accepted your invitation to send out our own commissioner to make an inquiry."

## II. COMMENCEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS.

The unholy traffic dates from the latter part of the fifteenth century, when Diego Cam, having in the course of a decade discovered the coastland both north and south of the Congo River, took possession of the "kingdom of the Congo" in 1491. But little progress was made in it, however, until Paolo Diaz, claiming in 1574 to be the "conquerer coloniser, and governor of Angola," founded in 1578 the present capital of San Paolo de Loanda, now commonly called Loanda, and used it, Benguela, Mossamedes, and other ports for shipment across the Atlantic of slaves captured in the interior. The historian Feo Cardozo, writing in 1825, tells how "the Dutch, who for several years had annoyed the Portuguese on the west coast, attempted to possess themselves of some of their ports for the purpose of obtaining a supply of slaves for their colonies in America," and consequently seized Loanda in 1641, but how, in 1648, they were driven out by an expedition "towards the expenses of which the inhabitants of Rio de Janiero largely contributed, as they saw how hurtful to their interests the loss of Angola would be from the failure in the supply of slave labour."

In spite of English, French, and other European rivalry, as well as Dutch, the Portuguese, who had already acquired possession of the equatorial islands of San Thome and Principe in the Atlantic, and who took Kabinda from the French in 1783, carried on the traffic for two other centuries, and have even, in defiance of the example of their former rivals and of obligations entered into with them, maintained it under varying conditions down to the present day. And this is done with none the less energy because they no longer—in communications with neighbouring and complaining European nations—dare to make such excuses as Feo Cardozo deemed satisfactory eighty years ago. "Despite the cries and declamations of sensitive minds, led away by false notions of the state of the question," he wrote, "as long as the barbarity and ignorance of the African natives shall exist, the barter of slaves will always be considered by enlightened philanthropists as the only palliation to the ferocity of the laws that govern these natives" (J. J. Monteiro, 'Angola and the River Congo,' vol. i. pp. 11-20).

Slavery and slave-raiding have, of course, and so far as we know,

been primeval institutions in nearly every part of Africa ; but until civilisation is far more advanced than it is now, or than it was in the early part of the last century, as regards fulfilment of the duties of enlightened whites to ignorant blacks, the enlightened whites have no right to object to the domestic slavery that is still almost universal among the ignorant blacks. Nor can it be truthfully denied that the most offensive slave-raiding by African natives has been less culpable than the slave-raiding and the like—in some cases more refined, in others more coarse—which have been resorted to by civilised Europeans in their dealings with those natives. Though they did not introduce slavery and slave-raiding into Angola, the Portuguese greatly aggravated and multiplied the horrors incident to the barbaric institutions that they found in vogue.

Their early captures and purchases were, of necessity, only on the fringe of coastland within easy reach of their trading settlements, where they chiefly came in contact with the Ovim-Bundu branch of the great A-Bunda nation, of Bantu kinship. From these Ovim-Bundu, though they were the first to be victimised by the Portuguese, apt accomplices were soon obtained ; and, the country being more favourable for European residence than some other parts of Central Africa, and Loanda being for some time a Portuguese penal settlement, many of the natives became "Europeanised" in the worst sense of the term. In and around Bihe, about 250 miles to the east of Loanda, a half-caste community grew up, less black than their neighbours, wearing rags of European clothing, speaking a smattering of the Portuguese language, and finding their principal and most profitable occupation in pandering to the Portuguese demand for slaves. Formerly known as Mambari, these people are now generally spoken of as Biheans.

At first the limit of slave-raiding and slave-buying for exportation, Bihe has been for at least a couple of centuries the chief inland market for the supply of slaves to merchants and shippers in Benguela and the other parts of Angola, bought or stolen from near and far in the interior, and along a route stretching right across Central Africa into the Mozambique possessions of Portugal on the eastern side of the continent. From year to year, and from generation to generation, this route was clearly marked out by the bones of slaves who had died and been left unburied in the passage from their homes to the Bihe market ; but the side-tracks taken by the traders in their quest for good bargains varied with their whims or shrewdness.



These traders and their trade had, for instance, scarcely been heard of in the Ngami country, more than 300 miles from Bihe, or at any rate had not been known to Dr. Livingstone, some sixty years ago, before the great missionary, after long detention by Lechulatebe, a neighbouring chief, and shortly after his discovery of the Zambezi, visited, in June 1851, the Makololo and their chief Sebituane, to the west of Victoria Falls. Of this visit he wrote:—

**Dr. Livingstone's  
Testimony.**

“ Many of the Makololo had garments of blue, green, and red baize, and also of printed cottons. On inquiry, we learned that these had been purchased, in exchange for boys, from a tribe called Mambari, which is situated near Bihe. This tribe began the slave trade with Sebituane only in 1850, and, but for the unwillingness of Lechulatebe to allow us to pass, we should have been with Sebituane in time to have prevented it from commencing at all. The Mambari visited in ancient times the chief of the Barotse, whom Sebituane conquered, and he refused to allow any one to sell a child. They never came back again till 1850; and, as they had a number of old Portuguese guns, marked ‘Legitimo de Braga,’ which Sebituane thought would be excellent in any future invasion of Matabele, he offered to purchase them with cattle or ivory, but the Mambari refused everything except boys about fourteen years of age. The Makololo declare they never heard of people being bought and sold till then, and disliked it, but the desire to possess the guns prevailed, and eight old guns were exchanged for as many boys. These were not their own children, but captives of the black races they had conquered. I have never known in Africa an instance of a parent selling his own offspring. The Makololo were afterwards incited to make a foray against some tribes to the eastward; the Mambari bargaining to use their guns in the attack for any captives they might take, while the Makololo were to have all the cattle. They went off with at least two hundred slaves that year. During this foray the Makololo met some Arabs from Zanzibar, who presented them with three English muskets, and in return received about thirty of their captives.”—(‘Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa,’ p. 79.)

There we have a very clear and instructive account of the starting in a new district, of the vicious and in every way pernicious slave traffic that, carried on through centuries by Portuguese half-castes in providing both the western and the eastern possessions of Portugal in Africa with their principal article of commerce, had quite recently been taken up far more vigorously by the so-called Arabs on the eastern side of the continent.

Two years later Livingstone had further experience of the traffic

while paying another visit to Makolololand, where he found Sebituane's son Sekeletu installed as chieftain at Linyanti, the capital, but sorely troubled by the rivalry of his kinsman Mpepe.

"When the Mambari, in 1850, took home a favourable report of this new market to the west, a number of half-caste Portuguese slave traders were induced to come in 1853; and one, who resembled closely a real Portuguese, came to Linyanti while I was there. This man had no merchandise, and pretended to have come in order to inquire 'what sort of goods were necessary for the market.' He seemed much disconcerted by my presence there. Sekeletu presented him with an elephant's tusk and an ox; and when he had departed about fifty miles to the westward he carried off an entire village of the Bakalahari belonging to the Makololo. He had a number of armed slaves with him; and, as all the villagers—men, women, and children—were removed, and the fact was unknown until a considerable time afterwards, it is not certain whether his object was obtained by violence or by fair promises. In either case slavery must have been the portion of these poor people.

"Mpepe favoured the slave traders, and they, as is usual, founded all their hopes on his successful rebellion. My arrival on the scene was felt to be so much weight in the scale against their interests. A large party of Mambari had come to Linyanti when I was floundering on the prairies south of the Chobe. As the news of my being in the neighbourhood reached them their countenances fell; and when some Makololo, who had assisted us to cross the river returned with hats which I had given them, the Mambari betook themselves to precipitate flight. It is usual to ask formal permission before attempting to leave a chief, but the sight of the hats made the Mambari pack up at once. The Makololo inquired the cause of the hurry, and were told that, if I found them there, I should take all their slaves and goods from them; and, though assured by Sekeletu that I was not a robber, but a man of peace, they fled by night, while I was still sixty miles off. They went to the north, where, under the protection of Mpepe, they had erected a stockade of considerable size. There several half-caste trade slavers, under the leadership of a native Portuguese, carried on their traffic, without reference to the chief into whose country they had unceremoniously introduced themselves."—('Missionary Travels,' &c., p. 157.)

Needless to say, even if these Mambari were as frightened on first hearing of his presence near them as he supposed, Livingstone was unable to stop their trading or that of others whom he frequently came across in his travels, and about whom he gave much valuable information more than half a century ago. For instance:—

"Some of these Mambari visited us while we were at Naliele. They

are of the A-Bunda family, which inhabits the country south-east of Angola, and speak the Bunda dialect. They plait their hair in threefold cords, and lay them carefully around the sides of the head. They are quite as dark as the Barotse, but have among them a number of half-castes, with their peculiar yellow sickly hue. On inquiring why they had fled at my approach at Linyanti, they let me know that they had a vivid idea of the customs of English cruisers on the coast. The half-castes, or native Portuguese, could all read and write, and the head of the party, if not a real Portuguese, had European hair."—('Missionary Travels,' &c., p. 190.)

Again, on the way to the West African coast, in January, 1854:—  
 "When crossing at the confluence of the Liba and Makondo, one of my men picked up a bit of a steel watch-chain of English manufacture, and we were informed that this was the spot where the Mambari cross in coming to Masiko. These Mambari are very enterprising merchants. When they mean to trade with a town, they deliberately begin the affair by building huts, as if they knew that little business could be transacted without a liberal allowance of time for palaver. They bring Manchester goods into the heart of Africa. These cotton prints looked so wonderful that the Makololo could not believe they were made by mortal hands."—(*Ibid.*, p. 236.)

And a fortnight later, in Kabompo's country:—

"Two half-caste Portuguese, engaged in trading for slaves, ivory, and bees'-wax, had erected a little encampment opposite the place where ours was about to be made. One of them came and visited us. I returned his visit next morning. His tall companion had that sickly yellow hue which made him look fairer than myself, but his head was covered with a crop of unmistakable wool. They had a gang of young female slaves in a chain, who had been purchased recently in Lovale, whence the traders had now come. There were many Mambari among them, and the establishment was conducted with that military order which pervades all the arrangements of the Portuguese colonists. It was the first time most of my men had seen slaves in chains. 'They are not men,' they exclaimed (meaning 'they are beasts'), 'who treat their children so.'"—(*Ibid.*, p. 253.)

Twenty years later than Livingstone, and travelling more closely than Livingstone had done on the track of the Angola slave traders, the late Commander Cameron was in a position to expose and condemn their misdeeds more clearly. At Kilamba, in what is now the Katanga district of the Congo State, about 300 miles west of Lake Tanganyika, and more than twice that distance to the north-east of Bihe, he met in 1874, and thus described, a trader who called himself Jose Antonio Alvez:—

Commander  
Cameron's Testimony.

“Dondo, on the river Kwanza, in the province of Angola, was his native place. He had left there more than twenty years before, and had spent the greater portion of the period in travelling and trading in the interior, formerly as agent for white merchants, but latterly on his own account. He came in state, being carried in a hammock with an awning by two bearers with belts covered with brass balls round their waists. I had almost taken it for granted, from the manner in which he came, that he was a white man. Great was my disappointment, however, when an old and ugly negro turned out of the hammock. Certainly he was dressed in European fashion and spoke Portuguese; but no further civilisation could he boast of, notwithstanding his repeated asseverations that he was thoroughly civilized and the same as an Englishman or any other white man.”

Another of the “horde of ruffians” with whom Cameron had dealings, and the one to whom, he said, “must be awarded the palm for having reached the highest grade in ruffianism amongst them all,” was “Lourenço da Souza Coimbra, a son of Major Coimbra, of Bihe.” Coimbra and Alvez were partners or allies of the Rua chief Kasongo in his “plundering raids,” and Cameron witnessed the issue of one of these raids. In July, 1875, he wrote:—

“Coimbra arrived with a gang of fifty-two women tied together in lots of seventeen or eighteen. Some had children in their arms, others were far advanced in pregnancy, and all were laden with huge bundles of grass-cloth and other plunder. These poor, weary, and footsore creatures were covered with weals and scars, showing how unmercifully cruel had been their treatment at the hands of the savage who called himself their owner. To obtain these fifty-two women, at least ten villages had been destroyed, each having a population of from one to two hundred, or about 1,500 in all. Some may, perchance, have escaped to neighbouring villages; but the greater portion were undoubtedly burnt when their villages were surprised, and shot whilst attempting to save their wives and families, or doomed to die of starvation in the jungle unless some wild beast put a more speedy end to their miseries.”

As the result of his general experience, Cameron said:—

“The cruelties perpetrated in the heart of Africa by men calling themselves Christians, and carrying the Portuguese flag, can scarcely be credited by those living in a civilised land, and the Government of Portugal cannot but be cognisant of the atrocities committed by men claiming to be her subjects. I have no hesitation in asserting that the worst of the Arabs are in this respect angels of light in comparison with the Portuguese and those who travel with them.”—(‘Across Africa,’ 1877, vol. II. pp. 57, 58, 94, 106, 136, 137.)

### III.—INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL UNDERTAKINGS.

It was in December of this same year, 1875, that the Portuguese Government—which had supplemented its ordinance of September, 1839, by ordinances dated February, 1840, and June, 1841, giving detailed instructions in furtherance of the policy to which it pledged itself, and had made other promises, to be systematically broken, in the interval—communicated to the British Government its opinion that—

**Portuguese Overtures  
to Great Britain.**

“To England and to Portugal Providence seems to have assigned the glorified mission of civilising the vast regions of Southern Africa. In fact, no other nation occupies territory which in importance or extent can be compared with those which, by right, belong to these two nations. That similarity of opinions and interests which unites in the strictest alliance the two nations in Europe must and should produce equally favourable results when they are, with sincerity, united on their African colonies.”

The upshot of that pompous and specious assumption was a proposal that the two Powers should agree upon “immediate action” being taken by Portugal to put a stop to “acts of hostility on the part of the indigenous population against the persons and property of merchants established in parts of the coast of Africa,” to “prevent the repetition of such acts of violence,” and to “efficaciously protect the transactions of legitimate commerce from the depredations and insults of the natives.”—(Parliamentary Papers, ‘Africa No. 2, 1883,’ p. 71.)

Though this notable suggestion was regarded with some favour by the British Government, nothing came of it, except that it helped to quicken interest in other proposals, philanthropic or pseudo-philanthropic, for the exploitation of Africa by methods professing to be beneficial to the natives as well as to the exploiters. Most momentous in its consequences was the unofficial international conference convened at Brussels in September, 1876, by King Leopold, partly at the instigation of Commander Cameron, who had returned to Europe and was one of its members. The International African Association then started—soon to cease being international and ultimately to be converted into the Congo (so-called) Free State—was the prelude to the International Conference held at Berlin in 1884-5, which sanctioned the insidious claims of the Congo State’s founder, and also, while considerably restricting the area of Portugal’s nominal possessions, improved its opportunities of “protecting,” in such possessions as were left to it, what

it regarded as the transactions of legitimate commerce" from "the depredations and insults of the natives," and from other "acts of hostility and violence on the part of the indigenous population."\*

It has been supposed by many, and pretended by others, that the General Act agreed upon by the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, and yet more the General Act of the Brussels Conference of 1889-90, brought about a complete reformation; and that the evils formerly complained of and protested against no longer exist. That undoubtedly ought to be the case, but it is not.

The stipulations now binding on the Portuguese Government, and on all the signatory Powers in any way concerned in the Central African slave traffic were thus summed up in a letter addressed to Sir Edward Grey on 3rd April, 1906, one of several appeals made to the British Government by the Committee of the Aborigines Protection Society in the course of the past six years:—

"In Article 9 of the General Act of the Berlin Conference, dated 26th February, 1885, it is declared by those of the signatory Powers exercising rights or influence in the territories forming the Conventional Basin of the Congo that 'these territories may not serve as a market or means of transit for the trade in slaves, of whatever race,' and each of these Powers bound itself to employ all the means at its disposal for putting an end to this trade, and for punishing those who engage in it. Although neither the portions of Angola in which the present traffic is most considerable nor the islands of San Thome and Principe are within the Congo basin, and although Article 9 of the Berlin Act may be too vague to be regarded as seriously obligatory, it is submitted that the intention is clear, especially as a large number of the natives now disposed of as slaves is obtained from the Congo basin, and that the declaration cited emphasises the responsibility imposed upon Portugal and also upon Great Britain as regards observance and enforcement of the treaties and other engagements previously entered into and still operative.

"The General Act of the Brussels International Conference, signed on 2nd July, 1890, but not ratified till July, 1892, was principally concerned with the African slave trade, to the crimes and devastations engendered by which the signatory Powers declared themselves, in its preamble, 'equally animated by the desire of putting an end,' their avowed desire being 'to give a fresh sanction to the decisions taken in the same sense, and at different

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\* These matters are more fully dealt with in my 'Civilisation in Congoland' (1903), from which a few of the sentences used above are borrowed.

epochs, by the Powers.' In the 3rd Article of this Act 'the Powers exercising a sovereignty or protectorate in Africa confirm and give precision to their former declarations'; and by its 5th Article 'the contracting Powers undertake,' unless they have already made such enactments, to enact, within a year of the signing of the Act, 'a law for, on the one hand, rendering applicable the provisions of their penal laws concerning the graver offences against the person to the organisers and abettors of slave hunting, to perpetrators of the mutilation of adults and male infants, and to all persons who may take part in the capture of slaves by violence, and, on the other hand, for rendering applicable the provisions relating to offences against individual liberty to carriers, transporters, and dealers in slaves.' The detailed provisions of this and subsequent articles appear intended to cover all cases of slave raiding and slave trading, and reference may be sufficient to the stipulations of Article 10 as regards 'the importation, sale, and transport of firearms and ammunition in regions where the slave trade is rife,' or in their frontiers, and of Articles 15 to 19 providing for the rigorous watching and control of all caravan routes frequented by slave dealers, as well as of all ports and places liable to be used for 'the sale and shipping of slaves brought from the interior, or for the formation and departure landwards of bands of slave hunters and dealers.'

"The Committee is aware that the Portuguese Government has at all times asserted its desire to suppress the slave trade, conspicuous evidence of its assertions being in a lengthy document submitted by it to the Berlin Conference. The Committee is also aware that prompt and repeated action has been taken by the Portuguese Government, especially after the decisions of the Brussels Conference, in issuing ordinances and regulations purporting to ensure adequate compliance with the requirements of the latter Conference. It is submitted, however, that these ordinances and regulations have not prevented continuance and expansion, under specious terms, both of what is in effect as real and offensive slave trading as heretofore from the interior of Angola to its western districts, and of what, though otherwise designated, is absolute slavery in those districts and in the islands of San Thome and Principe."

Although Portugal was nominally bound by the Treaty of Vienna in 1815, and by subsequent and particular treaties with Great Britain, to suppress its foreign and colonial slave trading, its rulers did not even make a pretence of abolishing slavery before 1875, when a "memorable Liberation Law" was passed, which purported to "secure and guarantee the freedom of negroes" in all the Portuguese colonies, "declaring them in all respects Portuguese citizens, enjoying on perfectly equal terms all

**The Liberation Law  
of 1875.**

the rights of citizens of the kingdom itself” ;\* and this showy legislation was merely the prelude to the issue of decrees, as showy and worthless, providing detailed regulations for the “contracting” and disposal of native labour in Angola, San Thome, Mozambique, and the other colonies, the first and most comprehensive being dated 21st November, 1878.

As a matter of fact, the old slavery prevails to this day, with no other variation or improvement than has come from the disposition of exceptional administrators to enforce, so far as they were allowed, the more humane stipulations of decrees generally regarded as dead-letters or from the necessity of conciliating natives goaded into resistance that might otherwise become serious.

It was with the transparent object of humouring the European delegates assembled at the Brussels Conference **The Decree of November, 1889.** which was opened on 15th November, 1889, that a new decree had been issued six days earlier.

According to the ‘Mémoire justificatif’ just quoted from :—

“The decree of 9th November, 1889, recognizing the need of suitably regulating, in the interests of civilisation and of Portuguese colonial progress, the conditions of the labour among aborigines in a way to secure for them, by protection and effective tutelage, a proportional and gradual development, moral and intellectual, which shall transform them into useful co-operators in a larger and fuller exploitation of the land, provides that all natives of Portuguese colonies shall submit themselves to the moral and legal obligation of seeking, by work, to procure the means of existence which they lack, and to improve their social condition. Complete freedom being accorded to them as to the choice of the mode of fulfilling this obligation, the public authority can compel the fulfilment if they do not adopt methods of their own. Among those who may be considered as exempt from such compulsion are natives possessed of capital or other property, or habitually engaged in commerce, industry, art, or other occupation yielding them the means of subsistence. Those following agricultural pursuits on their own account or salaried workmen regularly employed for a certain number of months in each year are also exempt, as well as women, all who are over sixty or under fourteen years of age, those who are sick or infirm, those in state employ, and chiefs or headmen recognized as such by the public authority. To facilitate fulfilment of the obligation to labour plots of uncultivated land

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\* These are the terms used in a remarkable ‘Mémoire justificatif du Gouvernement portugais sur le travail indigène dans les colonies portugaises,’ published in Lisbon in 1906, to which further reference will be made.



may be granted to the natives of each region, attached to them being compensations, advantages, and immunities.

“The natives of Portuguese colonies have a recognised right to freely contract their services, according to the terms of the civil code and the legal precepts applicable to them. Contracts for the location of services can be celebrated with or without intervention of the public authority, which intervention, however, is obligatory in every case of contracted service outside the judiciary comprising the natives’ residence. Contracts will be considered invalid if they stipulate a longer term of service than five years, or make no provision for payment of wages, or debar the natives from exercise of their rights and faculties, or require from them illegal acts, or expose them to manifest and considerable dangers. Their employers are bound to care for them in case of illness, or to supply them with hospital accommodation if this has been stipulated, and to withhold from them nothing that is their due.”

The decree of 1889 served to allay any uneasiness felt by anti-slavery agitators in Europe on account of the bondage imposed on all the native labourers employed in the sugar and other plantations on the western strip of Angola to which access was easy from the settlements on the sea-coast, as well as in cocoa and other plantations which were increasing in the islands of San Thome and Principe. Both in these islands and on the mainland there was, thirty years or so ago, some revival of the enterprise that had flagged after the injury done to the over-sea slave trade earlier in the nineteenth century. On the mainland a small railway was constructed, with the help of British and American capital, for the conveyance of rubber and other produce of the interior to Loanda; and on the islands, the coffee plantations being less profitable than formerly, the cultivation of cocoa was extended. Additional labour being required for these undertakings, and the old-fashioned methods of slavery not proving adequate for the increased supply, notwithstanding the liberal use made of convict labour and the facilities afforded for the purchase of slaves as “pawns” for unpaid debts and the like, the expedient of “contracted labour,” by no means a novelty at the time of its legalisation and expansion in 1889, was welcomed. The semblance of protection and benefaction offered to the *serviçaes*, as they were called, conciliated humanitarian sentiment, and made it easy for unblushing fraud to be practised with impunity. Free labour, as the late Consul Pickersgill stated in his Annual Report for 1894, with reference to the plantation work near Bihe, “would never consent to be tethered in a wearisome round of grubbing and picking

**Its Issues  
and Accessories.**

at  $4\frac{1}{2}d.$  a day, when it can earn from  $1s. 6d.$  to  $2s.$  a day in undisciplined freedom." Two years later, in his report for 1896, he wrote:—"As things are now, the people cannot be induced to labour on the plantations, so that the planters have no remedy but to ransom (resgatar) slaves; which is done under the contracted-labour system."—('Diplomatic and Consular Reports,' No. 1333, p. 9, and No. 1949, p. 10).

That "ransoming" process will be explained presently, as it was most freely employed in the case of slaves brought from a distance to the Bihe and other markets, and shipped to San Thome and Principe as well as distributed on the mainland. Let it first be noted that, notwithstanding

**The Decree of  
November, 1899.**

all the treachery to which the laxly administered and maladministered decree of 1889 lent itself, that decree did not provide as much cheap labour as was wanted. Therefore another decree was issued on 9th November, 1899, under which, as Consul Nightingale, Mr. Pickersgill's successor at Loanda, explained in his report for the same year, "vagrant natives, and such as cannot prove that they have any means of livelihood as labourers, carriers, artisans, &c., render themselves liable to be sentenced to a term of corrective labour (trabalho correccional);" and he added, "To ensure the better carrying out of this law, a gratuity is offered to all persons, including native chiefs and heads of villages, for each vagrant or vagabond presented to the authorities." Moreover, "natives who are condemned to punishment will be employed on road-making or as carriers for the Government; they will receive food and clothing at the Government's expense, and payment in money of one-third of the usual pay given to native labourers according to the locality. Their services can also be requisitioned for by the planters and merchants for periods of not less than three months."—('Diplomatic and Consular Reports,' No. 2555, p. 7.)

It will readily be seen how pernicious might, and almost certainly would, be the working of this arbitrary law, supplementing the long-established use of convict-labour by providing for planters and merchants, as well as for the Government, an unlimited supply of ready-made convicts, entitled to only one-third of the ordinary payment for the work forced upon them. This edict, like the previous one, really aggravated the evils already existing, while professing—as we are told in the 'Mémoire justificatif' already quoted from—"to make general and particular provisions for rendering efficacious the tutelary and protective action of the State, and to avoid and correct all possible

abuses in the observance and the rigorous and exact application of the law."

How matters stood in the more civilised portions of Angola, and some aspects of the situation not thus far touched upon, may be understood from the following concise account of his experiences in the course of ten years' residence as **Mr. Thomas Reed's Experiences.** a missionary in the neighbourhood of Bihe, which was penned by Mr. Thomas Reed while he was visiting England in 1902, on his way to his Canadian birthplace, where he died soon afterwards of the fever he had contracted in Central Africa :—

"The chief and most remunerative article of commerce is rum, and the object of the trader is to possess a still, thus increasing his gains and saving the expense and trouble of collecting carriers to bring in kegs of rum from the coast. Possession of the still necessitates labour. The average native is fully occupied on his own trading journeys to the interior for rubber, and in building and cultivating; and there is no inducement for him to leave his congenial and profitable occupation to work for a trifling wage in the plantations of the trader.

"The trader, bent upon getting slaves to work his plantations, by cajolery, dishonesty, and intimidation, and with the connivance of the authorities, involves the natives in lawsuits which end with a fine to be paid in people. The trader thus acquires a recognised right over people who are his slaves. His plantation is worked at no expense; his profits increase, and his capability to oppress the people, and amass wealth and slaves, grows wider with his prosperity. He commonly takes the law into his own hands, and whips, ties up, puts in chains, and imposes arbitrary fines, without reference to the authorities. For a verdict in a lawsuit before the authorities fines will not always be received in rubber, but very frequently people are demanded.

"The large influx of traders during the past few years has increased and aggravated these evils. It is a common thing for a man to begin trade with a little cloth and a few kegs of whiskey, and in a very few years to be possessed of a dozen or more slaves, extensive fields, and a good residence, with the invariable effect that his ill-fed slaves plunder the inhabitants, and they remove to other parts, and leave the trader alone, but still deal with him."

Subjoined are, as he said, "only a few statements about facts seen and known of a like condition of things all over the country," which Mr. Reed set down in 1902 from his own recent experiences.

"I met two years ago on the path near Lakanjimba, within five hours of the Bihe fort (Belmonte), a nude native man, with his hands tied behind

him, being driven like a beast with whips by natives sent after him from the fort at Bailundu. The man had run away from the fort to escape to his own people. His back was covered with weals from the lashing of the whips. The date I can give.

"On 2nd November of last year my colleague at Lakanjimba compelled a half-breed to release two men whom he had put in chains on a trivial and unjust accusation. The missionary gave the man the option of releasing them with his own hands or going with him and the men in chains as they were to the fort.

"On 15th January of this year, at the same place, a Portuguese who had come up from the coast with a herd of cattle told me and my companion that he was buying people with them and would not take any money. Men in chains were seen in his caravan by our schoolboys.

"On 1st March of this year, on my way to the coast, at Hunibi, twelve days inland, I passed a native with a heavy chain padlocked round his neck and coiled upon his head, weight 70 lb. I judge. On the same journey I picked up slave shackles which I have in my possession."—(*The Aborigines' Friend*, November, 1902, pp. 325-7.)

At the Bailundu fort above referred to, which is between Bihe and Benguela, and near which, besides the American mission conducted by

**The Bailundu  
War of 1902.**

M. Heli Chatelain, Mr. Reed worked with the members of another American mission, a "Bailundu war" broke out in 1902. Of this "paltry and wretched affair," originating with "a characteristic piece of Portuguese treachery, the Commandant having seized a party of native chiefs who were visiting him, at his own invitation, under promise of peace and safe conduct," Mr. Henry W. Nevinson, who visited the spot in 1905, says :—

"The rising, though attributed to many absurd causes by the Portuguese—especially to the political intrigues of the half-dozen American missionaries in the district—was undoubtedly due to the injustice, violence, and lust of certain traders and administrators. The rising itself was an absolute failure. Terrified as the Portuguese were, the natives were more terrified still. I have seen a place where over 400 native men, women, and children were massacred in the rocks and holes, where their bones still lie, while the Portuguese lost only three men.

"But the disturbance may have served to draw the attention of Portugal to the native grievances. At any rate, it was about the same time that two of the officers at an important fort were condemned to long terms of imprisonment and exile for open slave-dealing, and Captain Amorim, a Portuguese gunner, was sent out as a special commissioner to make inquiries.

He showed real zeal in putting down the slave-trade, and set a large number of slaves at liberty, with special 'letters of freedom' signed by himself. His stay was, unhappily, short; but he returned home honoured by the hatred of the Portuguese traders and officials, who did their best to poison him, as their custom is. His action and reports were, I think, the chief cause of Portugal's 'uneasiness.'—('A Modern Slavery,' p. 45. See also p. 157.)\*

The immediate results of the Bailundu war and its disclosures appeared not only in the temporary vigour with which the worst horrors of the inland slave traffic and local slavery were checked, or, at any rate, kept as much as possible out of sight, but also in fresh legislation.

Two decrees were issued in 1902, and another in 1903. The first dated 16th July, 1902, and especially applicable to Angola, repeated and added to the old prescriptions for ensuring to natives "freedom of choice" as to their methods of "fulfilling their moral and legal obligations to labour," and so forth, and increased the numbers of their curators and controllers. The second and third, dated 26th December, 1902, and 29th January, 1903, made new provisions and stipulations as regards recruitment of *serviçaes* for conveyance to the islands of San Thome and Principe, and for their treatment there.

**The Decrees of 1902  
and 1903.**

To these later decrees reference will be made hereafter. It will be convenient first to see from the reports of eye-witnesses in days more recent than Livingstone's and Cameron's how, on the Central African mainland, there has been aggravation of the evils described by those travellers, notwithstanding the fresh obligations taken upon themselves by the Portuguese authorities in their own enactments and in their endorsement of the Berlin and Brussels General Acts.

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\* I am indebted to Mr. Nevinson and his publishers, Messrs. Harper & Brothers, for sanctioning the extensive quotations from 'A Modern Slavery' which are made in this pamphlet.

## IV.—MAINLAND TRADING AND RAIDING BEFORE 1905.

While the decisions of the Berlin Conference were being acted upon, and for the most part perverted, by those entrusted with their carrying out, and while the Brussels Conference was being prepared for,

**Mr. Crawford's  
Testimony.**

the Garenganze Mission—in the region between Katanga and Barotseland, to the south-west of Lake Tanganyika and west of Livingstone Falls—was started and extended by Mr. F. S. Arnot and his brave comrades of the Plymouth Brotherhood; and one of the pioneers, Mr. D. Crawford, wrote thus in his diary on 28th August, 1890, when he was near Lake Dilolo, on the great slave-route:—

“Although I make this entry with the setting sun, I have still vividly before me a sad, heart-rending sight, a slave caravan on the march. It numbered perhaps eight hundred all told. This travelling mass of humanity had been months on the road. There were aged men and women whose poor shrivelled forms told of the welcome release awaiting them; mothers with babies on their backs, one just born this morning; and tall, strongly built young women and girls, some of them with fine features, carrying heavy loads. One had fallen behind, seemingly quite unable to carry the load that had been given to her. I appeared on the scene just in time to see her inhuman master beat her unmercifully on the head with a club, yelling out a threat at every stroke. Saddest sight of all were the scores of little children crawling along naked, many of them not above four years of age. Smile at them as one might, these dear little children would dart into the brushwood fear-stricken.”—(Arnot, ‘Garenganze, West and East,’ pp. 63, 64.)

Again, a few days afterwards, while he was halting at Nana Kandundu, which is also known as Kavungu and Nyakatoro, near the north bank of the Zambezi, Mr. Crawford wrote:—

“Their porters from Bihe were carrying on in secret an infamous traffic in slaves, and among the purchased was one young girl about ten years of age. Poor little soul! I used to watch her brooding over her ill-fortune, with as touchingly sad an expression as it was possible for face to assume. Her history, hitherto unknown to her owner, came to light to-day. It appears that in the Lovale raids she had been carried from her home, which is somewhere on the other side of the Zambezi, near where we visited. At our last camp one of the Lunda visitors recognised in her the daughter of his friend, and he at once bore the news to her father, who crossed the Zambezi to-day, and redeemed her with two slaves, twelve fowls, and a gun. He was only a poor man, but the shrewd Bihean had no mercy on him. While the

redemption price was being struck, the girl hugged her father, sobbing, and the father caressed her assuringly, saying, 'Never mind, my child, although I have to borrow, I will have you home with me to-day.'—(Arnot, pp. 64, 65.)

Some three years later Dr. and Mrs. Fisher started a new station of the Garenganze Mission in the Lovale country, close to the headquarters of the slave trade on the south of Lake Dilolo. **Dr. Fisher's Testimony.** Mr. Arnot reports:—

"Dr. and Mrs. Fisher and family arrived at Kavungu, January, 1894, after an arduous journey along the usual winding forest paths. In spite of all they had seen and heard of the slave trade nearer the coast, the travellers were surprised and shocked with what they saw inland of this inhuman traffic carried on chiefly by native traders from Bihe. Dr. Fisher wrote in his journal, January 4th: 'We met a large caravan coming from the Luba country. It contained at least four hundred slaves, many of them mere children. Some had their loads of rubber or ivory tied to them, and others were themselves tied together in groups.' Again he says, January 10th: 'One caravan passed us yesterday, the native traders having nothing but slaves for sale.'—(*Ibid.*, 75.)

The testimony of the Garenganze missionaries—of which further illustrations will be given presently, in order of date—is amply confirmed by that of Colonel Colin Harding, who, as Acting-Administrator of North-West Rhodesia, travelled extensively in and beyond the more remote parts of that territory, including portions of Barotseland which have since by the award of the King of Italy in July, 1905, been withdrawn from the sphere of the British South African Company's influence and included in the Portuguese possession of Angola. **Colonel Colin Harding's Testimony.** In February, 1900, he was at Nyakatoro, the capital of the Lovale country, so designated after the name of the Queen of the Va-Lovale, and he then heard much about the slave-trade, not only from Mr. and Mrs. Schindler, of the Garenganze Mission, but also from Mr. Bricker, "a typical American miner" whose acquaintance he made. Of the latter he reported:—

"His account of his journey into Nyakatoro with a wagon and ox from Mossamedes was most interesting; but the results of the slave-trade which at every point met his view were too horrifying and inhuman to realise, unless seen. The path, so he informed me, was strewn with the bodies of victims, heaped by the road-side; men, too old to carry their burdens, sank down, never to rise again. Children, too young to endure the heat of the tropical sun, are relieved of their sufferings by a stroke of the slave-driver's axe, their flesh left as food for hungry wolves. Such was the terrible evidence of

Mr. Bricker, who had no reason to invent, and no object in misleading. He told us that, when once returning from a walk, he stumbled over a child not more than ten years old, lying a few yards from the path, in the last throes of death, brutally left by the callous monster owning him, who, only a few hours before, had passed with his caravan of illegal merchandise. Such tales could be multiplied by many of those who have witnessed the horror of this traffic in human bodies."—('In Remotest Barotseland,' 1905, p. 112.)

From Nyakatoro Colonel Harding journeyed eastward in search of the source of the Zambezi, which he discovered. On his way the tales he had heard were confirmed by his own experience.

"On 5th March we left the Va-Lovale country, and on either side we were surrounded by the Malunda tribe. They have for years unwillingly supplied slaves for the West Coast, and consequently the villages are destitute of young men, whilst decrepit and palsied veterans of both sexes are seen in abundance throughout the kraals.....Owing to the persistent slave-raiding of the Va-Lovale and Mambari, the Malunda are in a constant state of armed resistance. Most of the villages are stockaded, and on our arrival the natives rushed away into the bush like rabbits, until drawn back by our assurances of friendly intention."—(*Ibid.*, p. 124.)

Returning to Nyakatoro, Colonel Harding soon left it again proceeding to Bihe, which was 560 miles to the west, and when about 200 miles of the distance had been covered he wrote, with reference to his Barotse servant and interpreter:—

"John tells me that at a kraal on the Kabompo he saw slaves with yokes and shackles lying prostrate outside their huts. A Portuguese half-caste stayed near my camp a day ago; he was *en route* to Nyakatoro, and I was informed by his interpreter that they were going to Nyakatoro to buy slaves, and expected to pay 120 yards of calico for each. I saw several traders at Nyakatoro, who also informed me that they had bought several slaves and were soon returning to their homes near the Kwanza with them."—(*Ibid.*, p. 186.)

Other incidents in Colonel Harding's journey to Masiko, or Mosiko, are as follows:—

"We trekked on and then camped at another Ochilombo camp. Ochilombo is the native name for the different camps, previously used by the Mambari or Bihean slave-traders. I am constantly passing two or three such camps each day. They are the ordinary sugar-loaf hut thatched with grass, and as a rule there is one especially built for the white man or Ochindele—the name given to a white man in the Va-Lovale country.".....

"After lunch, which we had in an old slave camp, we found lots of stakes



and yoke sticks forked and bored, through which a stick or chain is inserted, to keep them on their victim's neck.....

“On Thursday night I had the pleasure of staying at the same camp as some Mambari slave traders, two of the most scandalous-looking scoundrels one could possibly hope to meet. They are going to the Lunda country, and will return, I expect, before the wet season; I should like to meet them. Every day I see signs of the slave trade, the trees literally hung with the shackles which are used to put the hands of slaves in at night, some of them large enough to hold three slaves. These are left behind often on the corpse of its unfortunate prisoner. In the hut which I am using to-day I found one of these fearful instruments of torture.”—(‘In Remotest Barotseland,’ pp. 187, 199, 207.)

About midway between Nyakatoro and Bihe, and more important than Kalunga Kameya, which Colonel Harding passed on his journey from Nyakatoro, Masiko is the third of the Portuguese forts which appear to serve no other purpose than the upholding of the great slave route. Its commandant and garrison in 1900 are thus described:—

“He is in appearance a typical city man, dapper, short, and rather stout, with a great idea of making himself comfortable (also a city characteristic) and doing himself ‘good’.....His garrison is a heterogeneous collection of natives from different sources. I again met two or three boys who formerly lived at Delagoa Bay, and were taken from there against their will and brought here. They receive little pay—there is no real engagement—but they will remain here till too old for service. There Delagoa Bay soldiers came to me and complained that they were brought here against their will, and were anxious to return to their homes, but had no money, and were not allowed to do so. Calico is their substitute in place of money; and for that, and that alone, they must give the work of a lifetime.”—(*Ibid.*, p. 208.)

Such men are much better suited and likelier to be the allies than the foes of the slave-traders, willing to take their calico in exchange for tobacco and other luxuries on the outward journey from Bihe, and anxious to propitiate them on their return journey in charge of the slaves obtained from the purveyors of such chattel in the neighbourhood of Lake Dilolo, in Kasai, or of more distant collecting grounds in Katanga and elsewhere.

Passing out of Masiko, Colonel Harding entered “the Hungry Country,” as it is called, and the following are some of his notes thereupon:—

“Every day I am seeing traces of the slave trade. The wayside trees are simply hung with disused shackles, some to hold one, some two, three, and even six slaves. Skulls and bones, bleached by the sun, lie where the

victims fell, and gape with helpless grin on those who pass—a damning evidence of a horrible traffic. Some are buried, and surrounded and covered with wood, marked by a piece of linen or calico tied to a pole stuck in the ground, which shows that the dead man was more than an ordinary slave.

“Yesterday we met two caravans, and to-day one, proceeding to the Lunda country for their living merchandise. Some of them were carrying spare guns, some calico, others powder. Small boys and young girls were alike loaded with trading material, whilst the half-caste or Bihean trader walked in the rear attired in a startling costume, rascality written on every line of his face. The Mambari do their marching by easy stages; they travel with their women, and regard the whole game as a picnic. Time is no object, as under no circumstances would they return to Bihe till December or January.”.....

“This morning we met another slave caravan, numbering in all eighty-six. This is the third, and all for the same dastardly purpose. Again to-day several of the carriers were mere children, and the three Mambari traders as usual had their women. Most of their trading produce consists of calico, but I noticed a lot of spare guns and powder.”.....

“Each passing day brings repetitions of these horrid wayside scenes. To-day I saw the remains of five natives in every stage of decomposition. If five were visible from the footpath, I dread to think of the number that must have been dragged a short distance and there dispatched. One poor fellow had not been dead long. Lying by the remains of the fire he had ignited before his death, his gaping skull resting on his fleshless hands, his spirit had passed away without pain and without a struggle..... Other remains are to be found; here the skull is battered in by the trader’s axe, and the body clearly exhibits signs of the greatest torture and pain in the throes of death. Every sick man in a slave caravan who cannot walk is dispatched in this way. In doing so they minimise the percentage of sickness and stop effectually any malingering.”—(‘In Remotest Barotse-land,’ pp. 211, 214, 220.)

The last gruesome extract was written shortly before Colonel Harding reached the Kwanza fort, where he entered a region of comparative civilisation, and had only thirty-five miles to travel before arriving at Bihe, his destination. His journey back to Lualui, the residence of Lewanika, the king of the Barotse, was by another route, and outside the track of the slave raiders, of whom he tells us nothing more, except in brief mention of an expedition on which he started in October, 1900, traversing nearly 2,000 miles, and reaching the southern border of the Congo State’s Katanga territory. His too scanty information concerning this second expedition is as follows:—

“Whilst we were at Lualui, Lewanika was greatly disturbed by the rumours of slave trading by Mambari (West Coast slave traders) in the Bamashasha and Balunda countries (north of Lualui). I therefore decided to visit these parts.”.....

“Though we left Lualui with a small caravan, composed solely of the necessary carriers, a few police, and Barotse indunas, sent as usual by the king to look after me, we had, before reaching Kasempa, a following of several hundred natives—husbands looking for their wives, mothers looking for their sons, and children looking for their parents who had been stolen and sold for slaves. I was successful in restoring a number of these unfortunate people to the respective owners. Whilst I was at Kasempa I was fortunate enough to be able to punish a noted slave trader, storming his kraal by daylight and burning all his belongings.”.....

“From Kasempa, which is 250 miles north-west of Lualui, we journeyed to the source of the Kabompo, a distance of about 200 miles, passing through a country nearly denuded of natives by slave raiders, but well watered, mineralised, and to all appearances healthy.....

“With careful administration many of the natives who were driven away, but not actually carried off, by the slave traders will return. I have dealt with the slave trade in former chapters of my diary, when I met the caravans coming in to buy slaves, and now I have seen the result of their labour, and actually visited the country, or a part of it, in which they reap their unlawful harvest.”—(‘In Remotest Barotseland,’ pp. 367, 368, 373.)

There appears to have been good ground for Colonel Harding’s expectation, near the close of 1900, that, as a result of the steps taken by the Barotse king, with the assistance of the British South Africa Company, to put an end to the destructive slave-traffic previously carried on by Portuguese adventurers within the area that is now under British protection, slave-trading in Barotseland has been really as well as nominally abolished. But as to the extent to which it has been and is still being carried on in the southern portion of the territory assigned to the Congo State, and contiguous with Barotseland, we have grievous evidence from the Rev. Dugald Campbell, another member of the Garenganze Mission, whose **Mr. Dugald Campbell’s Testimony.** experience in this part of Africa dates from 1891.

Being for many years stationed in Katanga, and in touch with the Kasai district, Mr. Campbell saw much of the methods there in vogue for the supply of the Portuguese markets in Angola, especially since the supply of the Zanzibar and Mozambique markets by so-called Arabs has been almost put a stop to.

Those who are acquainted with the history of the Congo State will remember that Tippu Tib and his associates and rivals, having been encouraged by King Leopold's enterprise to compete with him, had acquired mastery over a large part of the Congo basin before the new Congo Government was in a position to drive them back, and that the Manyema, Batetela, and other cannibal tribes who had been the Arabs' chief agents in slave-raiding expeditions were promptly taken into King Leopold's employ. The Manyema and Batetela mutinies in 1895 resulted in all the eastern and southern portions of Congoland being overrun by the mutineers and others who afterwards joined their ranks, armed with and trained in the use of European weapons, whom the Congo Government has never been able to conquer and expel, and with whom it has latterly come to terms of one sort or another.

Light is thrown on the relations between Congo State officials and the cannibal malcontents, generally known as *revoltés* (in French) or *vallecci* (in Portuguese), by some of Mr. Campbell's letters to me. After describing the cruelties practised by Belgian officers and their imported native soldiers on the other and resident natives in Southern Katanga, he wrote in May, 1904 :—

“For several years, owing to the Batetela revolt, these officers received no European supplies, and had to live entirely on the produce of the country. All labour, roads, buildings, cultivation, caravans, &c., were unpaid for, or rewarded by plunder and slavery, and, as a rule, the soldiers and employés were paid from the loot taken from Bihean slave caravans, or villages raided on the plea of having brought no ivory as tribute. It was hard for us to explain to the natives the advantages accruing from European government, and ‘the benefits of civilisation,’ in the sight of this dreadful reign of terror and ivory curse.”—(*The Aborigines' Friend*, October, 1904, p. 207.)

Mr. Campbell's complaint is rather against the Congo State authorities for tolerating and profiting by the slave-trade, chiefly carried on in this part of Africa by the *revoltés* and the Angola slave-dealers, than against the Portuguese authorities for tolerating and profiting by the vicious traffic. But he shows plainly the complicity between both sets of culprits, whatever their quarrels among themselves. So it was under the rule alike of Captain Brasseur, Captain Verdeck and Captain Van dan Broeck, the successive District Commissioners under whose misrule he ministered. In the letter just quoted from he wrote with reference to matters in the Kasai region through which he had recently travelled :—

“Through Captain Van den Broeck I sent a report of a big slave-

caravan of above 3,000 slaves I met in the Congo State, near Lake Dilolo. These had been purchased principally from the Batetela revolters, then entrenched at Lake Kisale. This report, though signed by my wife and myself, never received a reply, though it would have given them a key to the situation from an anti-slavery point of view, and enabled them, by means of a post on the Lutembwe River, near Lake Dilolo, and others along the Kasai, to have for ever closed the State western door against Bihean and Portuguese slavers.

“I have crossed the continent between Benguela and Mozambique several times, and I do not hesitate to say that the only regular slave-trade that goes on to a large extent is in the southern and south-western corners of the Congo State. From the West Lualaba to beyond Lake Dilolo there is not a single State post to collect rubber and ivory and rescue the thousands of slaves to this day exported annually from the Congo State. It was clear to me that no information was wanted, and the slave-trade through that door is brisker than ever, and, judging from appearance, it is likely to be. The revolters, who were supposed to have been defeated by Major Malfey in March, 1901, are to-day (May, 1904) as lively and busy as ever in the districts around the Lubudi River, not far from our old mission road from the West Coast. Not only so, but they are well supplied with guns, rifles, and ammunition, and regularly supply the Bihe and Benguela slave markets through Bihean and Ovim-Bunda traders.....

“As regards the expedition [Major Malfey’s] against the Batetela in 1901, near Lake Kisale, I may say that I was then living an hour distant from Captain Van den Broeck. From the men who formed part of the caravan I heard that the revolters simply fired a few shots and cleared west leaving, besides a few women, powder and guns. Many of the carriers were given, or allowed to take, two or three cap-guns apiece for themselves, and of those which they returned numbers were sold all over Katanga. Many others are still in the possession of members of that caravan.

“Some of our missionaries at Nana-Kandundu (or Nyakotoro), in Lovaleland, were itinerating a few months ago near the Kalenda district of the Congo State, north of their station, and, within the State, struck on another slave caravan hailing from the revolters’ direction. Not only the revolters, but many others, are supplied with repeating rifles, as witness a native offering to sell two such rifles to Mr. Schindler, one of our missionaries. I mention this as the idea seems to prevail that the revolters are exterminated and the Benguela slave and gun trades non-existent, whereas the revolters are more active than ever—only in another part—and the slave trade thereby gets a tremendous spur.”—(*The Aborigines’ Friend*, October, 1904, pp. 209, 210.)

A later letter from Mr. Campbell, dated 8th December, 1904, contains the following passage :—

“As to the slave trade in the Congo State. Four of our men have just returned from a journey west through the Congo State to Kavungu, our mission in Lovaleland, and they report that revolted soldiers returned to their stronghold on the Lukoleshe River, from whence they were reported to have been driven by Lieutenant Baillons, aided by Mukandu Bantu (or Msiri II.) and his native warriors, three and a half months ago. They are still devastating, enslaving, and supplying Bihean and Portuguese traders with slaves.

“Our men met two very large slave caravans, with one of which was a Portuguese trader. The one was met at Olohosi, and the other at Bumba's—the latter not marked on the map, but five days' journey north-east from Kavungu, our mission station. The former (Olohosi) is one day west from the Lukoleshe River.....They were selling guns and gunpowder *ad lib.*, and buying gangs of slaves.”—(*The Aborigines' Friend*, July, 1905, p. 349.)

And on 12th February, 1905, he wrote :—

“Two of my men have just come back from a journey west in the State, and report the revolters as active as ever, and the slave trade and firearms and powder traffic with the State increasingly brisk. Why the State will not endeavour to suppress the slave trade, and stop the wholesale annual influx of Portuguese Angola slaves, I do not for the life of me pretend to know.....

“When I was last at Benguela there was a big Belgian trading company, to which belonged some ex-State officials, one of whom, knowing I had come from the State, invited me to dinner, and asked for information to enable him to promote a successful business in slaves. Of course he knew, he averred, that he would be raiding the State; but, then, ‘was not the State itself engaged in raiding?’”—(*Ibid.*, p. 341.)

It will be noticed that most of Mr. Campbell's evidence is as to occurrences subsequent to the Bailundu war of 1902, which doubtless lessened the inland slave raiding for a time, and which is alleged to have permanently wrecked it. This allegation is unquestionably erroneous, although persisted in by some British as well as by Portuguese officials. For instance, in reply to inquiries on the subject addressed to him by the Marquis of Lansdowne with reference to appeals of the Aborigines Protection Society, Mr. W. S. Brock, Acting-Consul General at Loanda, reported on 30th June, 1905 :—

“Raiding, pure and simple, is becoming less. Some of the principal raiders, both black and white, have not been out for two or three years. One of the last expeditions met with such a warm reception on the Congo

frontier that the man has not been since, nor is he likely to go again. The Government is trying to stop raiding, and will succeed, although, with the scant means at their disposal, it is no easy task.

"The *vallecci*, the revolted soldiers, for some time did a large trade, but their forces appear to be greatly broken, owing to their having been constantly pursued by the Congo State authorities. It was these people who, when the rifles they stole from the State had given out, gave such a high price—paid in slaves—for contraband arms and ammunition from the coast. As regards the *vallecci*, I cannot speak from personal experience, as the country in which they were lay months away from the farthest point I reached. My information is gathered from missionaries, traders, and other whites who have been in that part of Angola where the *vallecci* traded with the natives."—(*The Aborigines' Friend*, September, 1905, p. 402.)

Whoever may have been the missionaries from whom Mr. Brock obtained his information on the western side of Bihe—that being the farthest point he reached—Mr. Campbell was not one of them. Writing to me on 10th May, 1905, some weeks before the date of Mr. Brock's report, Mr. Campbell said :—

"Could you accompany me in a journey through the Chibokwe country for twelve days, from Masiko to Chisamba, and by the Kwanza River to Vikolo Ferry, I would show you the victims of this traffic, for which the Congo State is primarily responsible. Along the whole length of that frontier, from the Lualaba west to Lake Dilolo, and from there to the source of the Kasai River, for many hundred miles, there is not a single State post to prevent the annual influx of West Coast slaves from Angola, or to put a stop to the wholesale annual export of thousands of slaves which is in full swing at this very moment."—(*Ibid.*, p. 403.)

As it chanced, Mr. Nevinson had traversed part of that ground shortly before Mr. Campbell's and Mr. Brock's letters were written. Let us now hear what he has to tell us.

## V.—MAINLAND TRADING AND RAIDING SINCE 1904.

The Royal Decree of 16th July, 1902, supplementing and amending the earlier decree of 1875, and the "general regulation" consequent thereon, which is dated 21st November, 1878, made elaborate provisions for the management of native labour and agricultural development in the province of Angola, "maintaining the liberal principles of the régime, securing freedom of choice as to the methods by which all natives more than eighteen years of age might fulfil their moral and legal obligation to work, fixing the conditions of each form of labour under the protection of the State, imposing direct responsibilities on contractors or employers, and increasing the number of curators of labour so as to render more direct and effective their control and tutelage of the natives" ('Mémoire justificatif du Gouvernement portugais'). Every contract sanctioned by the Curator General of Angola or his subordinates had to bear the native's declaration that he had "come of his own free will to contract for his services," &c., and that he bound himself "to render all such services as his employer may require," and "to work nine hours on all days that are not sanctified by religion, with an interval of two hours for rest." It was further stipulated, with much else, that all such serviçaes—including women, of course, as well as men—should receive monthly wages, the amount being agreed upon with them at the time of their engagement, besides being supplied with food and clothing; that their engagements should last for five years, and not be renewed unless the visiting magistrates were satisfied that the expired contract had been properly observed; and that all children born during the terms of their parents' contract should be absolutely free.

**The Decree of  
July, 1902.**

**Mr. Nevinson on its  
Working.**

"Legally," asks Mr. Nevinson, who spent the closing weeks of 1904 in Loanda, the capital of Angola, and the first weeks of 1905 in Benguela, its principal port for shipment of slaves, "could any agreement look fairer and more innocent? or could any Government have better protected a subject population in the transmission from recognized slavery to free labour?" But this, as he proceeds to show, is "how the whole thing works out in human life":—

"An agent, whom for the sake of politeness we may call a labour merchant, goes wandering about among the natives in the interior—say seven or eight hundred miles from the coast. He comes to the chief of a tribe, or,



I believe, more often to a little group of chiefs, and, in return for so many grown men and women, he offers the chiefs so many rifles, guns and cartridges, so many bales of calico, so many barrels of rum. The chiefs select suitable men and women; very often one of the tribe gives in his child to pay off an old debt; the bargain is concluded, and off the party goes. The labour merchant leads it away for some hundreds of miles, and then offers its members to employers as contracted labourers. As commission for his own services in the transaction he may receive about £15 or £20 for a man or a woman, and about £5 for a child. According to law, the labourer is then brought before a magistrate and duly signs the contract with his or her new master. He signs, and the benevolent law is satisfied. But what does the native know or care about 'freedom of contract' or 'the general regulation of 21st November, 1878'? What does he know about nine hours a day and two hours' rest, and the days sanctified by religion? Or what does it mean to him to be told that the contract terminates at the end of five years? He only knows that he has fallen into the hands of his enemies, that he is given over into slavery to the white man, that if he runs away he will be beaten, and even if he could escape to his home, all those hundreds of miles across the mountains, he would probably be killed or sold again. In what sense does such a man enter into a free contract for his labour? In what sense, except according to law, does his position differ from a slave's? And the law does not count; it is only life that counts."— ('A Modern Slavery,' pp. 29, 30.)

It will be noticed that Mr. Nevinson here refers more especially to the slaves brought from the interior by one set of traders for sale to another set of traders with a view to their either being made use of on or near the coast or being exported to San Thome and Principe; and this is doubtless the most offensive and pernicious portion of the business. But by far the larger number of slaves in Angola are those acquired or inherited by planters, traders, and others in their own neighbourhoods, without resort to distant parts. So common, indeed, is this more or less domestic or plantation slavery that it is regarded almost as so much a matter of course by the natives themselves, as well as by their employers and the public at large, that scarcely any notice is taken of it. By far the larger proportion of the native population of Angola, however, probably more than three-fourths, would appear to be in reality the slaves either of other blacks or of white or parti-coloured owners. The "civilised" conquerors of Angola have taken over and aggravated this one, at any rate, of the barbarous institutions they found there; and no Royal Edicts or other pretences at making freemen of

**Slavery in Western  
Angola.**

the natives have any such effect. Mr. Nevinson's experiences agree with the testimony of all other impartial visitors and residents in this Portuguese possession. For instance :—

“On the same steamer by which I reached Benguela there were five little native boys, conspicuous in striped jerseys, and running about like rats. I suppose they were about ten to twelve years old, perhaps less. I do not know where they came from, but it must have been from some fairly distant part of the interior, for, like all natives who see stairs for the first time, they went up and down them on their hands and knees. They were travelling with a Portuguese, and within a week of landing at Benguela he had sold them all to white owners. Their price was fifty milreis a piece (nearly £10).....

“The price of women on the mainland is more variable, for, as in civilised countries, it depends almost entirely on their beauty and reputation. ....“While I was in the town a girl was sold to a prospector who wanted her as his concubine during a journey into the interior. Her owner was an elderly Portuguese official of some standing.....The price finally arranged between him and the prospector for possession of the girl was 125 milreis, which was then nearly equal to £25. When the bargain was concluded, the girl was led into her new master's room and became his possession. During his journey in the interior she rode upon his wagon. I saw them often on the way, and was told of the purchase by the prospector himself.....I was glad to find that the Portuguese official who had parted with her on these satisfactory terms was no merely selfish speculator in the human market, as so many traders are, but considered the question philosophically, and had come to the conclusion that slavery was much to a slave's advantage. The slave, he said, had opportunities of coming into contact with a higher civilisation than his own. He was much better off than in his native village. His food was regular; his work was not excessive; and, if he chose, he might become a Christian. Being an article of value, it was likely that he would be well treated. ‘Indeed,’ he continued, in an outburst of philanthropic emotion, ‘both in our own service and in San Thome the slave enjoys a comfort and well-being which would have for ever been beyond his reach if he had not become a slave.’.....

“An Englishman, coming down from the interior last African winter, was roused at night by loud cries in a Portuguese trading-house at Masiko. In the morning he found that a slave had been flogged, and tied to a tree in the cold all night. He was a man who had only lately lost his liberty, and was undergoing the process which the Portuguese call ‘taming,’ as applied to new slaves who are sullen and show no pleasure in the advantages of their position.

“In another case, only a few weeks ago, an American saw a woman

with a full load upon her head and a baby on her back passing the house where he happened to be staying. A big native, the slave of a Portuguese trader in the neighbourhood, was dragging her along with a rope, and beating her with a whip as she went. The American brought the woman into the house and kept her there. Next day the Portuguese owner came in fury with forty of his slaves, breathing out slaughters; but, as is usual with the Portuguese, he shrank up when he was faced with courage. The American refused to give the woman back, and ultimately she was restored to her distant village, where she still is.

"I would willingly give the names in the last case and in all others; but one of the chief difficulties of the whole subject is that it is impossible to give names without exposing people out here to the hostility and persecution of the Portuguese authorities and traders. In most instances also, not only the people themselves, but all the natives associated with them, would suffer, and the various kinds of work in which they are engaged would come to an end. It is the same fear which keeps the missionaries silent. The Catholic missions are supported by the State. The other missions exist on sufferance. How can missionaries of either division risk the things they have most at heart by speaking out upon a dangerous question?\*" They are silent, although their conscience is uneasy, unless custom puts it to sleep.

"Custom puts us all to sleep. Every one in Angola is so accustomed to slavery as part of the country's arrangements that hardly anybody considers it strange. It is regarded either as a wholesome necessity or as a necessary evil."—('A Modern Slavery,' pp. 49, 52, 54-6).

It is so regarded, with some exceptions, even by representatives of the British Government in Africa; one notable exception being Mr. Roger Casement, who, as British Consul at Loanda, denounced the iniquities in Angola before, as British Consul at Boma, he had an opportunity of denouncing the similar and more stupendous iniquities for which the Congo State is responsible. In a report dated 30th June, 1905, already quoted from, Acting-Consul Brock thus wrote after he had travelled as far as Bihe in Mr. Nevinson's company, and before the temporary effects of the Balundu war had passed off:—

"The slave trade still exists, but white officials do not participate so openly nor so much as formerly, and it is gradually falling into discredit.

"The principal sources of supply are the families whose members are sold by their kinsmen, under native laws, generally for debt. The natives of the interior here are inveterate litigants. The most trivial cause is a pretext for an indaka or law-suit amongst themselves, lasting perhaps for

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\* This has been the excuse of several missionaries of whom I have asked permission to repeat in public what they have told me in private.—H. R. F. B.

generations. A case in which a goat has been killed, injured, or stolen will result in a claim for a cow as compensation. This probably will not be settled until such time as the cow has had, or might have had, calves; thus forming a base for further dispute. It is quite possible for two or three members of one or both families to be sold to pay costs or claims for an originally small amount.

"In some parts a war does not settle private disputes. The families of those who go to war are responsible to the enemy afterwards for loss of life or property. This is another source of the supply of slaves; for the claims for damages can be calculated at three times the amount of the loss actually sustained....."

"As to what becomes of the slaves from the interior, it may be taken that the best are kept by their original purchasers, to all intents and purposes forming part of their family. The others are passed on to different buyers, who in their turn retain the best, disposing of the remainder, until those that are of the least use are shipped to the plantations of San Thome and Principe."—(*The Aborigines' Friend*, September, 1905, p. 401.)

Mr. Brock's statement that litigation is the "principal source" of slave supply in Angola is questionable. It would rather appear that, apart from the caravan trade with the interior, the laws empowering the Portuguese officials to arrest as vagabonds all natives not working for themselves or others in ways approved by the authorities, and to convert them into *serviçaes*, contribute most to the maintenance of domestic and plantation slavery, if not also to the upkeep of the slave-markets. But the sources of supply are numerous and various.\* For

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\* In the *Hamburger Fremden-Blatt* for 28th July, 1906, one source of supply is described by a German traveller who has spent ten years in Africa, Professor A. Prister, in terms which, it is to be hoped, are exaggerated. "In Angola, even in San Paolo de Loanda, under the eyes of the Governor, the Bishop and the high officials," he alleges, are to be found "regular 'bridewells' for the production of slaves." One of these he says that he visited on the estate of "one of the richest Portuguese," sixteen miles from Loanda. There he saw a large number of women, with only a few men, at work. "Each woman has a little hut, in a courtyard enclosed by a wall, in which she lives with her young ones. The woman is always pregnant, and carries her last child on her back, during work, in Kafir manner. The overseer of this plantation, who treated me in every respect with Portuguese friendliness, and took me for a great admirer of his breeding establishment, told me that about four hundred negroes were there, and added with a laugh that he had over a hundred young ones in the compound. This is just as if a cattle-breeder were boasting of the fine increase in his herds. When the young one is so far grown up that he can be put to some use, at from six to eight years of age, he enters into a so-called contract, or he steps quite simply into the place of a dead *serviçal*. For instance, Joseph is told that his name is no more Joseph but Charles, and immediately the dead Charles is replaced. He never fell ill; he never died; he only lives a second life."

instance, Mr. Nevinson, speaking of the slavery which "exists quite openly throughout Bihe, in the three forms of slavery among the natives themselves, domestic slavery to the Portuguese traders, and slavery on the plantations," tells us :—

"The purchase of slaves is rendered easier by certain native customs, especially by the peculiar law which gives the possession of the children to the wife's brother, even during the lifetime of both parents. The law has many advantages in a polygamous country, and the parents can redeem their children and make them their own property by various payments; but, unless the children are redeemed, the wife's brother can claim them for the payment of his own debts or the debts of his village. I think this is chiefly done in the payment of family debts for witchcraft, and I have seen a case in which, for a debt of that kind, a mother has been driven to pawn her own child herself. Her brother had murdered her eldest boy, and, going into the interior to trade, had died there. Of course his wives and other relations charged her with witchcraft through her murdered boy's spirit, and she was condemned to pay a fine. She had nothing to pay but her two remaining children, and, as the girl was married and with child, she was unwilling to take her. So she pawned her little boy to a native for the sum required, though she knew he would almost certainly be sold as a slave to the Portuguese long before she could redeem him, and she would have no chance of redress."—('A Modern Slavery,' p. 100.)

Of the inland slave trading, from Livingstone's day downwards, we have seen some illustrations, put together in chronological rather than in geographical order. By following Mr. Nevinson's account of the expedition on which he started in January, 1905, but in the course of which the route taken by him afforded only stray indications of the trade until he reached Bihe two months later, we shall obtain a clearer understanding of the traffic as a whole as it is at present conducted.

Bihe, which is some two hundred and fifty miles almost due east of Benguela, is not, as Mr. Nevinson explains, either a town or, in the usual sense of the term, a slave-market. It is a large stretch of forest and marsh, of which the Portuguese fort at Belmonte, with two or three stores near it, forms the centre, and over which are scattered "a very limited number of other trading-houses, without exception, I think, worked by slave-labour, as are the few plantations of sweet-potato for the manufacture of rum, which, next to cotton cloth, is the chief coinage in all dealings with the natives." It is from these trading-houses or directly from the Bihean natives and half-castes known as Ovim-Bundu,

**Slave Traffic in  
Bihe**

who carry their caravans into the interior, and whose villages are plentiful on the eastern side of Bihe, that the slaves are generally bartered, though other common articles of commerce are rubber and oxen, "a load of rubber (say fifty or sixty pounds), an ox and a young slave counting as about equal in the recognised currency."

"For generations past, probably long before the Portuguese established their present feeble hold upon the country, the Ovim-Bundu have been sending their caravans of traders far into the interior—far among the tributaries of the Congo, and even up to Tanganyika and the great lakes. Like all traders in Central Africa, they tramp in single file along the narrow and winding footpaths which are the roads and trade routes of the country. They carry their goods on their heads or shoulders, clamped with shreds of bark between two long sticks, which act as levers. The regulation load is about sixty pounds, but for his own interest a man will sometimes carry double as much. As a rule, they march five or six hours a day, and it takes them about two months to reach the villages of Nana Kandundu"—called also Nyakatoro and Kavungo—"which may be taken as the centre of African trade, as it is the central point of the long and marshy watershed which divides the Zambezi from the Congo. For merchandise, they carry with them cotton cloth, beads and salt, and at present they are bringing out rubber for the most part, and a little bees'-wax. Guns, gunpowder, and cartridges are the best exchange for slaves, owing to the demand for such things among the *révoltés*, the cannibal and slave-dealing tribes who are holding out against the Belgians among the rivers west of the Katanga district."—('A Modern Slavery,' pp. 83-86.)

Before starting on this eastward track, Mr. Nevinson had painful evidence of the horrors of the slave-trade, notwithstanding any brief check that had been put upon it by the Bailundu war. He reports:—

"In a village in the north-west of Bihe I have seen a man—the headman of the place—who has been gradually tempted on by a Portuguese trader till he has sold all his children and all the other relations in his power for rum. Last of all, one morning at the beginning of this winter (1905), he told his wife to smarten herself up and come with him to the trader's house. She appears to have been a particularly excellent woman, of whom he was very fond. Yet, when they arrived at the store, he received a keg of rum and went home with it, leaving his wife as the trader's property.

"In the same district I met a boy who told me how his father was sold in the middle of last January. They were slaves to a native named Onbungululu in the village of Chariwewa, and his father, in company with twenty other of the slaves, was sold to a certain Portuguese trader, who acts

on behalf of the Central Committee of Labour and Emigration, and was draughted quietly away through the bush for the plantations in San Thome.

“To show how low the price of human beings will run, I may mention a case that happened in January, 1905, on the Kwanza, just over the north-east frontier of Bihe. Last summer a Portuguese, who is perhaps the most notorious and reckless slave trader now living in Bihe, and whose name is familiar in the interior of Africa, sent a Bihean into the Southern Congo with orders to bring out so many slaves, and with chains to bind them. As the Bihean was returning with the slaves, one of them escaped, and the trader demanded another slave and three loads of rubber as compensation. This the Bihean has now paid, but, in the meantime, the trader’s personal slaves have attacked and plundered his village. The trader himself is at present away on his usual business in the remote region of the Congo basin called Lunda, and it is thought his return is rather doubtful, for the *révoltés* and other native tribes in those parts accuse him of selling cartridges that will not fit their rifles. But he appears to have been flourishing till quite lately, for the natives in the village where I am staying say that he has sent out a little gang of seven slaves, which passed down the road only the day before yesterday on their way to San Thome.”—(‘A Modern Slavery,’ pp. 102, 103.)

At the Portuguese fort on the Kwanza, three days’ journey to the north-east of Belmonte, begins “the Hungry Country,” extending to the Portuguese fort at Masiko, of which we have heard something from Colonel Harding. **Slave Traffic in “the Hungry Country.”** When Mr. Nevinson traversed it in April, 1905, he met no important slave gangs coming down from the interior, as that is the time of the year generally preferred by the traders for their outward journey and for their trafficking in districts further east; but before he had crossed the river he began to see abundant proof of the sort of traffic they engaged in.

“There are two ferries over the Kwanza, one close under the Portuguese fort, the other a comfortable distance up-stream, well out of observation. The Commandant’s duty is to stop the slave trade; but how can he be expected to see what is going on a mile or so away?”

“Even before you come down to the river you find slave shackles hanging on the bushes. You cross the stream in dugout canoes, running the chance of being upset by one of the hippos which snort and pant a little farther up. You enter the forest again, and now the shackles are thick upon the trees. This is the place where most of the slaves, being driven down from the interior, are untied. It is safe to let them loose here. The Kwanza is just in front, and behind them lies the long stretch of Hungry Country, which they could never get through alive if they tried to run back to their

homes. So it is that the trees on the western edge of the Hungry Country bear shackles in profusion—shackles for the hands, shackles for the feet, shackles for three or four slaves who are clamped together at night. The drivers hang them up with the idea of using them again when they return for the next consignment of human merchandise; but as a rule, I think, they find it easier to make new shackles as they are wanted.

“A shackle is easily made. A native hacks out an oblong hole in a log of wood with an axe; it must be big enough for two hands or two feet to pass through; and then a wooden pin is driven through the hole from side to side, so that the hands cannot stir until it is drawn out again. The two hands and feet do not necessarily belong to the same person. You find shackles of various ages—some quite new, with the marks of the axe fresh upon them; some old and half eaten by ants. But none can be very old for in Africa all dead wood quickly disappears, and this is a proof that the slave trade did not really end after the war of 1902, as easy-going officials are fond of assuring us.

“When I speak of the shackles beside the Kwanza, I do not mean that this is the only place where they are to be found. You will see them scattered along the whole length of the Hungry Country: in fact, I think they are thickest at about the fifth day's journey. They generally hang on low bushes of quite recent growth, and are most frequent by the edge of the marshes. I cannot say why. I have been assured that each shackle represents the death of a slave; and indeed, one often finds the remains of a skeleton beside a shackle. But the shackles are so numerous that, if slaves died at that rate, even slave trading would hardly pay, in spite of the immense profit on every man or woman who is brought safely through. It may often happen that a sick slave drags himself to the water and dies there. It may be that some drivers think they can do without the shackles after four or five days of the Hungry Country. But at present I can find no satisfactory explanation of the strange manner in which the shackles are scattered up and down the path. I only know that between the Kwanza and Masiko I saw several hundreds of them; and yet I could not look about much, but had to watch the narrow and winding footpath close in front of me, as one always has to do in Central Africa.

“The path is strewn with dead men's bones. You see the white thigh-bones lying in front of your feet, and at one side, among the undergrowth, you find the skull. These are the skeletons of slaves who have been unable to keep up with the march, and so were murdered or left to die. Of course the ordinary carriers and travellers die too.....But carriers are always buried by their comrades. You pass many of their graves, hung with strips of rag, or decorated with a broken gourd. Slaves are never buried, and that is an evidence that the bones on the path are the bones of



slaves. The Biheans have a sentiment against burying slaves. They call it burying money. It is something like their strong objection to burying debtors. The man who buries a debtor becomes responsible for the debts; so the body is hung up on a bush outside a village, and the jackals consume it, being responsible for nothing.

“Before the great change made by the Bailundu war of 1902, the horrors of the Hungry Country were undoubtedly worse than they are now. I have known Englishmen who passed through it four years ago”—in or about 1901—“and found slaves tied to the trees, with their veins cut so that they might die slowly, or laid beside the path with their hands and feet hewn off, or strung up on scaffolds with fires lighted beneath them. My carriers tell me that this last method of encouraging the others is still practised away from the footpath; but I never saw it done myself. I never saw distinct evidence of torture. The horrors of the road have certainly become less since the rebellion of 1902.”—(‘A Modern Slavery,’ pp. 111-115.)\*

Mr. Nevinson was prevented from visiting the more eastern portion of the track followed by especially enterprising traders in procuring slaves from the Katanga district of the Congo State. But he saw enough to prove the continuance of the shameful trade, and the reader may be referred to his volume for painful details of his experiences which need not be quoted here.†

On his journey back to Bihe Mr. Nevinson overtook suspicious-looking parties of natives in charge of men provided with chicottes—it being “a common trick of the traders now to get up the slaves as ordinary carriers”—and he heard of others travelling in by-paths, as though to avoid observation.

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\* The reader may have been struck by the close resemblance, and in some cases the identity, of phrases used in the above extracts from Mr. Nevinson, and in earlier quotations from Colonel Harding and Mr. Campbell. Lest it should be thought that these writers have copied from one another, it should be pointed out that Colonel Harding’s book, written in or soon after 1900, was not published till 1905, when Mr. Nevinson was in Angola, where his narrative was written before he could have seen a copy of ‘In Remotest Barotseland,’ and that Mr. Campbell’s letters, written from Katanga in 1904 and 1905, out of reach of both Colonel Harding and Mr. Nevinson, were seen only by myself before I published portions of them in October, 1904, and July, 1905.

† Quite recent light, moreover, is thrown on the conditions under which slave-raiding is still carried on in this part of Central Africa by a report of Acting-Vice-Consul Beak, dated 6th September, 1907, from which extracts will be found in the appendix to this pamphlet (p. 64).

“ But among all of them there was only one which was obviously a slave gang, almost without concealment. My carriers detected them at once, and I heard the word ‘apeka’ (slaves) passed down the line, even before I came in sight of them. The caravan numbered seventy-eight in all. In front and rear were four men with guns, and there were six in the centre. The whole caravan was organised with a precision that one never finds among free carriers, and nearly the whole of it consisted of boys under fourteen. This in itself would be almost conclusive, for no trade caravan would contain anything like that proportion of boys, whereas boys are most easily stolen from native villages in the interior, and, on the whole, they pay the cost of transport best. But more conclusive even than the appearance of the gang was the quiet evidence of my own carriers, who had no reason for lying, who never pointed out another caravan of slaves, and yet had not a moment’s doubt as to this.”—(‘A Modern Slavery,’ p. 121.)

After reaching Bihe Mr. Nevinson spent about five weeks in tramping along the old slave route thence to Benguela, and on the way he saw fresh evidence almost every day—as the following extracts will show—not only of the vigour and openness with which the traffic is carried on, but also of the participation of Government officials in it.

**From Bihe to  
Benguela.**

“In the northern part of the Bihe district I passed the house of a Portuguese trader of whose reputation I had heard before. He is still claiming enormous damages for injury to his property in the war of 1902. The villagers have appealed to the fort at Belmonte against the amount, but are ordered to pay whatever he asks. To supply the necessary rubber and oxen they have now pawned their children into slavery without hope of redemption. Two days before I passed the house a villager, having pawned the last of his children and possessing nothing else, had shot himself in the bush close by. Things like that made no difference to the trader. It is the money he wants. The damage done to his property must be paid for twentyfold.....So the matter stands, and the villagers must go on selling more and more of their wives and children that the white man’s greed may be satisfied.

“A day or two farther on I turned aside from the main track to visit one of the Agents whom the Government has specially appointed to conduct the purchase of slaves for the islands of San Thome and Principe. There are two Agents officially recognised in the Bihe district. On my way I met an old native, notorious for a prosperous career of slave-trading. At the moment he was leading along a finely built man by a halter round his neck, but at sight of me he dropped the end of the rope. A man who was with me charged him at once with having sold two of his own

slaves—a man and a woman—for San Thome. He protested with righteous indignation.....Yet, beyond question, he had sold the man and woman to the Agent that morning. They were at the Agent's house when I arrived, and I was told he had only failed to sell the other slave because his price was too high.

“The Agent himself was polite and hospitable. Business was pretty brisk. I knew he had sent off eight slaves to the coast only three days before, with orders that they should carry their own shackles and be carefully pinned together at night. But we talked only of the rumoured division of the Congo, for on the other subject he was naturally a little shy, and I found out long afterwards that he knew the main object of my journey. Next day, however, he was alone with the friend who had accompanied me, and he then attempted to defend his position as Agent by saying the object of the Government was to buy up slaves through their special agents and ‘redeem’ them from slavery by converting them into ‘contract labourers’ for San Thome. The argument is ingenious. The picture of a pitiful Government willing to purchase the freedom of all slaves without thought of profit, and only driven to contract them for San Thome, because otherwise the expense would be unbearable, is almost pathetic |

“But the Agent knew, as every one out here knows, that the people whom the Government buys and ‘redeems’ have been torn from their homes and families on purpose to be ‘redeemed’; that, but for the purchases by the Government Agents for San Thome, the whole slave traffic would fall to pieces; and that the actual condition of these ‘contracted labourers’ upon the islands does not differ from slavery in any point of importance.....

“As one goes westward, further into the mountains, the path drops two or three times by sudden, steep descents, like flights of steps down terraces. It is here that many of the slaves try to escape. If they got away, there would not be much chance for them among the shy and apelike natives of the mountain belt, who remain entirely savage and are reputed to be cannibal still. But the slaves try to escape, and are generally brought back to a worse fate than being killed and eaten. On 17th May, five days above Katumbella, I met one of them who had been caught. He was a big Lovale man, naked, his skin torn and bleeding from his wild rush through thorns and rocks. In front and behind him marched two of his owner's slaves with drawn knives or matchets, two feet long, to cut him down if he tried to run again. I asked my boys what would happen to him, and they said he would be flogged to death before the others. I cannot say. I should have thought he was too valuable to kill. He must have been worth £20 as he stood, and £30 when landed at San Thome. But, of

course, the trader may have thought it would pay better to flog him to death as an example. True, it is not always safe to kill a slave. Last April a man in Benguela flogged a slave to death with a hippo whip, and, no doubt to his great astonishment, he found himself arrested and banished for a time to Mozambique—"the other coast" as it is called—a far from salubrious home. But five days inland along the caravan route the murderer of a slave would be absolutely secure, if he did not mind the loss of the money.....

"I came down at last from the mountains into Katumbella. And as I walked through the dimly-lighted streets and beside the great courtyards of the town that night, I heard again the blows of the palmatoria and chicote and the cries of men and women who were being 'tamed.' 'I do not trouble to beat my slaves much—I mean my contracted labourers,' said the trader who was with me. 'If they try to run away or anything, I just give them one good flogging, and then sell them to the Agent for San Thome. One can always get £10 per head from him.'"—('A Modern Slavery,' pp. 150-153, 161, 167.)

Katumbella is the terminus of the old slave route, eight miles north of Benguela, with which it was formerly connected by a light railway convenient for the transport of slaves to be shipped thence to San Thome and Principe. It is now connected with the far more ambitious railway that is being constructed with English capital as part of a grand scheme for bringing down to the sea-coast the copper and other wealth of Central Africa. Should the Angola slave trade be allowed to last so long, this new railway may prove to be satisfactory to enterprising capitalists as a much more expeditious and economical arrangement for the bringing down of slaves from the interior than is the old-fashioned Benguela or Katumbella road.

Whatever commercial developments may be in store for Benguela, such prosperity as the port has hitherto had has been consequent on the use made of it for the shipment of slaves, formerly to Brazil and other parts of America, and latterly to San Thome and Principe. The slaves shipped thence are, of course, not much more than a thousandth of the three or four millions of Angola and Kasai natives in bondage to white or black masters; but they are a large majority of those dispatched by sea to the Portuguese islands, now almost the only destination of African slaves sent out from the western shore of the continent.

Before we consider the state of affairs in these islands, let us hear from Mr. Nevinson what he saw in Benguela. On his arrival, in 1904, he says :—

"I found no open slave market, such as reports in Europe would lead one to expect. The spacious courtyards or compounds round the trading-houses are no longer crowded with gangs of slaves in shackles, and, though they are still openly used for housing the slaves before their final export, the whole thing is done quietly and without open brutality, which is, after all, unprofitable as well as inhuman.

"In the main street there is a Government office, where the official representative of the Central Committee of Labour and Emigration for the islands (having its headquarters in Lisbon) sits in state, and, under due forms of law, receives the natives, who enter one door as slaves and go out of another as *serviçaes*. Everything is correct."—('A Modern Slavery,' p. 46.)

Mr. Nevinson describes the process in more detail as he saw it in June, 1905, before leaving the port:—

"A day or two before the steamer is due to depart a kind of ripple seems to pass over the stagnant town. Officials stir, clerks begin to crawl about with pens; the long, low building called the Tribunal opens a door or two, a window or two, and looks quite busy. Then, early one morning, the Curator arrives and takes his seat in the long, low room, as representing the beneficent power of Portugal. Into his presence the slaves are herded in gangs by the official Agent. They are ranged up, and, in accordance with the decree of 29th January, 1903, they are asked whether they go willingly as labourers to San Thome. No attention of any kind is paid to their answer. In most cases no answer is given. Not the slightest notice would be taken of a refusal. The legal contract for five years' labour on the island of San Thome or Principe is then drawn out, and also, in accordance with the decree, each slave receives a tin disc with his number, the initials of the Agent who secured him, and, in some cases, though not usually at Benguela, the name of the island to which he is destined. He also receives in a tin cylinder a copy of his register, containing the year of the contract, his number and name, his birthplace, his chief's name, the Agent's name, and 'observations'—of which I have never seen any. Exactly the same ritual is observed for the women as for the men. The discs are hung round their necks, the cylinders are slung at their sides, and the natives, believing it to be some kind of fetich or 'white man's ju-ju,' are rather pleased. All are then ranged up and marched out again, either to the compounds, where they are shut in, or straight to the pier, where the lighters which are to take them to the ship lie tossing upon the waves.

"The climax has now been reached. The deed of pitiless hypocrisy has been consummated. The requirements of legalised slavery have been satisfied. The Government has 'redeemed' the slaves whom its own Agents have so diligently and so profitably collected. They went into the Tribunal as slaves; they have come out as 'contracted labourers.'"—(*Ibid.*; p. 172.)

## VI.—SAN THOME AND PRINCIPE SLAVERY.

The islands of San Thome and Principe are situated in the North Atlantic Ocean, the former almost on the Equator, the latter nearly 100 miles to the north of it, and are about 200 miles to the west of French Congo, and some 800 miles to the north-west of Loanda, the capital of Portuguese Angola. San Thome, called "the garden of Africa" by the Portuguese who took possession of the islands in the fifteenth century, has an area of 416 square miles, that of the somewhat less productive Principe being only 49 square miles; but their commercial value, which rose between 1894 and 1903 from £600,000 to £1,880,000 a year, is only a third less than that of Angola, of which the estimated area is at least nine hundred times as great. The suppression of the oversea slave trade, in so far as England and other European Powers could suppress it, ruined the sugar-growing and rum production which had made these islands profitable in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but in the nineteenth century they were to some extent revived by the cultivation in them of coffee, chincona, and other articles before their humid climate was found to be especially suitable for the production of cocoa.

In 1867 the quantity of cocoa exported from the islands amounted to less than 50 tons. In 1886 it exceeded 1,000 tons; in 1895 it was more than 6,000 tons; and in 1905 it was at least 22,000 tons. Mr. Mackie, the British Consul at Angola, says in his report for 1906:—

"The production of cocoa has trebled itself in the last ten years, while its value is stated to have increased twofold. Out of a total area of 416 square miles (in San Thome) 190 are under cultivation. There is, therefore, plenty of scope for further expansion, and, if the same rapid progress that has marked the past is maintained, the industry in another ten years hence, or less, will attain the substantial figure of some £2,500,000 per annum."—(Parliamentary Papers, 'Diplomatic and Consular Reports,' No. 3928, p. 32.)

This anticipation should be alarming to all who object to the slavery employed in the cultivation of San Thome and Principe cocoa.

The actual natives of the islands had, long before the introduction of cocoa-growing, been killed off or frightened off by earlier generations of slave owners and slave drivers. When Consul Nightingale visited San Thome in 1902, he found, according to a census taken in the previous year, that it contained—besides a white population of 1,012, of whom only

**The Cocoa-growing Islands.****Their Slave and other Population.**

81 were females, and 19,211 *serviçaes*—17,553 other inhabitants labelled “black and mixed”; the dwellers in Principe being 173 whites (including 9 females), 3,175 *serviçaes*, and 979 “black and mixed.” As he explained, with evident sympathy for the employers of forced labour:—

“The natives proper are descended from the ancient black colonists and liberated slaves, amongst whom are to be found the most affluent of the coloured population of the island. A tribe called the Angolares, descendants of some 200 Angola slaves who were wrecked off the island in the year 1540, also exists. The people of this tribe for many years were a great source of trouble to the Government and planters, by their constant attempts to destroy the town, and raids on the plantations for the purpose of robbing the women; and even at the present time they are of very little use to the island, as they cannot be induced to work on the estates. With their innate love of idleness their ambition soars no higher than to catch the fish and grow mealies and cassava sufficient for their own requirements.

“More than half of the coloured population is made up of *serviçaes*, great numbers of whom are imported every year. There were 4,572 imported into the two islands during 1901. The mortality amongst this class is enormous, as will be seen by the annex”—showing an annual percentage of 20·67—“which, although dealing with the smaller island of Principe, can be taken as a very fair indication of the death-rate in San Thome, of which island a full return is not obtainable.....So large a death-rate calls for constant fresh supplies from Angola, the principal ports from which they are obtained being Benguela, Novo Redondo, and Loanda, where they are ransomed from the black traders who bring them from the far interior.”—(Diplomatic and Consular Reports, No. 2922, pp. 3, 4, 10, 11.)

Of the “ransoming,” after it had been subjected to the alleged improvements of the Royal Decree of 1903, we have seen something, and shall presently see more. The supply, however, was then and had long been below the demand, according to Mr. Nightingale, who wrote in the same report:—

#### The Servical System.

“Both the islands are far from having reached the full extent of development, due, perhaps, to the difficulty in procuring labourers—a difficulty which will no doubt continue until some other system of obtaining labour than that at present existing is adopted.”—(*Ibid.*, p. 9.)

Many attempts had been made to overcome that difficulty. A Royal Decree, appointing special regulations for San Thome, in the way of labour-recruiting, and supplementary to the general laws and regulations of 1875 and 1878 which have been already referred to, was issued on 17th August, 1880, when the cocoa production of the islands was barely

ten times greater than it had been in its infancy, twelve years before, and had reached only about one-fiftieth of its present dimensions, after eight and twenty years of further growth. Some account has also been given of two subsequent Royal Decrees, dated 9th November, 1889, and 9th November, 1899, which appear to have been helpful—notwithstanding, if not by reason of, their humanitarian pretensions—in increasing the supply of forced labour to the islands. In commendation of the latter decree Consul Nightingale wrote in his Annual Report for 1899:—

“This law, if rigorously carried out, should benefit the colony to an enormous extent. It would compel many thousands of natives to work who at present are content to live in wretched grass huts, existing on manioc roots, rats, and suchlike vermin. It would greatly benefit the black man himself; he would become healthier in his habits, and would learn to know the power of money and the benefits to be derived from his labours; he would learn to dress himself in decent clothes, thereby increasing the demand for cotton tissues, &c., and, if he can only be kept off drinking rum, his moral tone would be raised very considerably.”—(‘Diplomatic and Consular Reports,’ No. 2555, p. 7.)

Unfortunately there is no evidence that this law has improved the condition of the natives, either in Angola or in the Portuguese islands, by enabling them to eat better food and wear European clothing, or has done anything but augment the opportunities which were already plentiful for their ill-usage by their own chiefs and by white oppressors; and Mr. Nightingale showed in the paragraph immediately following the one just quoted how futile was the expectation that their moral tone would be raised by any efforts to inculcate among them habits of temperance. He went on to say:—

“Here, as in other parts of Africa, the rum and gin are the curse of the native, and there seems little likelihood of its abating as far as Angola is concerned. The rum industry is the source of a big revenue to the province, and much capital is sunk in the different cane plantations, which are increasing in number and size from year to year.”

With less profit to the capitalists, but not less injury to their slaves, rum production is—unless slave raiding and slave trading are on a par with it—as much the staple industry of Angola as cocoa production has come to be the staple industry of San Thome and Principe.

No details are available as to the number of *serviçaes* imported into these islands before 1887; but we read in Consul Casement’s report for 1897 and 1898:—



“From the years 1887 to 1896 inclusive it is stated officially that 22,140 contracted *serviçaes* left the port of Angola for the two Portuguese islands of San Thome and Principe to work on the plantations there. The same document shows that during 1897 1,919 labourers (1,063 males and 856 females) were so sent to those places. It is not stated how many of these *serviçaes*, whose contracted term of labour is for five years, returned to Angola.”—(‘Diplomatic and Consular Reports,’ No. 2363, p. 6.)

For no period is that information forthcoming, and there is good reason for supposing that, although a fair proportion of the few labourers brought from Cape Verde and elsewhere have been repatriated on the expiration of their engagements, none or no more than one or two of the *serviçaes* brought from Angola have been restored to their homes. Meanwhile the number of victims imported has increased every year. We learn from Consul Nightingale that “for the year 1898 no fewer than 3,131 *serviçaes* were contracted for the islands of San Thome and Principe, an increase of 1,212 on the previous year,” and that in 1899, the whole number recruited in Angola being 7,363, nearly half, or 3,648, were sent to the islands. “This emigration,” Mr. Nightingale reported, “is a great drain on the province”—of Angola—“and the planters in Kazengo and other parts complain very bitterly of it, as they are unable to offer such large sums for the ransoms (*resgates*) as the richer planters of the above-mentioned islands. A good healthy man and woman cost at the present time (1900) about £50 sterling in San Thome. This seems very much like quoting for cattle or any other marketable commodity. Such quotations are made, and contracts are signed to deliver so many pairs at so much per pair.”—(*Ibid.*, No. 2555, p. 6; No. 2721, p. 4.)

Statistics as to the number of natives “delivered” in San Thome and Principe in 1900 are not accessible, but it appears that, whereas the newcomers amounted to 3,648 in 1899, they had risen to 4,752 in 1901 (*Ibid.*, No. 2922, p. 11); and that number has probably not since been very much exceeded, the large expansion of the cocoa supply in the past few years being chiefly accounted for by improvements in mechanical appliances. It must be assumed, moreover, that in the treatment of natives some benefits, at any rate, have resulted from yet another Royal Decree, which was issued on 29th January, 1903, as a part of the efforts and pretences at reform that were consequent on the Bailundu war and its disclosures, and which limited to 6,000 the number of *serviçaes* allowed to be shipped to the islands from Angola in each year.

Before account is given of this important decree, the following may be quoted from the statement made to me by Mr. Reed in 1902, of which other portions have already been cited:—

“A Benguela merchant showed me on my way home (in March last) a small book in which was summarised the trade of his house in people for the past ten years. The numbers varied, the lowest for one year being 32, for most years over 300; but last year they bought and sold 2,000 and odd. He frankly said that, although these natives were theoretically *serviçaes*, under contract for five years to work in the plantations of San Thome and Principe, they never came back.

“On the boat we came home by there were about 350 of these *serviçaes* shipped from Benguela and northern ports. They were almost all put off at San Thome. An officer told me in conversation that the Empreza Nacional carries them at the average of 250 per boat, or about 6,000 per year—in ten years 60,000—and it is thought at that rate the interior of Angola will before long be almost depopulated. He and others said the death-rate on the island is very high indeed, but causes no compunction since the supply is almost unlimited.”—(*The Aborigines' Friend*, November, 1902, p. 326).

The Royal Decree of 29th January, 1903, expanding the policy proposed for labour recruiting in Angola in the Royal Decree of 16th July, 1902, deals especially with the requirements of San Thome and Principe. Reserving to itself the right of transporting in its own way any vagrants and others having no visible means of subsistence, the Portuguese Government stipulates that ordinary labour recruitment for the islands shall only take place at authorised agencies, and in conformity with conditions laid down in the decree. It is provided, among other things, that all employers of labour in the islands anxious to add to it, and able to prove their competence to carry out any contracts made by them, shall apply in due form, during the first fortnight of either June or December, to the Curator General in San Thome or his deputy in Principe, whose duty it will be to forward the applications to the Secretariat of the Provincial Government with a view to their being complied with. One adult man or woman, for agricultural purposes, being allowed to each hectare (about 2½ acres) of land, and, for domestic services, three to the family of each owner, manager, or agent of an estate, the supply must be limited to 3,000 in any half-year.

The control of these and consequent arrangements is assigned to a Central Labour Emigration Board in Lisbon, having for its president the Director-General of the Colonies or his deputy, and the other

members being two departmental heads of the Colonial Office and four proprietors from San Thome and Principe—the latter being nominees of the proprietors resident in Lisbon. For the carrying out of the Central Board's instructions a Local Committee is to sit in San Thome, consisting of the Curator-General, two high officials, and three residents of the island.

Elaborate provisions are made for the management of Emigration Agencies, which must be licensed by the Governor of the province or district in which it is established ; each agent being required to deposit 500 milreis (about £110) as caution money, and to pay a tax of 500 reis (about 2s. 1d.) for each labourer procured by him and sent to San Thome, besides an annual tax of 5 milreis (about £1 1s.) for his license, which may be cancelled at any time without compensation. The agents are forbidden to meddle directly or indirectly in native politics, or in the relations between the authorities and natives. They are expected to take all possible care in obtaining and recording information as to contracting labourers, to avoid illicit emigration, and to abstain from forcible or fraudulent enlistment. On these and other matters the Curators or other persons "exercising administrative functions," in whose presence duly authorised contracts are to be drawn up, are supposed to satisfy themselves, the fee for the same being in each case 1,500 reis (about 6s. 4d.).

Provision having been made for the transport of *serviçaes* from Angola to the islands and their distribution there, the later articles of this decree stipulate that, in addition to their proper feeding and housing, the natives shall have ample and efficient medical attendance and hospital accommodation, with crèches and nurses for all children under seven years of age ; that children under fourteen shall only be employed in picking fruit, looking after nursery gardens and poultry, domestic service and other light work ; that women and girls over fourteen shall only be employed on indoor and outdoor work, including portorage, "according to their strength" ; that boys under sixteen shall be exempt from "felling trees and shucking coffee" ; and that the minimum monthly wage of all adult males shall be 2,500 reis, and that of women 1,800 reis (about 10s. 8d. and 7s. 8d. respectively). Two-fifths of these wages, or of any larger amount contracted for, are to be paid monthly, the remaining three-fifths being reserved as a Repatriation Fund, lodged by the authorities in a Coffer of Labour and Emigration, with a view to any sums so funded being handed to him or her on arrival at the place of debarkation on the expiration of the five years'

service, unless the servçal chooses to renew his or her "contract" for "a second term," in which case the wages agreed upon in the old contract are to be augmented by 10 per cent., and bonuses on "accumulated wages" are to be paid every three months.

In its 'Memoire justificatif,' of 1906, which has been already quoted from, the Portuguese Government took credit to itself for the ideal arrangements of this Royal Decree. "The regulating laws," we are assured, "are, in theory and in practice, humanitarian in their principles, their methods and their results, and, in adjusting the work of the natives to the conditions of its colonial policy, the Government has not for a single moment forgotten its high duties as a Colonial Power, but, on the contrary has sought sincerely and loyally to fulfil those duties in the interests of civilisation and humanity, of which it has been, from the earliest times, the most valiant defender and champion." Unfortunately, that boast, like all the others, has not been justified."

Everything in the regulations appointed by the Royal Decree of 1903 which is to the advantage of the employers appears to have been fairly well enforced, and it would seem that, whenever the employers have had an intelligent regard for their own interests, they have also shown a prudent regard for the interests of their slaves—to the extent, at any rate, of endeavouring to keep alive and in working order, for at least the five years of the contract, the bondsmen and bondswomen whom, if the price bargained for by the official Emigration Agent in 1905 is a correct average, they had bought and paid for at the rate of 120 milreis (about £26) per head.\*

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\* A glowing account of the benevolent policy adopted on the estates owned by Senhor Monteiro de Mendonça, among the most extensive in San Thome, is given in 'The Boa Entrada Plantations,' translated by Lieut.-Colonel J. A. Wyllie, published last September, by way of answer to the protests made against slave-labour in the Portuguese islands. The largest property in San Thome is that of Count de Valle Flor, who in 1905 produced more than 4,000 tons of cocoa by the labour of over 3,000 servçaes; but on the Roça Boa Entrada 716 tons of cocoa were produced in 1904 by more than 600 natives, the production having been only 259 tons in 1891; and credit is taken for the importation of 1,166 labourers between 1890 and 1905, at a cost to the importers of 150,000 milreis (or about £20,000). It is admitted that in 1905, 85 out of the 600 died, so that of the 149 newcomers in that year more than half merely replaced the year's victims; but these mortalities are attributed mainly to alcoholism and geophagy, without its being deemed necessary to point out that the slaves in their compounds cannot drink more alcohol than their masters allow, and that the craze for earth-eating must be due to a desire to find some way

Everything in the provisions of the decree, however, which the estate owners find inconvenient, or from their point of view unnecessary, is systematically ignored. The Local Committee in San Thome which was intended to carry out the instructions of the Central Board in Lisbon, and to supply it with information as to the treatment of the natives and the requirements of the planters, has never been called into existence. Instead of applying to the Curator General for any additional labour that they need, the planters make their own arrangements direct with the Emigration Agents and obtain from them such consignments as they bargain for at the market rate for the time being, which, as has just been mentioned, was about £26 per head in 1905. The bargain being that the slaves shall be delivered in good health, any who can be proved to have been sickly or diseased on arrival, as is credibly reported to be of frequent occurrence, are allowed to die or are kept as damaged articles at a reduced price, and the deficiencies are made good by further importation. Many of the labourers receive much less than the two-fifths of the minimum wage assigned to them by the decree, and, as the proposed Repatriation Fund has never been established, nor any organisation for its custody, the three-fifths that should be set apart for the enrichment of the poor creatures in the event of their living out their five years of servitude and being restored to their homes or any part of Angola, have hitherto been retained by the planters.

None of those sent to the islands in accordance with the provisions of the 1903 decree of course will be entitled, if then alive, to repatriation before the summer of 1908 ; but it may be taken for granted that those who do survive will be compelled, as the surviving *serviçaes* brought

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out of the intolerable misery of those who indulge in it. Perhaps it would not be fair to take as a gauge of the accuracy of the compiler of this volume his statement that, among "the illustrious foreigners who have visited San Thome," was "the very president of the Aborigines Protection Society, who went there to inform himself at first hand of the horrible crimes of the slavers, and returned—terribly disappointed" (p. 11). This statement, it scarcely needs to be said, is as fabulous as is another made by Senhor A. de Almada Negreiros, to whom Senhor de Mendonça (p. 17) refers as "our distinguished countryman in Paris," in his recent work on 'Les Colonies Portugaises.' Here (p. 345), we are told that "M. Fox Bourne a envoyé aux îles de San Thome et Principe un délégué de l'Aborigines Protection Society, avec mission d'y faire une rigoureuse enquête philanthropique. Le verdict, agrémenté de gravures, était préparé d'avance. Il a fallu plus tard—on le verra—le déchirer ou le cacher." The same writer speaks of Mr. Nevinson as "ce voyageur mythique" whom "personne n'a jamais vu, ni dans Angola ni à San Thome" (p. 354).

over under earlier decrees have been compelled, to enter into fresh engagements—even if it is thought worth while to take so much trouble as that—with as little choice in the matter as they had when they were bought or captured in Angola and consigned to what is no better than lifelong slavery. As regards the children, although they are born in great numbers during their parents' captivity, and although, notwithstanding the death of a very large proportion in infancy, the majority live on, none of the crèches appointed for their benefit have been started, and they are left to grow up, if they can, in any way they can.

Mr. Nevinson's stay in San Thome on his way back to England in the autumn of 1905 was limited ; but his graphic account of what he saw there is in all important respects confirmed by information from other sources, and the Portuguese critics who denounce him are so unable to refute his statements that they chiefly limit their efforts to reckless assertion that he did not visit the island at all, and that his narrative is merely a wild romance.\* From his narrative a few illustrations of the working of the 1903 decree may be borrowed. The following are portions of his report of experiences on a voyage to San Thome in which some of his fellow-passengers were *serviçaes* whose forcible recruitment he watched while he was in Benguela. The voyage was in one of the steam vessels of the *Empreza Nacional*, which has the largest contract for the conveyance of such passengers.

" We were taking only 150 of them from Benguela ; but we gathered up other batches as we went along, so that finally we reached a lucrative cargo of 272, not counting babies. This was perhaps a rather larger number than usual, for the steamers, which play the part of mail-boats and slaveships both, go twice a month, and the number of slaves exported by them yearly has lately averaged a little under 4,000.

" The slaves are, of course, kept in the fore part of the ship. All day long they lie about the lower deck, among the horses, mules, cattle, sheep, monkeys, and other live-stock ; or they climb up to the fo'c's'le deck in hopes of getting a little breeze ; and it is there that the mothers chiefly lie beside their tiny babies. There is nothing to do. Hardly any one speaks, and over the faces of nearly all broods the look of dumb bewilderment that one sees

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\* Besides the statement which has been already cited, others to the same effect have been repeatedly made in letters to newspapers and other publications, principally by Senhor Negreiros, who is apparently a semi-official apologist for the cocoa-growing interest in Portugal.

in cattle crowded into trucks for the slaughter-market. Twice a day rations of mealie pap or brown beans are issued in big pots. Each pot is supplied with ten wooden spoons, and holds the food for ten slaves, who have to get as much of it as each can manage. The first-class passengers, leaning against the rail of the upper deck, look down upon the scene with interest and amusement. To them these slaves represent the secret of Portugal's greatness—such greatness as Portugal has.

“At sunset they are herded into a hold, the majority going down the hatchway stairs on their hands and knees. There they spread their sleeping-mats, and the hatch is shut down upon them till the following morning.....

“When we were anchored off Ambriz, a commotion suddenly arose on board, and the rumour ran that one of the slaves had jumped into the sea from the bow. Soon we could see his black head as he swam clear of the ship and struck out southward, apparently trusting to the current to bear him towards the coast. For he was a native of Ambriz, and knew what he was about. Already a boat had been hastily dropped into the water and was in pursuit, manned by two black men and a white. They rowed fast over the oily water, and the swimmer struggled on in vain. The chase lasted barely ten minutes, and they were upon him. Leaning over the side of the boat, they battered him with their oars and sticks till he was quiet. Then they dragged him into the boat, laid him along the bottom, and stretched out a piece of old sail over his nakedness, that the ladies might not be shocked. He was brought to the gangway and dragged, dripping and trembling, up the stairs. The doctor and the Government agent, who accompanies each shipload of slaves, took him down into the hold, and there he was chained up to a post or staple so that he might cause no trouble again.....

“On the eighth day after leaving Benguela we came in sight of San Thome.....The whole place smoked and steamed like a gigantic hothouse. In fact, it is a gigantic hothouse. As nearly as possible, it stands upon the Equator, the actual line passing through the volcanic rocks of its southern extremity. And even in the dry season, from April to October, it is perpetually soaked with moisture. The wet mist hardly ceases to hang among the hills and forest trees. The thick growth of the tropics covers the mountains almost to their summits, and every leaf of verdure drips with warm dew.

“The slaves on deck regarded the scene with almost complete apathy. Some of the men leaned against the bulwark and silently watched the points of the island as we passed. The women hardly stirred from their places. They were occupied with their babies, as usual, or lay about in the unbroken wretchedness of despair.

“Two girls of about fifteen or sixteen, evidently sisters, whom I had before noticed for a certain pathetic beauty, now sat huddled together

hand-in-hand, quietly crying. They were just the sort of girls that the planters select for their concubines, and I have little doubt that they are the concubines of the planters now. But they cried because they feared they would be separated when they came to land. In the confusion of casting anchor I stood by them unobserved, and in a low voice asked them a few questions in Umbandinu, which I had crammed up for the purpose. The answers were brief, in sobbing whispers; sometime by gestures only. The conversation ran like this: 'Why are you here?' 'We were sold to the white men.' 'Did you come of your own free will?' 'Of course not.' 'Where did you come from?' 'From Bihe.' 'Are you slaves or not?' 'Of course we are slaves.' 'Would you like to go back?' The delicate little brown hands were stretched out, palms downwards, and the crying began afresh.

"That night the slaves were left on board, but next morning (17th June) when I went down to the pier about nine o'clock, I found them being landed in two great lighters. One by one the men and women were dragged up on to the pier by their arms and loin-cloths and dumped down like bales of goods. There they sat in four lines till all were ready, and then, carrying their mats and babies, they were marched off in file to the Curator's house in the town beside the bay. Here they were driven through large iron gates into a courtyard and divided up into gangs according to the names of the planters who had requisitioned for them. When the parties were complete, they were put under the charge of gangers belonging to various plantations, and so they set out on foot upon the last stage of their journey."—('A Modern Slavery,' pp. 176, 177, 180, 181-184.)

The hardships endured by the slaves shipped nowadays from Angola to San Thome are undoubtedly much less than were those of which harrowing accounts were given by eye-witnesses of the tortures inflicted on the human cargoes sent from Portuguese and other settlements in Africa to North and South America in the eighteenth and earlier centuries, and it seems pretty certain that in most of the plantations on the islands in which they are forced to labour for the rest of their lives they are at least as well cared for as were the slaves of former times by the better sort of masters in the United States and West Indies. But they are slaves none the less.

Their treatment as slaves varies, of course, very considerably in accordance with the character and capacity of the several owners or managers and other conditions in the different plantations, which are here known as *roços*. But a general notion of this treatment may be drawn from Mr. Nevinson's account of a visit which he paid—"one Sunday, after driving some six or seven miles into the interior from the port of

**The Slavery in  
the Islands.**



San Thome"—to a *roça* that appears to be of average goodness or badness in its arrangements. He writes :—

"The road led through groves of the cocoa-tree, the gigantic 'cotton-tree,' breadfruits, palms, and many hard and useful woods which I did not know. For a great part of the distance the wild and untouched forest stood thick on both sides, and as we climbed into the mountains we looked down on unpenetrated glades, where parrots, monkeys and civet-cats are the chief inhabitants. The sides of the roads were thickly covered with moss and fern, and the high rocks and tree-tops were from time to time concealed by the soaking white mist which the people for some strange reason call 'flying-fish milk.' High up in the hills we came to a filthy village, where a few slaves were drearily lying about, full of the deadly rum that hardly even cheers. A few hundred yards farther up was the *roça* which owns the village and runs the rum-shop there for the benefit of the slaves and its own pocket.

"The buildings are arranged in a great quadrangle, with high walls all round and big gates that are locked at night. On one side stands the planter's house, and attached to it are the dwellings of the overseers or gangers, together with the quarters of such slaves as are employed for domestic purposes, whether as concubines or as domestic servants. On the other side stand the quarters of the ordinary slaves who labour on the plantation. They are built in long sheds, and in a few cases they are two stories high, but in most plantations only one. Some of the sheds are arranged like the dormitories in our barracks; sometimes the homes are almost or entirely isolated; sometimes, as in this *roça*, they are divided by partitions, like the stalls in a stable. At one end of the quadrangle, besides the magazines for the working and storage of the cocoa, there is a huge barn, which the slaves use as a kitchen, each family making its own little fire on the ground and cooking its rations separately, as the unconquerable habit of all natives is. At the other end of the quadrangle, sunk below the level of the fall of the hill, stands the hospital, with its male and female wards duly divided according to law.

"The centre of the quadrangle is occupied by great flat pans, paved with cement or stones, for the drying of the cocoa-beans. Within the largest of these enclosures the slaves are gathered two or three times a week to receive their rations of dried fish. At six o'clock on the afternoon of my visit they all assembled to the clanging of the bell, the grown-up slaves bringing large bundles of grass which they had gathered as part of their daily task, for the mules and cattle. They stood round the edges of the square in perfect silence. In the centre of the square at regular intervals stood the whity-brown gangers, leaning on their long sticks or flicking their boots with whips.

Beside them lay the large and savage dogs which prowl round the buildings at night to prevent the slaves escaping in the darkness.

“As it was Sunday afternoon, the slaves were called upon to enjoy the Sunday treat. First came the children one by one, and to each of them was given a little sup of wine from a pitcher. Then the square began slowly to move round in single file. Slabs of dried fish were given out as rations, and for the special Sunday treat each man or woman received two leaves of raw tobacco from one of the superintendent’s mistresses, or, if they preferred it, one leaf of tobacco and a sup of wine in a mug. Nearly all chose the two leaves of tobacco as the more lasting joy. When they had received their dole, they passed round the square again in single file, till all had made the circuit. From first to last not a single word was spoken. It was more like a military execution than a festival.”—(‘A Modern Slavery,’ pp. 192-194.)

On Sundays the *serviçaes* are supposed to work for only five hours, and they have at any rate leisure enough to spend their small allowance of wages in rum or such other palliatives to the wretchedness of their lives as their owners provide or permit. On other days their working hours are limited by regulation to nine, extending from 6 A.M. to 5.30 P.M., with intervals for rest and meals amounting to two and a half hours; but sundry occupations, such as gathering grass and firewood, generally detain them till about 7 P.M., when they are paraded for inspection. After that they may amuse themselves, if they can, until a 9 o’clock bell sends them to their sleeping quarters, from which they are summoned next morning at 5. The work imposed upon them, if not for the most part exceptionally hard, is irksome by reason of the climate, and altogether uncongenial. The chicotte and the palmatorium have to be freely used in keeping them at their duties, and the extent to which these instruments of torture are used depends solely on the temper of the slave-drivers. The victims have a right of appeal to the authorities; but, as a matter of fact, the authorities are, except in very rare cases, entirely out of their reach. They run away whenever opportunity occurs; but, if they do, they are generally soon captured, and their recklessness only brings upon them heavier sufferings than they sought to escape from.

Need more be said in evidence of the shameful conditions under which, as we are reminded by the British Consul at Loanda in his last-published report to our Foreign Office, the cocoa production of San Thome and Principe trebled in quantity and doubled in value in the ten years between 1897 and 1906? “There is plenty of scope,” says the

same informant, "for further expansion, and, if the same rapid progress that has marked the past is maintained, the industry in another ten years hence or less will attain the substantial figure of some £2,500,000 per annum" ('Diplomatic and Consular Reports,' No. 3928, p. 32).

Already between 4,000 and 6,000 Angola natives are torn from their homes each year and sent to the cocoa-growing islands, there to die in slavery when they can no longer be kept alive as slaves. Already, it is estimated, one-fifth of the world's supply of cocoa comes from this poisoned source, and it is admitted that about one-fourth of this slave-grown commodity is brought to England and here prepared for British consumption. How much more will this monstrous scandal be allowed to increase? How much longer will it be allowed to exist at all?

## VII.—PRESENT AND PRESSING QUESTIONS.

On 16th December, 1907, immediately after the return of the representatives of English cocoa manufacturers who had visited Lisbon in order to submit to the San Thome cocoa-growers and the Portuguese authorities the information contained in Mr. Burt's report, they sent out for publication a statement from which these sentences are extracted:—

**The English Cocoa Manufacturers' Protest.** "The report establishes the following facts:—

"(a) The large majority of Angola natives who are taken to San Thome are brought to the coast and shipped to the islands against their will, and therefore, when they allow themselves to be contracted, it is under the force of circumstances and not as a voluntary act.

"(b) The good Repatriation Laws are a dead letter.

"(c) There now take place innumerable 'offences against the person of the native,' which are the inevitable result of the present system, and which must continue until labour is made free in reality and not in name only.

"(d) The treatment of the native in the islands, at any rate on the large and best managed estates, is excellent; but, in spite of good food, healthy labour, and free medical treatment and hospitals, the death-rate among the natives is appallingly high, especially as it is the death-rate of a population consisting mainly of adults.

"(e) It appears from medical reports that most of the mortality is due to two diseases—anæmia and dysentery; complaints that are easily developed by people in a depressed mental condition. It is also admitted that the highest death-rate is among the newly arrived labourers, and this is exactly what might be expected, when it is remembered that these people are forcibly taken from their homes for work across the sea, without any hope of return."

The same document informs us that, the questions raised having been discussed with the Portuguese cocoa-growers, the latter published "a lengthy defence and statement," arriving at seven "conclusions." Of these the following alone appear to have any serious purport:—

**The Portuguese Cocoa-Growers' Proposals.** "(3) The Repatriation Fund, which now amounts to about £100,000, will, by the wish of the planters, be transferred to the Colonial Bank in San Thome, as agents of the State, on 31st December, 1907, to be administered by the local Committee of Emigration under the superintendence of the Government. Each repatriated labourer will receive about £18 upon landing in Angola. Those who wish to renew their contract will receive 10 per cent. increase in wages, and their capital (£18) will be returned to them in quarterly instalments of 6 per cent. A new Repatriation Fund will then be started for

each labourer. The first contracts of service made under the law of January, 1903, will expire in the first half of the year 1908.....

"(5) It is stated that the Colonial Minister is sending to Angola on 7th January, 1908, his 'Chief of Staff' to personally investigate any irregularities that are found to exist in the present system of recruiting.

"(6) The Portuguese Government has recently taken action, and is still proceeding in an energetic and efficacious manner to establish obedience to the law in those regions in Angola formerly outside its control."

In the first of the above "conclusions," it will be noticed, the San Thome cocoa-growers take on themselves the responsibility of carrying out provisions of the Royal Decree of January, 1903, which the Portuguese Government has never—so far as the public has been informed—taken the least trouble to enforce. Unless it be quite recently, no Repatriation Fund has been opened, although it may be correct to say that the fund, were it in existence, should "now amount to about £100,000"; nor does it appear that any "local Committee of Emigration under the superintendence of the Government" has been set up to administer the fund as from 31st December 1907. What grounds have we for supposing that, even had not the recent assassination of King Carlos and overthrow of the Franco Ministry intervened, the San Thome cocoa-growers, in fulfilment of their promises, would have been willing to pay up the £100,000 now admittedly due from them to the Repatriation Fund,\* or that they could or would have compelled the Portuguese Government to tardily comply with the obligations imposed upon it by the decree of 1903 as regards either the appointment of a local Committee in San Thome or any other of the tasks assigned to it as guardian of the interests of the Angola natives?

The English cocoa manufacturers' statement ends with these sentences:—

"For several months the British Foreign Office has been following up this subject, and has made a definite representation to the Portuguese Government through Sir Francis Villiers, the **The Portuguese Government's Promises.** They have received promises of substantial reforms, though at present full particulars are not available.

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\* It may be pointed out, however, that, as a matter of fact, there are not likely when the five years are completed to be any, or more than a very few, *serviçaes* in the islands alive or allowed to claim from the authorities the munificent sum of "about £18" apiece which it is proposed to hand over to each repatriated native deposited in Angola, as the three-fifths of his wages for "voluntary" slavery on the cocoa plantations.

“Through the kind offices of Sir Francis Villiers, in Lisbon, a personal interview with the Colonial Minister, Senhor Ornellas, was granted to the representatives of the English cocoa manufactures, in which he personally assured them of his intention to carry out immediate reform, and authorised the publication of the following statement:—‘The Government intends at once to make a thorough investigation of the whole subject in Angola, with the intention of replacing the present irresponsible recruiting agents by a proper Government system, as far as possible on the lines employed with success in Mozambique.’ Also:—‘The system of recruiting will be such that it will also serve as a means of repatriation, and make it practicable for the native to return to his home in the interior.’

“It is cause for congratulation that the representations of the British Government have been thus promptly responded to by the Portuguese Ministry, and that the planters have so readily promised their co-operation. The matter is now left in the hands of the Foreign Office, with confidence in the definite pledge of the Portuguese Government that before long reforms of lasting benefit will be instituted for the native of Angola.”

These pledges, it must not be forgotten, were given by a Portuguese Government now deposed and utterly discredited in Lisbon, and, in so far as there is any value in them, they need adoption by Ministers in office before they can be of any efficacy.\* But what is their real value, if any?

All that is promised is that—while the cocoa-growers express their readiness to carry out the Portuguese Government’s hitherto neglected duties as regards creation of the Repatriation Fund, which, it is admitted, ought now to amount to some £100,000—the Portuguese Government itself will take steps with a view to “replacing the present irresponsible recruiting agents by a proper Government system,” which, somewhat on the lines of the recruiting system in Mozambique, “will also serve as a means of repatriation, and make it practicable for the native to return to his home in the interior.”

As there is no evidence of the willingness of either the late or the present Portuguese Government to insist on the measures proposed by the cocoa-growers, in very partial fulfilment of the provisions of the Royal Decree of 1903, these proposals are scarcely worth considering ;

\* In answer to inquiry at the Foreign Office, I was informed on 30th March that the “trusted official” whose departure from Lisbon for Angola had been promised for 7th January, had not yet apparently started on his mission, and that the details asked for had not been received as to the new recruiting arrangements which had been foreshadowed.

but, let it be understood, the proposals, in themselves misleading, take no account of several important stipulations of the decree which, like the arrangements for repatriation, have been persistently ignored and defied both by the cocoa-growers and by the authorities.

Cruel, however, as is the treatment of the four or five or more thousands of natives sent every year to slave and die in the islands, it is not on the islands but on the mainland that drastic reforms are especially called for, as the only means of stamping out the appalling slave trade to which the chief incentive is the supply of forced labour for use in the islands—and which would rapidly decrease, and might ultimately disappear altogether, if the sources of that supply were cut off. The promises to this end which are attributed to the Portuguese Government seem to be quite illusory.

What advantage—other than the indefinite procrastination which is presumably the one thing aimed at—can result from “a thorough investigation of the whole subject in Angola,” with “intention” of superseding “the present irresponsible recruiting agents,” when these recruiting agents are only irresponsible or unsatisfactory through the favour and preference of the authorities? The agents, though not directly appointed by the provincial governors or magistrates, are licensed by them subject to the tolerably stringent conditions imposed by the decree of 1903, and can be summarily deprived of their licences for misconduct. The governors and magistrates, moreover, who are accredited servants of the State, as well as the curators and their delegates, who are the nominees of the Central Emigration Labour Board in Lisbon, having the Director-General of the Colonies or his delegate for its official president, are, to say the least, as responsible for the admitted wrongdoing as are the licensed agents.

Undoubtedly the recruiting system in force in Mozambique is much better than that prevailing in Angola. This is patent to all who know anything of the rules laid down for its conduct or of the methods actually adopted; and the superiority is fully recognised by the Portuguese authorities. But, as the authorities can scarcely fail to be aware, it is not possible for the one policy to be assimilated to the other. This was briefly pointed out in the two sentences of a letter addressed by the Committee of the Aborigines Protection Society to Sir Edward Grey on 19th February, 1908, which, with its concluding paragraph, are here quoted:—

**Mozambique and  
Angola Recruiting.**

"In Mozambique nearly all the labour now recruited is obtained by arrangement with the native chiefs, who allow or compel certain of their tribesmen to go to the Transvaal and elsewhere for comparatively short periods, within comparatively easy reach of their homes; and that this arrangement is on the whole satisfactory to the contracted labourers is clearly shown by the fact that the majority of them, after being restored to their own homes, renew their engagements from time to time. In Angola, as has been acknowledged by His Majesty's consuls and other officials, most of the natives collected for conveyance to the islands are obtained by force or barter from districts far in the interior, thence deported as slaves to Benguela or other ports, and there converted into *serviçaes* before shipment to the islands from which few, if any, ever return.

"It is submitted that nothing less than a complete abandonment of this survival of slave trading and slavery will meet the requirements of the case, and the Committee earnestly repeats its appeal to His Majesty's Government for such representations to the Government of Portugal as may lead to fulfilment of its treaty obligations."

Appeal is now made also to all British subjects to whom the honour of their country is dear, and who inherit their forefathers' resentment of slave trading and slavery, to use their influence with His Majesty's Government in urging upon it a duty as great as it was seventy years ago, when the first of the late Queen Victoria's Prime Ministers counselled her to insist on the abandonment of a traffic that caused her to be "extremely indignant," and on the adoption of a policy that would "satisfy England and exonerate Portugal from that reproach under which she labours." The grounds for reproach are surely, to say the least, as grave, and the need for reforms is as great, in 1908 as they were in 1838.



## APPENDIX.

THE following is the English text of a memorial addressed to the President of the International Conference which is to meet at Brussels on 28th April :—

“Broadway Chambers, Westminster, London, 21st April, 1908.

“Sir,—In anticipation of the assembling of the International Conference that is about to be held for revision of the Articles of the Brussels General Act of 1892 which relate to the supply of European arms and ammunition to natives of Africa, we beg very respectfully, on behalf of the Aborigines Protection Society, to submit through you, for the consideration of the delegates taking part in the Conference, the following remarks and suggestions on the subject before them.

### A Memorial to the Conference.

“2. In an appeal which was addressed by our Society on 16th December, 1889, to the delegates at the Conference then discussing the terms that were ultimately embodied in the General Act of 1892, it was urged that it is ‘essential to the well-being of the natives of Africa that the supply to them of European fire-arms and other munitions of war should, as far as possible, be absolutely forbidden.’ Our Society, therefore, heartily welcomed the decisions of the Conference, detailed in Articles VIII.

to XIV. of its General Act, which appointed a rigid control over this traffic within a zone marked out, on the ground that ‘the experience of all nations who have intercourse with Africa has shown the pernicious and preponderating part played by fire-arms in slave-trade operations as well as in internal wars between the native tribes, and the same experience has clearly proved that the preservation of the African populations, whose existence it is the express wish of the Powers to safeguard, is a radical impossibility if restrictive measures against the trade in fire-arms and ammunition are not established.’

### The Provisions of 1892.

“3. Unfortunately the experience of the past sixteen years has shown that, notwithstanding the humane provisions of the Brussels Act of 1892, and even to some extent in consequence of those provisions, the slaughter and ruin brought upon Central African

### Their Inadequacy.

natives by the introduction and employment among them of European implements of war have been during these sixteen years, and still are, greater in quantity, and in some respects more heinous in character, than they were in former times. Neither the worst horrors of the slave trade carried on by European and Christian nations to meet the demand for labourers in their American and West Indian colonies in the sixteenth and subsequent centuries,

nor those of the later slave trade carried on chiefly by Arab adventurers which was at its height less than half a century ago, surpassed the evils that have taken fresh shape and vigour in our own day.

“4. The most stupendous and egregious example of the failure of the Articles of the Brussels Act which deal with the traffic in arms and ammunition to achieve the avowed objects of their authors appears in the extensive use that is now made of these instruments of oppression and destruction in the enforced collection of rubber and other marketable commodities in the territories of the Congo State. But like, if less flagrant, abuses occur in other parts of Central Africa, extending both to the western and the eastern shores of the continent, responsibility for which attaches to other signatories to the Brussels Act besides the representatives of the Congo State. In support of this statement, we take the liberty of inviting the attention of the delegates to the evidence furnished in the pamphlet, entitled ‘Slave Traffic in Portuguese Africa,’ which is offered as an annex to the present memorial.

“5. As to the nature of that evidence, notable illustration is furnished by a British Parliamentary Paper, ‘Africa, No. 1 (1908),’ in which Acting Vice-Consul Beak, sets forth his experiences and observations during an official visit paid by him to Katanga between May and September, 1907. In his report Mr. Beak describes the state of affairs in that and adjacent parts of Congo State territory, and in the neighbouring district, stretching westward to Lake Dilolo and beyond, which is included in the Portuguese province of Angola, and which has long been a famous centre for the collection of slaves by Angola traders and their native allies, chiefly of the Mabundu tribe. Speaking of the survivors and successors of the Batetela and other mutineers from Congo rule in 1895, of whom he found many in Katanga last July, Mr. Beak says: ‘The local official estimate, which I believe to be exaggerated, of the numbers of the revoltés is from 7,000 to 8,000, and they are said to possess 5,000 modern rifles, for which they have ammunition in large quantities. The chief occupation of these revoltés is slave raiding. The original revoltés decamped with their Albinis only. They now possess modern weapons of all descriptions, *e.g.*, Express rifles, Winchester repeaters, Mausers, &c., and machinery for making cartridges. They capture more slaves than they can possibly require; they must, therefore, have a market for them. The Mabundu introduce guns and powder into the country.....The raids of the revoltés are very extensive, and, with the exception of small areas in the neighbourhood of one or two white stations, from Lake Dilolo in the south to Katobwe in the north, a stretch of country some 200 miles from east to west appears to have been

**Arms Traffic and  
Slave Traffic.**

devastated by them. From all accounts their numbers show no diminution, and their supply of firearms and ammunition is well maintained.....The revoltés, left pretty much to themselves, except for periodical ineffective expeditions, have hitherto confined themselves to slave-raiding on the west of the Lualaba. But the area of their raids has year by year gradually increased, while their camps have formed a refuge for the malcontents of the Katanga territory. They may at any moment assume the offensive, and in this event a movement hitherto limited in its operations might become a source of positive danger.'

"6. The foregoing extract from a British Consular Report, dated 6th September, 1907, confirms the truth of earlier official and unofficial statements as to the wholesale abuse of the stipulations of the Brussels Conference as regards both the improper supply of arms and ammunition to natives of Africa, and also the use made of them in slave raiding. Similar abuses exist on the eastern and northern sides of Central Africa, as well as in other parts; and, although on the eastern side the evil is now being to some extent reduced through the vigilance of the European authorities, it is manifestly increasing on the northern side, especially in the Wadai district of French Sudan and in the Darfur district of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. From the two latter districts it appears that thousands of slaves are procured each year, by help of weapons of war illegally introduced into the country for conveyance across the desert to Tripoli, most of them being thence shipped to Constantinople and other Turkish markets.

"7. But it is on the southern side of Central Africa, and principally within the area referred to in Mr. Beak's report, that the evil is greatest, and his description clearly indicates its nature and enormity. With the tolerance, if not with the approval, of representatives of the Congo Government, large portions of its Kasai and Katanga provinces are now, and have been for many years, tyrannised over by the survivors and successors of savages who had been freely supplied with arms and trained as soldiers or auxiliaries of the State, originally and ostensibly for the extension and upholding of its control over unarmed natives, but who soon threw off the yoke of the State to become marauders on their own account. Well supplied from the first with European weapons of the sort which the Brussels Conference aimed at withholding from the use of natives, these revoltés, including the many who have joined the actual mutineers in recent years, have had no difficulty in obtaining all the additional weapons they require, partly through illicit access to the stores of the Congo State, but chiefly from West Angola traders, who, with the sanction and encouragement of the Portuguese authorities, periodically convey into the interior large cargoes of arms and ammunition, together with other articles of commerce, to be exchanged for the slaves collected with a view to such barter in the neighbourhood of Lake Dilolo or

in nearer markets. Apart from the growing dangers to the maintenance of orderly government in Central Africa which, as Mr. Beak points out in his report, are incident to this shameless defiance of the provisions of the Brussels General Act, its immediate results appear in the vast numbers of unfortunate natives—estimated at from 15,000 to 30,000 every year—who are torn from their homes and forcibly taken, avowedly as slaves, to Bihe and other markets, where they are nominally ‘ransomed’ by agents of the Portuguese Government, and disposed of as *serviçaes*, either for compulsory labour in Angola or for shipment to the islands of San Thome and Principe.

“8. It is more particularly against the illegal traffic in arms and ammunition, in furtherance of the equally illegal traffic in slaves, both of which still prevail on the contiguous borderlands of Portuguese Angola and the Congo

**An Appeal for Reforms.**

State, that the Aborigines Protection Society protests, and its earnest appeal to the forthcoming Conference is that adequate arrangements for suppressing this traffic may be adopted and enforced by the Powers responsible for them.

“9. Our Society deplores the development in recent years of the policy of employing large armies of uncivilised natives, trained in the use of European weapons of war and under European officers, in coercing other and more or less defenceless natives while at the same time, endeavouring to deprive these latter of the means necessary for their legitimate resistance of oppression. This, it submits, is a policy altogether at variance with ‘the preservation of the African populations whose existence it is the express wish of the Powers to safeguard.’ Here, however, it desires more especially to call attention to the inefficiency of the stipulations of Article IX. of the Brussels Act as regards the supply of European weapons for manifestly illegitimate use. This Article provides that, ‘independently of the measures directly taken by Governments for the arming of the public force and the organisation of their defence’—and with a few ‘individual exceptions for persons affording sufficient guarantees that the arms and ammunition delivered to them will not be given, sold or assigned to third persons,’ and the like—no ‘arms of precision such as rifles, magazine-guns, or breech-loaders, their cartridges, caps, or other ammunition intended for them,’ shall be allowed to circulate in any part of the zone of prohibition prescribed by the Act. It also provides, as regards ‘flint-lock guns, with unrifled barrels, and common gunpowders, called trade powders,’ that ‘the local authorities shall determine the regions in which these arms and ammunition may be sold,’ at the same time directing that ‘the regions infected by the slave trade shall always be excluded. Were these stipulations complied with, it is submitted that it would not be possible for traffic in arms and ammunition of any sort to be carried on in regions ‘infected by the slave trade,’ and that this trade would be practically

exterminated as regards the capture or purchase of natives to be deported to other parts of Africa, and would also be very considerably reduced, if not altogether ruined, as regards the relations of natives with one another.

“10. Article X. of the Brussels Act directs that ‘the Governments shall take all measures they may deem necessary to insure as complete a fulfilment as possible of the provisions respecting the importation, the sale and the transport of fire-arms and ammunition, as well as to prevent the entry or exit thereof by their inland frontiers, or passage thereof to regions where the slave trade is rife’; and by Articles XI. to XIV. the Powers having territorial possessions within the zone of prohibition bind themselves to make in their respective legislatures the arrangements necessary for fulfilment of their obligations under the Act, and to co-operate with one another in endeavouring to attain the common objects aimed at. Those objects have not yet been attained, and experience has proved that, together with such strengthening as may be practicable of stipulations already agreed upon, further and really binding conditions ought to be laid down for securing fulfilment of the obligations assumed by all the Powers holding territory in the portions of Africa in which the Brussels Conference interested itself.

“11. It is the prayer of the Aborigines Protection Society that the representatives of the several Governments taking part in the Conference about to be held will adopt such measures as may rescue the unfortunate natives of the continent from the additional disasters brought upon them, in aggravation of the consequences of their own misdeeds, by their being allowed, encouraged, or compelled to make use of the European implements of war, which, according to the words of the Act of 1892, render ‘the preservation of the African populations, whose existence it is the express wish of the Powers to safeguard, a radical impossibility.’

“We have the honour to be, Sir,

“Your most obedient servants,

W. BRAMPTON GURDON, *President.*

CHARLES W. DILKE.

HENRY COTTON.

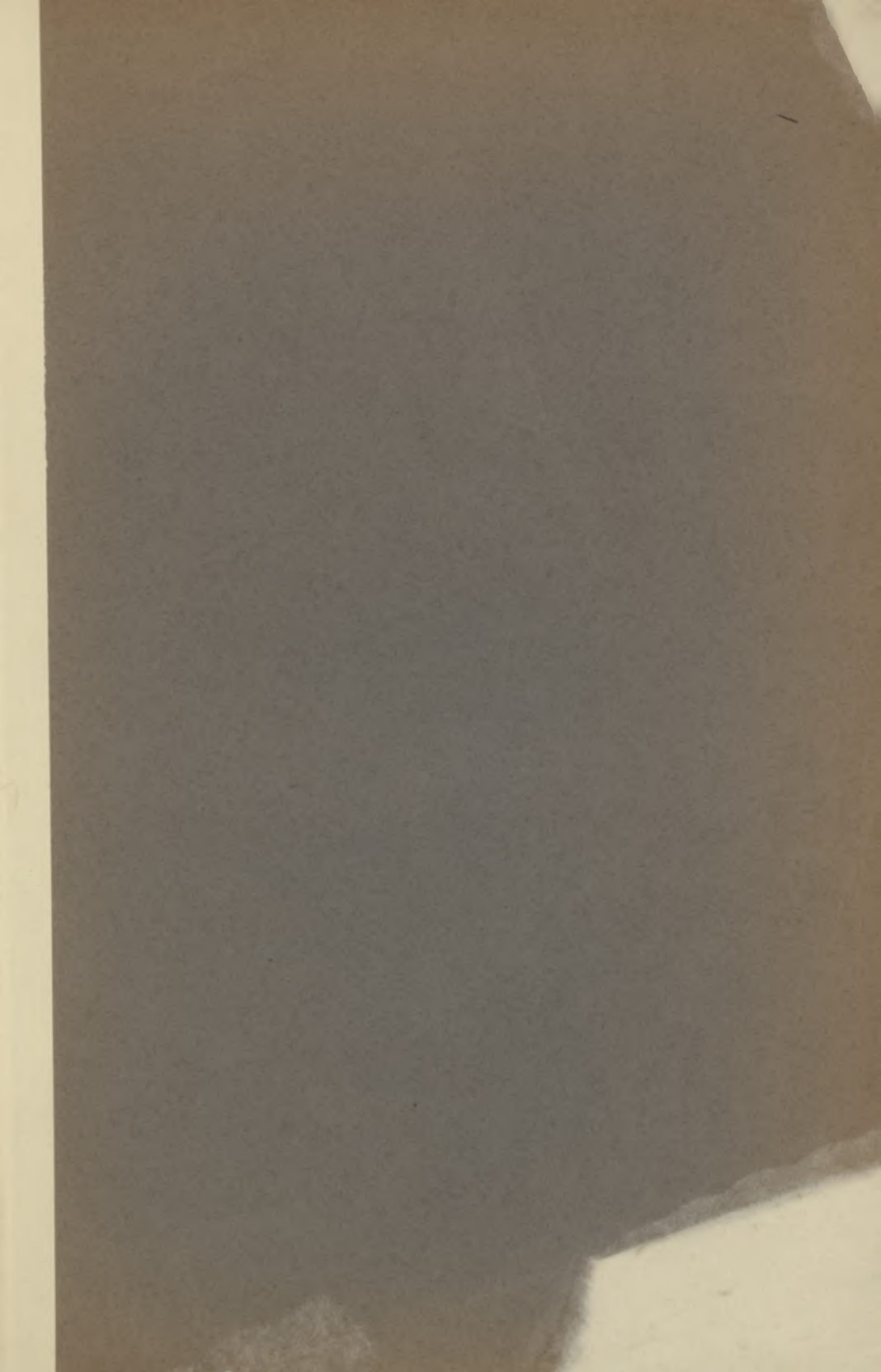
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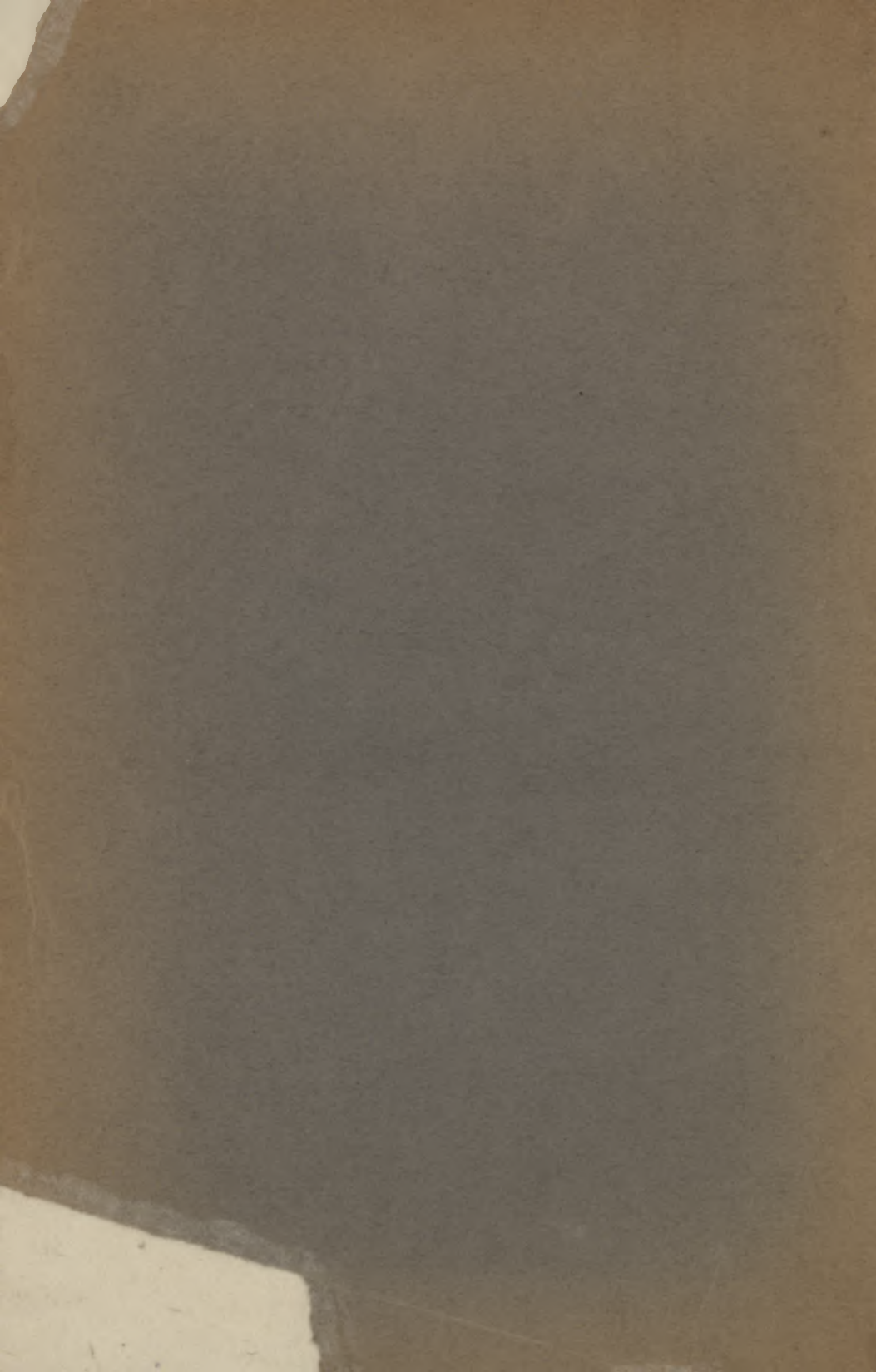
E. W. BROOKS, *Treasurer.*

H. R. FOX BOURNE, *Secretary.*”





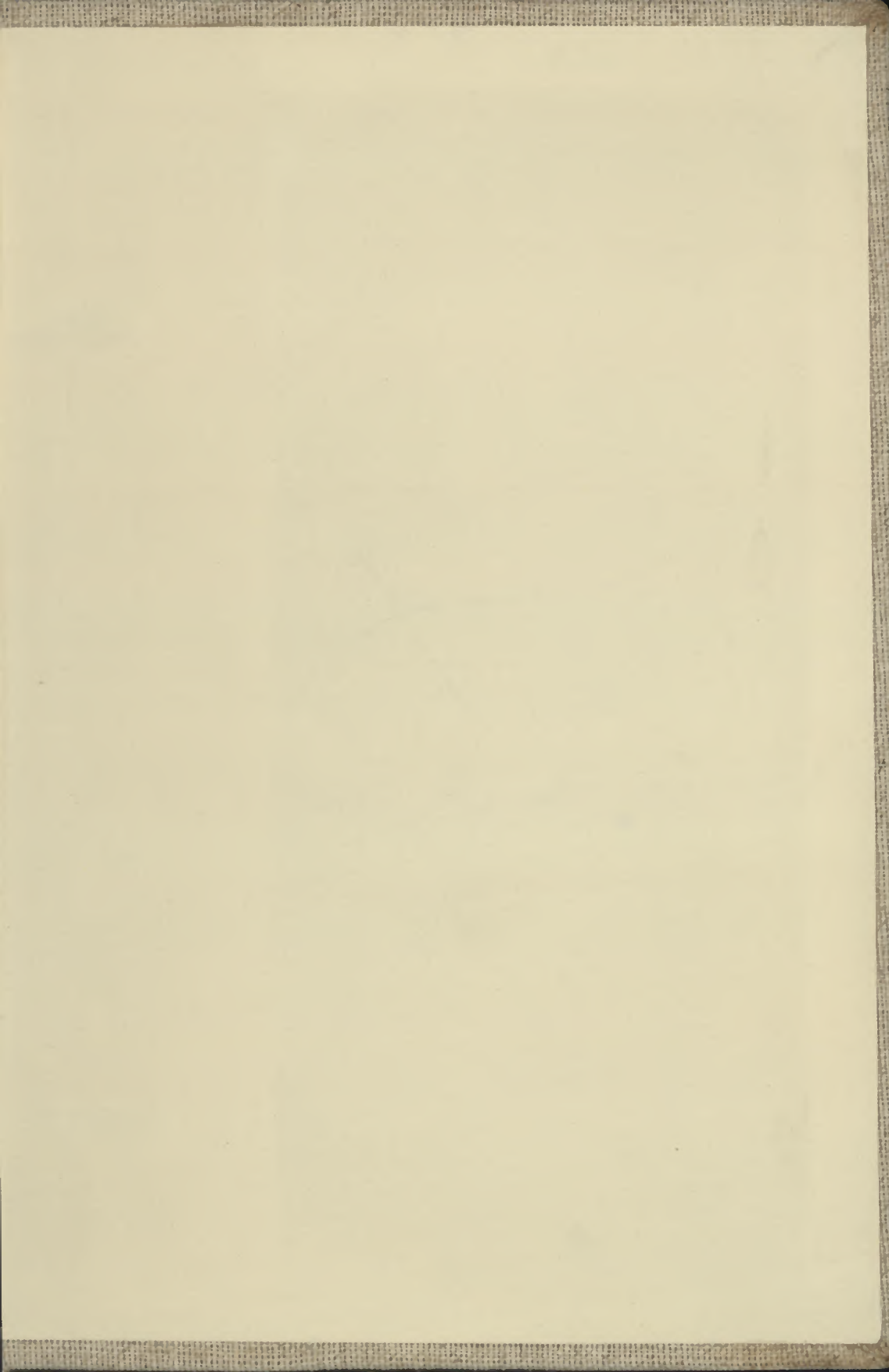












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