

THE COLONIAL PROBLEM

Economic and Political Aspects.

By

Dr. ABDEL HAMID KHALED.

University of Alexandria.

The colonial problem which confronted the statesmen in the recent years did not assume its modern form till the end of the eighteenth century ; but imperialism—the parent of this problem—is as old as history. In the earliest times imperialism—which I define as the conquest and rule by a sovereign of peoples alien in race, religion, language, culture, and inhabiting a different territory, or who are characterised by any combination of these or any other factors which makes for group consciousness—in the earliest times imperialism was probably motivated by the instinct for aggrandizement and thirst for power, although economic factors, too, may have played a role. The earliest records of antiquity speak of attempts by kings to conquer alien territory and to impose their rule upon weak neighbors. Lugal-zaggizi, king of Umma and Uruk, and Sargon I, king of Akkad, carried on imperialist wars in about 2800 B.C., although neither Sargon nor his great successor Naram-Sin attempted to rule the conquered colonies by means of appointed officials (1). It was left for Egypt to invent a system of direct rule, although she seems to have preferred, as did Rome later, and Britain still later, government by “indirect rule”. Anyway, the history of the tribes and groups in the valley of the Nile during the fourth and third milleniums revolves largely around the continuous struggle for supremacy between the south, led for a large part of the period by Thebes,

(1) Rostovzeff, *A History of the Ancient World*, I, 27 ff.

and the north, whose center of gravity was mainly at Memphis. Imperialism received a powerful stimulus during the long reign of Thutmose III (1501-1447 B.C.) and his successors Amenhotep II (1447-1420 B.C.) Thutmose IV (1420-1412 B.C.) and Amenhotep III (1412-1376 B.C.). These great rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty waged numerous wars in Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, and Nubia and governed them as tributary subject provinces. "To assure the fidelity of these kingdoms, strong Egyptian garrisons, commanded by Egyptian generals, were stationed at important centers" (2), and Thutmose III compelled Cyprus and the federation of Cretan cities to be either his allies or his dependents. Even little Judea, weak and itself often at the mercy of the more powerful states on the north, east and south, did not escape imperialist ambitions.

Yet it was not till the torch of civilization was carried to the northern shores of the Mediterranean that imperialism assumed a pattern bearing some resemblance to its modern forms. Eastern imperialism revolved almost entirely around the dynastic rivalries and personal ambitions of royal heads.

The tribute collected from the conquered peoples went to swell the royal coffers. But with the emergence of Greek imperialism in the fifth century B.C., and especially when Rome became mistress of the Mediterranean and the lands beyond, imperialism for the first time assumed objective form as a state policy, intended to advance the power, prestige and wealth of the State. There is an almost modern ring in the economic and military policies of the Greek imperialists (3). Their methods of colonization constituted a great advance over

(2) Rostovzeff, *op. cit.*, 77.

(3) Ferguson, *Greek Imperialism*. Cf. Pericle's Funeral Oration, which shows that the imperialist basis of the catastrophic Peloponnesian war (431-404 B.C.)—catastrophic alike to the victor as to the vanquished—was fully recognised by the chief actors in the tragedy. "And if our remote ancestors deserve praise," the Athenian statesman said, "much more do our own fathers, who added to their inheritance the empire which we now possess, and spared no pains to be able to leave their acquisitions to us of the present generation. Lastly, there are few parts of our dominions which have not been augmented by those of us..., while the mother country has been furnished by us with everything that can enable her to depend on her own resources whether for war or for peace." (Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 103.)

anything hitherto known (4) ; their imperial policies were built on sound strategic considerations.

It would take us much too far afield to attempt here even a brief survey of Greek and Roman imperialism.

Such a survey would mean nothing less than a history of those peoples and of almost every one of their innumerable wars. Every foreign war—and perhaps even the Servile Wars—was in the final analysis a war for imperial dominion (5). The Roman social, economic and political structure was built on imperialism, and without the profits from this political policy the internal structure would not have been able to survive. The constant flow of tribute in money and materials, from the conquered provinces was essential if the ruling class was to maintain itself in power and if the proletariat was to be kept contented. Indeed, there is more similarity between the Roman and British empires than the Earl of Cromer admitted in his famous lecture (6).

Political and economic imperialism came to an end with the destruction of Rome. For five or six centuries Europe was in far too chaotic a condition to attempt the subjugation of alien peoples. During those centuries Europe was kept busy by its efforts to reorganize itself and by the need to absorb the new cultural currents and new peoples which had swept in from the northeast and from the south. Yet those centuries are not without importance in the history of imperialism.

Christianity conquered Europe, and Christianity, in contrast to the religions of antiquity, was a missionary religion. While this missionary religion was spreading in the West, another missionary religion emerged in the East. Islam was born during the first part of the seventh century ; and within less than a hundred years after the death of Mohammed in 632 A.D., the Faithful, propelled by a combination of political, economic and—a factor

(4) Morris, *A History of Colonization*, I.

(5) Jones, *Roman Empire*; Arnold, *Roman Provincial Administration*; Rostovtzeff, *An Economic and Social History of the Roman Empire*.

(6) Cromer, *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*.

not to be overlooked—religious motives, had conquered a vast empire extending from the Indus to the Atlantic. Religion as a cause of imperialism was something new in the long history of conquest and exploitation ; it was to give color to the whole imperialist movement of the future.

The great geographical discoveries at the end of the fifteenth century brought about a revival in political and economic imperialism, and with it a recrudescence of imperialist wars on a scale greater than any hitherto known (7). There is no need to review here the explorations and discoveries of this amazing period ; one needs only to compare the map of Fra Mauro (1459) with that of Schoner (1523) or with Mercator's fascinating map (1587) to see graphically the vast progress made almost within a lifetime.

Portugal and Spain emerged as the leading powers in Christendom. Portuguese traders and sailors dominated the East and established colonies in the new world ; Spain dominated Central and South America. The division of the world between the two Iberian kingdoms was confirmed in 1493 by the Papal Bull which drew a line of demarcation between their respective imperial spheres.

It is difficult to exaggerate the significance of this reawakening of European imperialism. With the exception of the ineffectual and futile Crusades, Europe had shown no marked expansionist tendencies till the end of the 15th century. Then, for the first time since the days of the Roman Empire, Europe began a career of adventure that has continued to this day. And new technological discoveries coupled with the growing power of centralized national states enabled it to prosecute imperial policies with a vigor and in a scope undreamt of by the ancient rulers on the banks of the Tiber. The nature of imperialism had changed too—unfortunately for the worse. Like their imperial predecessors in ancient times, the new imperialists were not content to permit the conquered peoples to retain their

(7) Cf. Muir, *The Expansion of Europe*; Moon, *Imperialism and World Politics*; *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*; Prescott, *The Conquest of Peru and Mexico*; Johnston, *The Colonization of Africa*; *Cambridge History of India*.

indigenous cultures, religions and political patterns. The Iberian imperialists combined the traditional lust for booty with medieval religious fanaticism, thus starting a new type of imperialism of which the world was to see more during the succeeding centuries.

The conquest of Portugal in 1580 by Phillip II turned Spain into a colossus straddling a vastly expanded world ; and it was inevitable that the national states that were gradually coalescing on the north should sooner or later become restive under Spanish domination and arrogance. When the challenge came, the Iberian empires were found to be more vulnerable than their outward brilliance had indicated. Their power rested not on firmly implanted colonies of settlers and progressive industries, but on stolen precious metals, which were used for unproductive purposes and left the country almost as soon as they arrived. "The surprising thing is not," as Ramsay Muir has remarked, "that, the Spanish Empire should have fallen into an early decrepitude, but that it should have shown such comparative vigour, tenacity and power of expansion as it actually exhibited" (8). The courage and pertinacity of individual Spaniards did much to keep alive the connection with the American and other colonies ; but no amount of personal daring could overcome the diseases that were eating away Spanish society ; and with the destruction of Spanish sea power by the loss of the Great Armada in 1588, the Iberian phase of European imperialism came to a rapid and inglorious end.

When the scepter fell from Spanish hands, no other European state was sufficiently powerful to seize it ; and the arena was thus opened for a number of minor competitors for empire, who soon began a life and death struggle for supremacy among themselves, which was to last fully three centuries. Dozens of major and minor wars were fought during the merciless imperialistic struggles—wars that raged over the whole world, and embraced, at one time or another, all the inhabitants of the earth. Millions of men and women and children lost their lives in those conflicts in Asia, Africa and America and on

(8) Muir, *op. cit.*, 19.

innumerable European battlefields; whole countrysides were devastated; villages and cities were destroyed, and the civilizing work of men was repeatedly undone. European powers did not even scruple to use savages against Christian Imperial rivals, and slight regard was paid to the customary laws of peace or war.

The Dutch enjoyed a number of advantages during the first part of the struggle for world imperial supremacy. Capitalism had developed there more than anywhere else; a brisk manufacture of woolen goods and articles had grown up (9), the Dutch merchant marine was second to none, and Dutch national consciousness had been sharpened during the long struggle against Spanish tyranny. It was during this period that two trading corporations enjoying the financial support of the States General were to establish Dutch hegemony in East and West after a protracted and bitter struggle, with no quarter given, against the Spaniards and Portuguese.

The Company of the East Indies planted trading stations at the Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius, the Spice Island, Ceylon and Malayan Archipelago; before long it became the paramount power in Far Eastern waters. The Company administered its trade monopoly as despotically as the Spaniards and expelled all rivals, including the British who had been its allies against the Portuguese. At the same time the Company of the West Indies carried on a similar struggle against the Portuguese in the Americas, during which Northern Brazil was conquered (1624), various islands were occupied, and New Netherlands was established.

Dutch supremacy was not to last, and by 1660 decline had set in. British and French buccaneers preyed upon the Dutch as the latter had once preyed on the Spanish and Portuguese; British and French traders and colonizers gradually succeeded in establishing themselves in various parts of the world where the Dutch had attempted to maintain their monopoly. It was not long before the French had built an empire in many ways more solid than that of their rivals. French colonies in the

(9) Cf. Pirenne, *Medieval Cities*.

New World were firmly entrenched and well-defended, and their trading stations in India grew in importance and power. But this period—the third in the history of modern European imperialism, lasting from about 1660 to the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) saw also the beginning of the long drawn out duel between Britain and France, which was to continue, with short interruptions, until 1815.

Cromwell, for all his religious fanaticism, read the signs of the times far better than many a worldly politician. Realizing that power was rapidly passing from the Dutch to the French, Cromwell hastened to make peace with England's former enemies to turn against the latter. At the same time, the British dictator launched an unprovoked, and unsuccessful, attack on the Spanish island of Hispaniola, but he did succeed in seizing Jamaica (1655). With marvellous impartiality, the British then fought two wars against the Dutch, which led to the conquest of New Netherlands (1667). But the French were not forgotten. It was during this period that the British occupied Gibraltar, Newfoundland, Acadia, the great furbearing regions about the Hudson Bay and the French half of St. Kitts Island. Moreover, the East India Company was gradually consolidating its position in India and preparing itself for the decisive struggle that was yet to come.

The Peace of Utrecht, as might have been foreseen, did not lay the basis for a durable peace. On the contrary, it was no more than a breathing spell in the Anglo-French duel for world empire, which was soon to begin in earnest. During the first part of the ensuing struggle, a number of small wars—the War for Jenkins' Ear and the War for the Austrian Succession (1740-48)—proved indecisive. Although England won some victories in North America, and British ships inflicted heavy damages on the Spaniards, Britain emerged from this phase of struggle without significant additions of territory.

Not until the outbreak of the seven Years' War in 1756 was the position of the contestants to undergo a radical change. During 1756-63, however, the British scored a series of brilliant victories in America and in the East; French territories were overrun; the French flag was all but swept off the seas; and the French colonial empire collapsed like a house of cards.

Canada, India, and a number of small islands now came under the domination of Britain, which emerged from the war without a serious imperial rival.

The French, however, showed no intention of leaving the arena. Defeated in the imperial race, in which they were handicapped by the lack of an adequate navy, they decided to strengthen their power on the Continent, and in the meanwhile to bide their time and wait. And time was to present them with new opportunities for inflicting serious wounds upon their hereditary enemy. In 1776 the rebellion of the North American colonies broke out; the French were not slow in coming to their aid. Soon the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars made the French the paramount power on the continent. Obviously, the British with their traditional balance of power policy could not afford to permit a French-dominated Europe, and the old struggle assumed a new form. The British fought French domination of the European continent for a quarter of a century, relentlessly constructing one powerful continental combination after another, until Napoleon was defeated and exiled to St. Helena. But as happened after the collapse of their first colonial empire, the French now sought new fields for their operations.

Undaunted, they began to construct a new colonial empire. Algeria was occupied in 1830; French influence grew in the Asiatic possessions of the Ottoman Caliph, and there was a recrudescence in French power in the Far East. But the French had ceased to be a menace; their fleet could not compare with that of the British, and London could afford to watch with good-humored tolerance these activities of its erstwhile mortal enemy.

British world-supremacy, did not inaugurate a period of Pax Britannica. The number of imperialist wars greatly increased during the nineteenth century as compared with the eighteenth; and their ferocity and destructiveness more than kept pace with the growth in civilization. Wars had to be fought in Chinese and Far Eastern waters; British troops in India were busy fighting either in Indian states or in the buffer territories on the north; wars had to be fought against the Russians, Egyptians, Arabs, Persians and other peoples. The last decades of the century saw the beginning of a new and more bitter race for Africa, with a new contestant, Germany,

in the field ; the struggle for supremacy in the Far East also assumed more menacing aspects ; and the Anglo-Russian rivalry seemed for a time to be leading the two powers to a major conflict. The growing competition between the British and French empires and the young and vigorous German empire finally let loose the first world war.

1.—Imperialism Assumes Duties.

Imperialism did not develop a conscience until the latest years of its long history. Neither Greek nor Roman writers found it necessary to rationalize their rule of alien people ; it is significant that nowhere in his oration does Pericles attempt to justify Greek imperialism by the benefits it conferred on the subjected races. He feels no need for such a justification ; his public did not expect it. Sufficient is it that Athens profits from her colonies, that she is furnished by them "with everything that can enable her to depend on her own resources whether for war or for peace." A few Spanish writers did invoke the conversion of heathens to the one true faith as a justification for their cruel rule ; but during the first three centuries or more of its modern existence imperialism made few attempts to conceal its predatory origins with a barrage of verbal humanitarianism, altruism and missionary other-worldliness. Both in theory and in practice imperialism was synonymous with robbery, exploitation, slavery and rule by whip or gun. Imperial administrators did not attempt to justify their existence by claiming to introduce western culture among black and yellow barbarians ; they did not claim to teach them how to exercise self-government, nor how to save their eternal souls. In fact, they doubted whether the natives had any kind of souls at all, eternal or otherwise.

It was not till late in the eighteenth century, when Britain emerged as the leading colonial power, that imperialism began to feel the need for a justification other than self-interest. "Justice, and mercy, and liberty, and the law of God, and the happiness of man" which England was allegedly bringing to the Colonies—those were to Macaulay the justification for British imperial rule, not private profits in terms of "pounds, shillings and pence." If only to justify its existence before an increasingly

liberal world, imperialism assumed new functions and new responsibilities during the course of the past century and a half, which had nothing to do with the selfish material interests of the dominant nation. It had to assume the new functions to survive in a democratic world increasingly intolerant of privileges founded upon force (10).

To obtain a correct perspective of the change in attitude towards imperialism it is necessary to recall that the nineteenth century saw the greatest exploration and development of communications in human history. History textbooks speak of the fifteenth century as the "century of discovery"; but it was left for the last century to consolidate the gains of its famous predecessor.

In 1800 no less than two-thirds of the globe was as isolated and as closed to human intercourse as it had been a thousand years before; by 1900 there was hardly a square mile which had not been explored and had its barriers broken down. It was not till the last century that world history was born; until then, Europe, China, the Islamic countries, Africa, etc., had led isolated existences and possessed only local histories. To realize graphically the vast revolution effected during the last century one needs only to compare the personnel of the peace congress which gathered in Vienna in 1814-15 with the personnel of another peace congress a century later.

This opening of the world created a series of highly complicated problems, for all the nations of the world did not—as they could not—meet on a plane of equality. There were, it is undeniable, races and peoples in very different stages of development; and the great problem was how to stimulate the development of the backward peoples within the shortest possible time. A common denominator was essential if the various races and nations were to meet on a plane of equality; and it was inevitable that the West should elevate its own peculiar civilization and culture to the position of the world standard. The West had the might to enforce its standards upon others;

(10) Woolf, *Imperialism and Civilization*, 29-49.

more important, unprecedented material success gave it the moral conviction of righteousness to do so.

The problem of the last century, in brief, was how to westernize the globe; and modern imperialism was basically the answer. It is true, of course, that the non-European peoples were not devoid of cultures of their own; it is true also, that in most cases those peoples did not want the strange European conception of human bliss, which all too often came accompanied by guns. The Chinese, Arabs and Indians had cultures which in many ways were more complex and more refined than the European, and careful anthropological studies before long showed that even the most primitive tribes of the interiors of Asia and Africa had evolved intricate indigenous cultures. But all this was irrelevant; those cultures did not count. Whether the non-European peoples liked it or not, the west made it abundantly clear that all non-western cultures were basically merely forms of barbarism, and only those peoples which had assimilated the western pattern could have a place of respect and security in the modern world.

Nor did it matter that to a large extent the civilizing activities of the west were motivated by selfish considerations. Industrialization had created new problems at home which the imperialist nations sought to solve in Asia and Africa. The west became dependent on a great number of raw materials found only, or under the most profitable conditions, in colonial lands (11). Cotton was a subject which aroused the interest of all Englishmen, and the demand for "empire cotton" to assure a reliable flow of the commodity—and at cheap prices—grew among the manufacturers, traders and to a no lesser extent also among the working-people of Manchester, especially after the widespread unemployment and trade depression as a result of the dislocation in supply lines during the American Civil War. It is interesting to note that even as late as 1926, the then Colonial Secretary, Mr. Amery, mentioned scarcity of "cotton which is menacing Lancashire" as an argument in favor of extension

(11) Moon, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-117; cf. Lenin, *Imperialism*.

of mandatory supervision over Iraq (12). The competition for copper, jute, gold, copra, vegetable oils, rubber, sugar, tin and other raw materials essential for modern industry drove European Powers to search for colonial sources of supply, which meant placing the African and Asiatic territories under political and economic conditions favorable for industrial development. The growth of monopolies and cartels created marketing problems for every state, which forced industrialists to seek markets for their surplus produce. Capital, too, was interested in developing private preserves where investment would be safe and produce comfortable returns.

These needs of the industrialized West supplied imperialism with a powerful *raison d'être*. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the claim that it was serving the interests not only of the imperial country but of the West as a whole became one of the most persistent of its apologias (13). British writers argued that their rule opened new territories for the trade of all nations; that it created new fields for investment for capitalists without distinction of nationality or religion; that the products of tropical Africa and of Asia were made available to European trade and industry on equal terms to all that, finally imperial rule created favorable conditions for settlement and colonization for all peoples living in the overcrowded countries of the old world. Gladstone justified Britain's occupation of Egypt not on the ground that control of the Suez Canal had become vital for the protection of imperial communication; not even because Manchester was tremendously interested in Egyptian cotton. The liberal statesman felt it necessary to proclaim responsibility "not only to the people of Egypt... but likewise to the subjects of other Powers for the maintenance of law and order" (14).

(12) "Iraq, too, can make her contribution to the solution of that problem," the colonial Secretary continued. "I will not detain the House by going into that matter, but would suggest that the hon. Members should read the special Report of the British Cotton Growing Association on the possibilities of cotton growing in Iraq." *P.D.C.*, February 18, 1926, V. 191, Ch. 2178.

(13) Cf. Bodelsen, *Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism*, 150 ff.

(14) *P. D. C.*, May 1, 1888, S. 4, v. 11, ch. 1655.

It is historically incorrect, however, to concentrate exclusively on these selfish material factors in the western expansion. The fact is that the nineteenth century combined with these material interests a missionary zeal unknown to ancient imperial movements. We have seen how religion emerged as a factor in imperialist expansion during the Middle Ages: this factor continued to operate during the 19th century. Missionary activities increased greatly; wherever the religious missionary did not precede the soldier and administrator he invariably followed closely in the footsteps of the latter. The whole of Africa and the major part of Asia was covered before the end of the century with missionary institutions financed by every advanced western nation and by almost every religious denomination. The nineteenth century added to the religious motive—or rather, grafted on it—purely cultural motives which became increasingly important as the century progressed. The problem was no longer merely one of converting the heathen to Christianity, but and to an ever increasing extent, how to convert them to westernism (15).

The rise of cultural imperialism was to have far-reaching consequences. Never before had political and economic imperialism been so intertwined with cultural proselytism. Both Greeks and Romans had shown very little interest in fostering their civilisation on strange peoples. The conquered colonials might learn Latin or Greek and worship Roman and Greek gods if they wished; but no Roman administrator considered propagation of Roman culture part of his duties. If Hellenistic and Roman civilization spread throughout the Mediterranean world, the expansion was due, not to imperial policy, but to the natural attraction which a superior and dominant culture hold for vanquished peoples and to the example set by Hellenic and Roman colonies settled throughout the Empire.

Even the Spaniards, interested as they were in gaining converts for the Cross, displayed little zeal in reforming the native social and economic patterns. During the 19th century, however, the old religious missionary motive combined with

(15) Woolf, *op. cit.*, 50-70.

insisted on revolutionizing native political and economic institutions, on fastering western education and western ideals of justice, equality and toleration no less than western manners, clothes and mechanical devices. When Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary and a sincere believer in the new type of imperialism, was confronted with an active demand in the House of Commons from Egypt, his reply was that withdrawal was impossible till England's civilizing work "has been fully accomplished."

"The work we have undertaken in Egypt is to make the country secure against foreign invasion, against domestic anarchy and disorder... A mere handful of Englishmen... have revolutionized the condition of the country. Under the able guidance of Lord Cromer they have made it secure..., they have rescued Egypt from the state of ruin into which it was rapidly falling, they have established equal justice throughout the land, they have secured the material prosperity of the country by great public works of irrigation, they have done a great deal for the education of the people, and at the same time they have equalized and lessened the burden of taxation. Well, sir, that is a record of which any country might be proud" (16).

Perhaps no better expression of the justification of imperialism by the cultural and social services it rendered to the natives, nor one which had a wider influence, appeared in Britain during the last century than Sir John Seeley's *Expansion of England* (1883). Seeley was a profound believer in the ideal of imperialism trusteeship; he could see no other justification—certainly not selfish interests—for assuming domination over foreign peoples. "Nothing is to be considered for a moment but the well-being of India and England," he wrote, "and of the two countries India, as being by much the poorer, is to be considered before England" (17). Seeley regarded Britain's work in India as a mission of civilization; the connection having been establ-

(16) *P.D.C.*, Feb. 2, 1893, S. 4, v. 8, col. 280-81.

(17) Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, 204.

ished, England was not free to relinquish it (18). She must carry on with the white man's burden, like it or not. Other writers on imperial affairs, notably Froude (19), Disraeli (20), Dilke (21), repeatedly gave expression to the same ideas. The ideal of trusteeship passed over to the United States, where it obtained vigorous expression during the first years of the present century. The Senate of the United States passed a resolution on February 14, 1899, declaring that "it is the intention of the United States to establish" in the Philippine Islands "a government suitable to the wants and interests and conditions of the inhabitants of the said islands to prepare them for local self-government..." (22). And President McKinley described American rule in the Philippine Islands as "an unsought trust which should be unselfishly discharged and evolves upon this Government a moral as well as a material responsibility toward these millions we have freed from an oppressive yoke" (23). And the President went on to speak of "our obligation as guardian" which "was not lightly assumed." One might quote an infinite number of statements by British, French, German and Italian ministers and colonial officials and by a whole galaxy of writers which show how universal had become the idea of trusteeship—that rule of an alien people imposes moral obligations which should be

(18) "Withdrawal," he wrote, would be "the most inexcusable of all conceivable crimes and might cause the most stupendous of all conceivable calamities" (*Op. cit.*, 207) Not that he did not see some of the evil results of British rule; Seeley was probably more clear-sighted than most of his contemporaries. But if western civilization in India "is not a glorious light shining in darkness" it must at least be admitted to be "a somewhat cold daylight introduced into the midst of a warm gorgeous twilight" (*Op. cit.*, 255-56).

(19) Cf. J. A. Froude, *Oceania and The English in the West Indies*.

(20) *Speeches*, edited by Keppel.

(21) Sir Charles W. Dilke, *Problems of Greater Britain, and The British Empire*.

(22) *Congressional Record*, XXXII, 1847; quoted by Wright, *Mandates Under the League of Nations*, 13.

(23) Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, I, 263; Wright, *op. cit.*, 13.

discharged unselfishly and for the benefit of the natives and of the world as a whole (24).

2.—Fulfilment of Duties to Colonial Peoples.

Unfortunately, imperialism performed much less than it promised. The noble ideals which sounded so well then proclaimed from parliamentary rostrums, remained only ideals and were not translated into reality. Instead of civilization and freedom the western imperialists often brought a system—to use the words of a British Foreign Secretary—of “bondage under the most barbarous and inhuman conditions, maintained for the mercenary motives of the most selfish characters” (25). Instead of justice and peace, the white rulers instituted almost in the whole of Africa a system of slavery which in many ways was far worse than any native slavery. Herr Schlettwein, a government representative on the Reichstag’s Colonial Budget

(24) Joseph Chamberlain, in the above quoted speech, boasted that England’s great accomplishments in Egypt—“one of the creditable incidents in British history”—were due to the work of “a mere handful of Englishmen—some four scores of English officers and perhaps three scores more of English officials” (*op. cit.*, col. 280). More emphatic even was Lord Cromer, the “maker of modern Egypt.” “The Englishman,” he wrote, “came to Egypt with the fixed idea that he had a mission to perform, and, with them his views about individual justice, equal rights before the law, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and similar notions, he will not unnaturally interpret his mission in this sense, that he is to benefit the mass of the population. There lie those nine or ten million native Egyptians at the bottom of the social ladder, a poor, ignorant, credulous, but withal not unkindly race, being such as sixty centuries of misgovernment and oppression by various rulers, from Pharaohs to Pashas, have made them. It is for the civilized Englishman to extend to them the hand of fellowship and encouragement, and to raise them, morally and materially, from the abject state in which he finds them. And the Englishman looks towards India, and he says to himself, with all the confidence of an imperial race,—I can perform this task; I have done it before now; I have poured numberless blessings on the heads of the ryots of Bengal and Madras, who are own cousins of the Egyptian fellow-Heen; those latter also shall have water for their fields, justice in their lawcourts and immunity from tyranny under which they have for so long groaned; the reign of Pashadom shall cease.” (*Modern Egypt*, II, 130.)

(25) Quoted by Morel, *The Black Man’s Burden*, 105.

committee, openly admitted, after some scoffing allusions to "exaggerated humanitarianism, vague idealism, and irrational sentimentality," that the underlying principle of wise administration must be the idea that "the Hereros must be compelled to work, and to work without compensation and in return for their food only. Forced labor for years is only a just punishment and at the same time it is the best method for training them" (26). A reliable British missionary summarized the reaction of the Matabele people in Southern Rhodesia with the following sentence: "Our country is gone, our cattle have gone, our people are scattered, we have nothing to live for, our women are deserting us; the white man does as he likes with them; we are the slaves of the white man, we are nobody and have no rights or laws of any kind."

It is not easy to describe in a few pages the suffering, confusion and despair brought everywhere in Africa and in certain parts of Asia by the white imperialists during the first period of infiltration. Africa was far from being a paradise before the white men came; there was native slavery and the inevitable slave raiding which destroyed villages and took innumerable lives. There was disease; there was stagnation; native justice was cruel and human life had very little value. Nevertheless, the natives had constructed a social system of their own which, barbaric and primitive as it might appear in our eyes, provided a good deal of satisfaction; they had evolved a system of values which gave cohesion to their society. The coming of the Europeans completely upset the native social structure. The authority of chiefs and elders was undermined; tribal laws ceased to regulate the lives of the community, especially of the younger members; Europeans brought new diseases which took a frightful toll of native lives. It is difficult to overestimate the ravages caused by the introduction of alcohol and of other narcotics. All investigations of conditions in industrial compounds and in native sections of the cities of South Africa tell a tale of broke families, prostitution, venereal diseases,

(26) *Ibid.*, 47.

excessive alcoholism, and degeneration (27).

Land and cattle, singly or combined, were at the bottom of most of the unrest and suffering brought by the white imperialists to Africa. Millions of natives were driven off their lands and massacred to make room for whites eager to obtain plantations on the cheap. In German South-West Africa the Hereros, a vigorous and intelligent tribe, were decimated when they rose in revolt against a series of wicked ordinances aiming to rob them of their lands and cattle. "They (the Hereros) were ranchmen and landowners, and we were there to make them landless workingmen," Germans admitted with amazing sang-froid (28). In Libya, Tunis, Algeria, the same end was accomplished with scarcely less cruelty. No one will ever know the exact number of Libyans who perished in the revolts against Italian rule; but room was made for the settlement of a few thousand Italian farmers (29). In Kenya, some 2,100 whites managed to stake ownership over 5,200,080 acres—or about twenty-five hundred acres per settler; in Nyasaland, Cecil Rhodes' South African Company acquired ownership over 2,700,000 acres; in Northern Rhodesia its subsidiary still owns more than two million acres; the British Sugar Company succeeded in acquiring over twenty-five per cent of the cultivated

(27) For more detailed analyses of the social problems in Africa and Asia see: Lord Hailey, *An African Survey*; Morel, *The Black Man's Burden, Red Rubber, King Leopold's Rule in Africa, Nigeria: its Peoples and Problems* and other books by this distinguished colonial reformer; Brown and Hutt, *Anthropology in Action*; Bowker, *Liverpool and Slavery*; Copeland, *Life of Wilberforce*; The South African Native Races Committee, *The Natives of South Africa*; Orde-Browne, *Labor Conditions in Northern Rhodesia*; *Rhodesia-Nyasaland Royal Commission Report*; Viton, *Great Britain: An Empire in Transition*, pp. 39-66; Macmillan, *The West Indies*; Pim, *Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Financial and Economic Position of Northern Rhodesia*; *Report of the Kenya Land Commission*, and the *Minutes of Evidence*; Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*; Buell, *The Native Problem in Africa*.

(28) Morel, *op. cit.*, 67.

(29) It is significant that all estimates before 1910 placed Libya's population above 1,250,000; an Italian census in 1933, however, showed that there were less than 850,000 inhabitants in the same area. Viton, *The New Imperialism*, Asia, XL (1940), 489-93.

area in Fiji. The story was the same in almost every colony. Sometimes the land came into white possession with less cruelty and sometimes with more, depending on the degree of skill of the white rulers ; but the essentials did not change.

Nor did the white administrators make a serious effort to modernize native agriculture and to teach the peoples under their charge how to eke out a living from less land. There was enough land in Africa for all the natives and for tens of millions of white settlers. The native standard of living not only could have been raised many times, but room could have been found for many more settlers than were colonized. What was needed was a progressive agricultural policy. Natives needed to be taught intensive cultivation ; irrigation and soil control had to be developed ; more economic crops needed to be introduced ; finally, there was a crying need for cheap credit and for instruction in economic management. Unfortunately, imperialism has only lately undertaken these tasks ; where it did attempt to improve native agriculture, as in British West Africa, it did so only to an infinitesimal extent (30).

Nor were imperialist officials as much missionaries of civilization as the West fondly hoped. French colonial administrators never believed in universal education for their colored wards ; the whole purpose of the educational system employed was to train a small class of natives to perform minor jobs in the administrative machine. Instead of directing the natives to develop according to their own cultural proclivities, the French instituted a system of "cultural assimilation", which made the natives bad Africans and worse Frenchmen (31). Before World War II, few French, Dutch and Portuguese colonies could boast a literate population of ten per cent ; usually the figure was

(30) Buell, *op. cit.*, v. I; *The Colonial Problem*, 141-56; Hailey, *African Survey*, 712-978; Lugard, *op. cit.*, 280-346.

(31) *The Colonial Problem*, 204-209. Russell Golt, an American educator in Egypt, has summarized Britain's educational accomplishments in the responsibility for perpetrating... a system of education, the chief object of which has for years been the creation of civil service employees" (*The Effects of Centralization on Education in Modern Egypt*, 43).

considerably lower. No better were conditions in British colonies. Although control of the Gold Coast forts was assumed by Britain in 1821, a census in 1931 revealed that only 35,318 out of 3.2 million natives had completed an elementary school: Kenya, Nyasaland, the Rhodesias—all relied almost entirely on missionary bodies to provide some kind of instruction for the natives. "One cannot help feeling that the establishment of a girls' school (in Nigeria) ought not to have been deferred till after thirty years of British rule," writes Arthur Mayhew (32).

Very little was done by the white carriers of civilization to improve health conditions among the natives. The first impact of European civilization, in fact, invariably brought new diseases; the greater physical exertions demanded of the natives helped make old illnesses more acute. The reports of the Belgian Congo Commission showed that with the coming of the whites such indigenous diseases as sleeping-sickness assumed a more acute form and spread, while hitherto unknown diseases—tuberculosis, cerebro-spinal-meningitis, typhoid—were introduced. The East African Commission reported that "50 percent of our native population are relatively incapable of physical exertion; that pneumonia, malaria, yaws, syphilis and heart-weakness... are of appallingly wide distribution" (33). But frightfully little was done to cope with these problems. Infant mortality was everywhere extremely high. In many colonies no less than a third of all infants did not live to see their first birthday (34). In some colonies the decline in native population assumed catastrophic proportions (35). How little was actually

(32) *Education in The Colonial Empire*, 132.

(33) Lugard, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, 153.

(34) "An investigation in Kavirondo in 1922 showed an infant mortality rate of 400 per 1,000, and a similar figure for the native reserves of Kenya as a whole, based on limited inquiries, is cited by Orr and Gilke (*Physique and Health of Two African Tribes*, 1931), 1 c. In Lagos the infantile mortality rate declined from 450 per 1,000 in the period 1898-1900 to 130 per 1,000 in the census figures for 1931" (*The Colonial Problem*, 133).

(35) Harrisson estimates that 150 years ago there were no less than a million people in New Hebrides; now, there are less than 50,000. ("The New Hebrides People and Culture", *The Geographical Journal*, LXXXVIII (1936), No. 4.

done, to improve the health conditions of the natives can be seen from the record of the South Africa Chartered Company, which occupied Northern Rhodesia during the nineties of the last century. "Not before 1915-16 did the annual report of the Secretary of the Administration contain a reference to health matters in general". Even as late as 1922, the medical staff in that vast territory of 824,500 square miles with a population of close to one million gave medical treatment to no more than 5,000 native patients. Before the War few colonies allocated as much three per cent of their total revenue to public health. In 1940 total expenditure for this purpose in the whole British African Empire amounted to a grand total of \$ 745,000 (36).

Neither the tariff, nor the educational nor the financial policies of the imperial powers favored the development of industry in the colonies. Customs duties were always levied for revenue. Raw materials necessary for industry as well as machinery were subjected to high custom rates, while cotton goods and other simple manufactures which could be produced locally were taxed as lightly as revenue considerations permitted (37). The policy was to limit as far as possible colonial production to raw materials and foodstuffs, which the industrialized metropolitan power needs at cheap prices. The absence of trained workers also militated against industrial progress. Imperialism took good care not to provide colonial youth with technical training. The few technical schools started before the World War II—and there were only a very few—aimed at supplying government needs exclusively, and could not accomplish even that much (38). There can be no doubt but that colonial governments actively discouraged the development of local finishing industries, which alone could pull the colonies out of their immeasurable poverty.

No aspect of the colonial policies of the great powers evoked so much criticism as that concerning labor. Open slavery having

(36) Viton, *Op. cit.*, 45.

(37) *The Colonial Problem*, 233-38; Viton, *op. cit.*, 34-6; Smith, *Nationalism and Reform in India*, 138-98.

(38) Advisory Committee on Colonial Education, *Memorandum on the Education of Native African Communities*, col. 103.

been abolished during the first half of the last century, white colonists and administrators developed new ways of securing cheap and steady supply of labor ; "and they did so by methods which involved serfdom, and sometimes disguised forms of slavery (39). Forced labor for public works, and often on projects designed to benefit primarily white settlers was decreed in all colonies ; private estates and mines could obtain forced labor in the Portuguese and French colonies. Forced labor for private purposes having been abolished in British colonies, more subtle means had to be invented for teaching blacks the "dignity of labor". In almost all important British colonial possessions, Master and Servant Ordinances were enacted which gave the employers almost unlimited powers over his black employee, and which provided fines, sometimes amounting to a year's wages or two years imprisonment, or both, for escape from a job. Imposition of a poll-tax or hut-tax, usually amounting to two months wages, was another favorite British method for teaching the blacks the dignity of labor (40).

3.—Responsibilities to the West.

Nor could anyone say that imperialism honestly discharged its obligations to the West. Numerous studies of the economic and social policies of the great imperial powers revealed that a few thousand individuals, nationals of the imperial country, benefited to a greater or lesser extent from the system. A small part of the profits percolated downwards, primarily through taxation, to a much broader strata of the population. The world as a whole, however, benefited only slightly from its great empires in Asia and Africa (41). A whole literature sprang up

(39) *The Colonial Problem*, 165.

(40) *Ibid.*, 162-97; Viton, *op. cit.*, 52-6; Lugard, *op. cit.*, 390-424. "Taxation was the only method possible of compelling the native to leave his reserve for the purpose of seeking work," Sir Percy Girouard, who was Governor of Kenya, pointed out (*The Colonial Problem*, No. 175.)

(41) J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism* (1902) is undoubtedly the most searching of those studies. Cf. Viton, "The Profits of Imperialism", *Asia*, XXXVIII (1938), 513-17.

on this subject in Italy and Germany, the two important "Have-not" powers in Europe, which saw themselves wronged by the unequal opportunities afforded to them by the unequal distribution of colonies. The fact gradually emerged that the system was not more efficient, nor more devoted, in performing its alleged service to the West than it was in fulfilling its avowed progressive and humanitarian duties to the colonial peoples.

During part of the 19th century the great European powers did in fact maintain a free trade policy in their colonial possessions. Thanks to the efforts of Richard Cobden and of the Manchester School generally, Adam Smith's devastating exposure of the fallacies of mercantalism gained ground first in England and later also on the Continent. A reaction against the 18th century mercantalist ideas set in shortly after the fall of Napoleon I, which gained in strength until about 1880. Trade prohibitions gave way to preferential tariffs, and the latter were gradually relaxed in favor of a policy of complete open door. Germany, coming late in the race for colonies, maintained from the first to the last a policy unrestricted trade and opportunity. "There is no evidence from trade statistics, tariff schedules, and informed authorities which leads to the conclusion that the Open Door was not practised", says Benjamin Gerig (42). "Whether from fear of tariff retaliation" in the greater and more prosperous colonial empires or in the hope that other States would adopt the Open Door, the economic equality of German colonial administration from 1885 to 1914 stands as a record of which the German nation may well be proud". In their anxiety to perpetuate and to extend the Open Door practice the German Government negotiated a series of bilateral treaties with other colonial powers to assure reciprocal Open Door privileges (43).

France had traditionally followed a monopolistic trade policy in her colonial empire. But in 1860 Napoleon III negotiated the famous treaty with Cobden, the effect of which was to liberalize the whole trade policy. "Between 1860-71 the chief features of French colonial tariffs were (1) Foreign goods

(42) *The Open Door and the Mandates System*, 72-3.

(43) U.S. Tariff Commission, *Colonial Tariff Policies*, 220.

could enter the colonies. Exclusion was already modified in 1845. (2) Colonial products could now be sold in foreign markets. (3) Ships of any nationality could enter the French colonial trade (44). Unfortunately, no sooner was the new policy launched than it began to lose favor in French official and commercial circles. The Cobden Treaty was renounced in 1872, and a new policy of colonial assimilation was used to justify a general increase in trade barriers with the outside world (45).

Next to Germany, Great Britain and Holland followed the most liberal colonial trade policies. Holland abandoned preferential tariffs in 1886 and apparently has had no reason to regret the step. The Open Door principle remains the rule in all her colonial territories. The British Empire, larger and far more complex than any other imperial structure, found it less easy to adopt so simple and clear a rule. Outright free trade created difficulties in negotiating commercial treaties with other nations, which were unwilling to grant concessions to British trade except on a reciprocal basis; the newly emancipated Dominions, which obtained financial autonomy during the second half of the last century, began to pursue protectionist policies; and the rise of Mid-Victorian imperialism created a certain amount of sentiment in favor of protection, or at least tariff preference, as a measure calculated to strengthen imperial bonds. Nevertheless, free trade remained the rule in the colonial empire during the 19th century. Colonial tariffs were imposed for revenue purposes, not for protection (46). It was not till after outbreak of World War I and the emergence of new economic and political problems that a fundamental change in favor of imperial preference was adopted by the British Government.

The Open Door principle won a singular triumph at the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 called to settle the fate of Leopold's claims for the Congo. Attended by all the nations of Europe except Switzerland, and including the United States (which however refused to ratify the Act), the Conference adopted after

(44) B. Gerig, *Op. cit.*, 20-21.

(45) *Ibid.*, 74.

(46) *Ibid.*, 26-30, 73-84. Cf. *Colonial Tariff Policies*, 636 ff.

three months' deliberation and diplomatic bargaining the first multilateral Open Door treaty. The General Act laid down (Article 1) that "the trade of all nations shall enjoy complete freedom in all the regions forming the basin of the Congo"; and detailed provisions for safeguarding those commercial interests were formulated. There was to be free navigation for the ships of all nations over the Congo and the Niger Rivers; "The roads, railways, or lateral canals... shall be considered... as equally open to the traffic of all nations" without discrimination in tolls, fees, etc. (47). The General Act was intended according to the Convention of St. Germain (September 10, 1919), "primarily to demonstrate the agreement of the Powers with regard to the general principle which should guide their commercial and civilizing action in the little-known or inadequately organized regions of a continent where slavery the slave-trade still flourished".

Unfortunately, experience amply demonstrated the complete inadequacy of unilateral, bilateral or even multilateral agreements of this sort to solve the colonial problem. It was not only that unilateral free trade policy could be changed at any moment and contained no guarantees of permanency. It was not only that experiences proved that even a multilateral treaty like the Berlin Act could be circumlocuted and its purposes defeated by means of clever manipulations (48). The matter went far deeper than that. Increasing experience demonstrated abundantly that trade was only one—and possibly not even the most important one—of the benefits of colonial control, and that the numerous other benefits could be reaped to the full by the imperial power even within a region of absolute free trade. Britain, Holland and Germany generally followed an honest Open Door policy; but experience demonstrated that the over-

(47) Hertslet, *Map of Africa by Treaty*, I, 20; Gerig, *op. cit.*, 37-38.

(48) Among other "inherent weaknesses" of the Act was that "The language... was so wide that any doubtful point uncovered was taken by Leopold to be admissible. Hence when the Act stated that no Power "shall be allowed to grant a monopoly or favor of any kind in matters to trade," the King saw that if he could not "grant" a monopoly he was not prohibited in "exercising" a monopoly himself. Exercise it he did and was able to get eminent judicial opinion to defend his case." Grieg, *op. cit.*, 52-3.

whelming majority of capital invested in their respective colonies came from the mother-countries. It was all very well to say that Frenchmen, Germans and members of other nations were free to purchase stock in colonial concerns: they were free—yet subtle impedimenta stood in the way. And the fact was that nearly all the commercial concerns in the colonies belonged to nationals of the respective imperial powers. It was noticed also that the Open Door did not—perhaps could not—guarantee absolute equality in the purchase of government stocks and materials for public works; and such purchases always constituted a large percentage of all imports of backward countries. Moreover, Open Door did not guarantee absolute freedom in access to strategic raw materials. On the contrary, it was noticed that, intentionally or otherwise, concessions for exploitation of strategic raw materials always fell into the hands of nationals of the ruling power.

It was these factors, coupled with the general cultural and physiological disillusionment after World War II, that made necessary a fundamental change in colonial administration. The demand was that imperialism should really start performing those services for the civilized world which it had always claimed to render—that there should be equality for all, and that the equality should be real and not a sham (49). The generation which had become so tired of imperialism was sought to evolve a system which would end the disastrous imperialist rivalries by removing the economic and other one-sided benefits of imperialism.

4.—Rise of Colonial Reform Movements.

Little was known in Europe about conditions in the colonial territories during the heyday of imperialism, and Europe cared even less. Oratorical grandiloquence and glowing reports of expanding empires filled the press in Britain and other

(49) Cf. Beer, *African Questions at the Peace Conference*.

imperialistic countries (50). A few voices were raised here and there to protest against the evils of the system, but those were voices crying in the wilderness. The West was too self-satisfied, too confident of its righteousness and power to doubt in the beneficial results of its activities. Colonial reformers reached the climax of their influence during the first third of the century. Having succeeded in their efforts to outlaw the slave trade (1807-20) and to abolish legal slavery, they felt that all had become well in the empires. The great reformers and humanitarians in Britain and France were content to rest securely on their accomplishment. Half a century was to pass before the conscience of Europe re-awakened.

New cultural and political currents began to flow towards the end of the last century. The development of democracy in England, Germany, France and other western countries; the spread in popular education and the growth of the labor and socialist movements; a certain cultural sentimentalism which set in at the end of the century—all contributed to the reawakening of Europe's conscience. A flood of reports from missionaries and travellers in Asia and Africa brought to the attention of the West that under the guise of benevolent intentions a frightful system of virtual slavery had been saddled on the colonies; gruesome tales of bestial cruelty in the white possessions, and of policies apparently designed to exterminate the natives, were heard. The outcry was immense. Missionaries, liberal and labor groups everywhere began to demand colonial reforms; committees to investigate social conditions in the colonies were appointed; the halls of the British parliament shook with the thunder of denunciations in the debates on colonial affairs during the annual Colonial Office vote. It was this reform

(50) In a speech at Glasgow, October 6, 1903, Joseph Chamberlain said: "I say to you that all that is best in our present life, best in this Britain of ours, all of which we have the right to be most proud, is due to the fact that we are not only sons of Britain, but we are sons of Empire... We are joint heirs to the greatest Empire the world has ever seen. What can we make of it? We, the white men, the British race, to whom it has fallen, to whom it belongs, with all its responsibilities by virtue of the sacrifices we have made." (Imperial Union, 103-4.)

wave that eventually resulted in, and made possible the acceptance of, the mandates system.

The reform movement attained maturity during the Congo Scandal, the echoes of which reverberated across the world. There is no need to review here the adventures, intrigue and diplomatic heckling which resulted in King Leopold's acquisition of the largest private estate held by a western monarch. The story of the Congo Basin reads, as Moon has said, "like a Romance, a Romance with its touches of pathos and its lapses into bathos"; but it is a story which has been told more than once. Suffice it to say that an international conference held at Berlin in 1885 recognized the claims of Leopold's International African Association—founded "for the purpose of promoting the civilization and commerce of Africa and for other human and benevolent purposes"—to rule over the Congo. Leopold undertook "to protect the natives in their moral and material well-being, to co-operate in the suppression of slavery and the slave trade; to further the education and civilization of the natives; to protect missionaries, scientists and explorers". The Act also provided that in the future Powers should give due notice of their intentions to proclaim a Protectorate and for the peaceful settlement of disputes by arbitration. What concerns us is only that the Berlin Conference gave the Powers of Europe interests in Leopold's Congo, which soon blossomed out as the Congo Free State with Leopold as its sovereign.

With the Conference over, the Congo was forgotten by everyone except its new sovereign. To further the work of civilization, a decree was issued in 1885 declaring all "vacant lands" the property of the State, which meant in effect the property of Leopold II, since Leopold was the State. The following years saw the promulgation of a series of new decrees—all strictly logical, perfectly legal and designed to convert the 20-30 million natives into the personal slaves of the King of the Belgians. Natives were required to work, of course, as payment for taxes, on the rubber-bearing trees in the "vacant lands", now the property of the State; since they held no rights in the land, they naturally did not hold any rights in the trees and were therefore not permitted to gather rubber for sale to private merchants; Leopold's agents were instructed to teach

the "dignity of labor" at the lowest possible cost—and the lower the cost per native the bigger the commission of the agent.

"The process", Morel has written, "called for some ingenuity and a certain breadth of vision... Circulars... were sent out to the effect that the paramount duty of officials was to make their districts yield the greatest possible quantity of these articles; promotion would be reckoned on that basis. As a further stimulus to 'energetic action' a system of sliding-scale bonuses was elaborated, whereby the less the native was 'paid' for his *labour* in producing these articles of 'taxation', *i.e.* the lower the outlay in obtaining them, the higher was the officials' commission. Thus if the outlay amounted to 70 centimes per kilo. of rubber, the official got 4 centimes commission per kilo; but he got 15 centimes per kilo if the outlay was only 30 centimes... outside financiers had to be called in to share in the loot, otherwise the new Policy would be unable to weather the storm. 'Concessionaire' Companies were created to which the King farmed out a large proportion of the total territory, retaining half the shares in each venture. These privileges were granted to business men, bankers, and others with whom the King thought it necessary to compound... By these means a public vested interest of a somewhat extensive character was created throughout Belgium which could be relied upon to support the King's 'System' should it ever be challenged by 'pestilent philanthropists'. The more lucrative the profits and dividends... the louder, it might be assumed, would an outraged patriotism protest against any agitation directed to reducing them. The network of corruption thus spread over Belgium was not confined to that country. Financiers, journalists, politicians, even Ministers in some other countries were placed from time to time in the position of benefiting by inside knowledge of the Congo share-markets. Their favour was thus purchased, and was not negligible as a diplomatic asset.

These various measures at the European End were comparatively easy. The problem of dealing with the natives themselves was more complex. A native army was the pre-requisite. The five years which preceded the Edicts of 1891-2 were employed in raising the nucleus of a force of 5000. It was successively increased to nearly 20,000 apart from the many thousands of 'irregulars' employed by the Concessionaire Companies. This force was amply sufficient for the purpose, for a single native soldier armed with a rifle and with plentiful supply of all cartridge can terrorise a whole village. The same system of promotion and reward would apply to the native

soldier as to the Official—the more rubber from the village, the greater the prospect of having a completely free hand to loot and rape. A systematic warfare upon the women and children would prove an excellent means of pressure. They would be converted into 'hostages' for the good behaviour, in rubber collecting, of the men. But in certain parts of the Congo the rubber-vine did not grow. This peculiarity of nature was, in one way, all to the good. For the army of Officials and natives soldiers, with their wives, and concubines, and camp-followers generally, required feeding. The non-rubber producing districts should feed them. Fishing tribes would be 'taxed' in fish; agricultural tribes in foodstuffs. In this case, too, the women and children would answer for the men. Frequent military expeditions would probably be an unfortunate necessity. Such expeditions would demand in every case hundreds of carriers for the transport of loads, ammunition, and general impedimenta. Here, again, was an excellent school in which this idle people could learn the dignity of labour. The whole territory would thus become a busy hive of human activities, continuously and usefully engaged for the benefit of the 'owners' of the soil thousands of miles away, and their crowned Head, whose intention proclaimed on repeated occasions to an admiring world, was the 'moral and material generation' of the natives of the Congo (51).

Measured in terms of dollars and cents, Leopold's system was a success, at least in the short run. The value of ivory exported increased from 2.8 million francs in 1891 to 5.3 millions a bare ten years later; that of rubber increased from 0.3 million francs to no less than 39.9 millions. From the Crown domain alone Leopold made a *net* profit of £3,197,120 in ten years. His concessionaire companies did no worse. The Abir Concessionaire Company earned in six years a net profit of £720,000 on a paid up capital of £9,280; each \$20 share received some \$1,575 in dividends. A company working in Kasai earned in four years a net profit of £736,680 on a paid up capital of £140. What matter if the population of the Congo fell from, according to the most reliable figures, from twenty to thirty millions to a maximum of eight millions in 1911, what matter if cities were devastated and laid bare; what matter if hundreds of natives were mutilated and untold misery inflicted as long as the coffers

(51) Morel, *op. cit.*, 117-119.

of the European adventures were filled? The British Aborigines Protection Society published vigorous protests as early as 1893 against the horrible mistreatment; but it was not till Leopold's officials murdered an English trader a few years later that the protest movement gained momentum.

Before the century had come to an end the "crime of the Congo" was on everybody's lips, and powerful denunciations rolled in from every corner of the globe. Captain Hinde's sensational revelation that Leopold's armed auxiliaries were fed with human flesh stirred public opinion in Britain and the United States (52); the diary of an American missionary, published in the *Century Magazine*, and the detailed book by the Swedish missionary Sjoblom made the world acquainted with the bestial cruelties and punishments inflicted in the Congo. A Reform Association sprang up in Great Britain and one in France; humanitarian Americans formed an American Congo Association; a French League for the Defense of Congo Natives was formed and a Swiss League. The furore developed in mounting crescendo; innumerable questions were asked in the House of Commons and the British government was driven to publish a long series of Consular Reports (53); dozens of missionaries and travellers added their eye-witness accounts; E. D. Morel came forthwith a series of devastating factual studies; last but not least, Mark Twain penned a mighty denunciation which, if slightly exaggerated, did much to mobilize public opinion throughout the world.

The reform movement was not to limit itself to the Congo. The conscience of Europe thus awakened, it was not long before travellers and missionaries began to show that conditions in other colonial possessions were not basically different from those in Leopold's private preserve. The British Aborigines Protection Society became more active than it had been; imperial governments were driven to send commissions to study conditions in their colonies. Public opinion and embarrassing questions in the Chamber forced the French Government to send De Brazza, one of France's most distinguished colonial administrators and explorers, to investigate conditions in French Congo. Great difficulties were placed in De Brazza's path by the French

(52) Hinde, *The Fall of the Congo Arabs*.

(53) See the list in Morel, *op. cit.*, 126.

authorities ; information was repeatedly denied to him ; but he succeeded in collecting a volume of facts which proved conclusively that conditions in French Congo were only slightly, if at all better, than in the Belgian Part. A debate in the French Chamber in February, 1906, revealed conditions which were described as "monstrous", "unbelievable", "scandalous" ; a few French newspapers, notably *L'Humanité* and *Courrier Européen*, kept alive agitation—alas! with little results. A committee to study the conditions of South African native races was formed even in South Africa. The committee published a highly illuminating study of the economic and social conditions of the natives, and suggested many fundamental reforms (54).

The reform movement swept over other colonial empires. Thanks to the humanitarian and wholly unselfish efforts of a number of British traders and cocoa manufacturers led by the Cadbury brothers, a commission to inquire into labor conditions in the Cocoa Islands was forced upon a reluctant Portuguese government. The commission found such "shocking", "brutal", "savage" conditions that a number of British firms agreed to boycott entirely San Thome cocoa—a measure in which, one must regretfully mention, American firms refused to co-operate. Henry W. Nevinson, called by Morel the "preux chevalier of modern journalism", travelled in Angola on behalf of Harper's Monthly Magazine ; his book, *A Modern Slavery*, did much to arouse public opinion in Britain no less than in the United States. Later the spotlight shifted to Morocco, Tunis, Tripoli, and to the Asiatic possessions of the Great Powers. A long series of books appeared during those years on India which placed British rule in a very different light from that thrown by Seeley in his famous lectures on the Expansion of England.

During the middle of the first decade of the century the spotlight shifted to the German colonies in Africa. A revolt of the Hereros in 1906, which was put down in the worst Prussian manner, during which more than half of the tribe perished, drew Europe's attention to this part of the colonial world. Missionaries and travellers came forth to supply details of

(54) *The Natives of South Africa: Their Economic and Social Condition*, edited by the South African Native Races Committee.

atrocious German cruelties, mismanagement and downright robbery of natives. Social Democratic papers in Berlin took up the cry ; commissions of inquiry were formed, which produced a great deal of damaging material ; the Reichstag devoted long debates to the situation, during which the Imperial Colonial Minister made many damaging admissions. It is worthy to point out that during the World War I the Allies made sample use of those revelations to incite world public opinion against enemy (55). No doubt, the propaganda was not without effect in bringing home to the West the evils of the old type of imperialism.

The same years witnessed a marked expansion in the social and humanitarian activities of missionaries (56). Eager to win converts, the various missionary organizations began to vie with one another in the extension of schooling facilities, health centers, and other civilizing agencies. The missionaries, especially the British ones, did much to acquaint Europe with the real conditions in the colonies, and their presence probably exercised a deterrent influence on political officers and, to an even greater extent, on private traders. Native complaints often received publicity in the metropolitan press through letters by missionaries ; they appeared before commissions of inquiry ; missionary organizations were in the forefront of those championing native rights. No less an authority than Lord Lugard has borne eloquent testimony to the beneficial work of the Christian missions, whose number and spheres of activity increased manifold between 1900 and second World War. "It is to the devoted work of the missionary that the educated African owes his existence, for their schools preceeded by many decades the comparatively recent government educational establishments (57). In British colonies especially the natives soon learned that the Methodist or Baptist missionary was their friend, and that he would be most ready to protect them against the insatiable

(55) *Great Britain, Official Peace Handbook*, No. 113. "Colonization consists in the utilization of the soil, its products, and its men for the economic profits of the colonizing nation" (p. 40).

(56) Lugard, *op. cit.*, 393 ff.

(57) *Ibid.*, 443.

material appetites of the other white men. The greater social interests of the missionaries were no doubt part of the wider humanitarian and reform movement which swept across the world.

Public Opinion in all civilized countries was fully prepared for fundamental reforms ; indeed, the demand for reforms had grown rapidly and had assumed formidable proportions before 1914. Labor organizations and the socialist parties especially made far-reaching colonial reform—in some cases, even downright anti-imperialism—fundamental planks in their programs. The Liberal party in Britain had for many decades championed the rights of colored peoples. Above all, during the four years of war, Liberal and leftwing writers, who traced the origin of the wars to imperialist rivalries did much to mobilize public opinion in all allied countries against the evil consequences of imperialism.

The ideals which took root during the two decades before outbreak of the World War II can be summarized in a few simple principles. First, the reformers demanded thoroughgoing social improvements. They wanted better and more universal education ; they demanded improvements in health and housing conditions ; modernization of native agriculture, development of industry in colonial areas to increase the native standard of living, more progressive taxation—all these figures on the reformers' lists. Second, there was a widespread demand for amelioration of the status of labor. The low wages, long hours and scandalous working conditions, lack of progressive labor legislation which often produced a state of virtual slavery were everywhere the butt of liberal and labor attacks. Finally, the autocratic administration of white officials was subjected to heavy criticism, and the demand for greater native self-government made itself heard. Reformers wanted to be associated in the process of government, and that colonial governments should make good their promises of training their colonies for self-government. Self-determination emerged as a basic ideal in western thought.

Dr. ABDEL HAMID KHALED.