

## SLAVERY IN BRAZIL.

A correspondent with reference to the proximate extinction of slave labour in Brazil has addressed the following communication to the Ceylon "Observer":—

The returns given, although relating to only of the the provinces of the Empire, give us a pretty fair idea of the working of the emancipation fund for the whole twenty provinces into which Brazil is divided. Your readers, however, as coffee planters, are more interested in knowing how the labour market of the three great coffee-producing provinces can be affected by it. A decrease in the labour supply of these would very sensibly diminish the exports of coffee from Rio de Janeiro and Santos.

I mentioned that, for the last eight years, there had been a general migration of the slave population from the northern to the three coffee producing provinces, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Minas Geraes, and that this movement corresponded with the gradual extension of new coffee fields and the increase of the shipments of coffee. An agitation was started against this interprovincial slave trade, and, strange to say, was carried on principally by the class who had benefited by it—the Sao Paulo planters. In 1879, a law was passed by the provincial assembly at Sao Paulo, imposing a tax of 1,000,000 reis (£100) on each slave entering the province of Sao Paulo from another province. This law was vetoed by the government as unconstitutional. In 1880, the provincial assembly of Rio de Janeiro, when passing the supply bill, included in it a tax of 1,500 milreias (£150) on each slave being registered, coming from another province, and this part of the bill passed almost unnoticed, and became law on 1st January, 1881. The province of Sao Paulo immediately followed with a law, imposing a tax of 2,000 milreis (£200) to come in force in February, and Minas Geraes with one for the same amount to come in force also in February, 1881. These taxes were to be paid on registration of slaves coming from one province to another, excepting only three to accompany each family and exempting those that came by inheritance and through judicial execution.

The law of 1881 regulated the machinery for collecting a tax on the transfer of slave property, and, as sales took place, an entry was made in the collector's book. These new provincial laws were prohibitory, inasmuch as the tax was much more than the value of the property, the value of a field hand being about £200. The collector is liable to a fine of 3,000 milreis (£300) for each slave neglected to be so registered, and the owner to a fine of 1,000 milreis (£100) if he escaped the time allowed for registration, namely, thirty days.

It is difficult to conceive the motive which prompted the introduction of these laws, for the planters of these provinces were loud in their outcry about the scarcity of labourers, and they were the people who benefited most by the entry of slaves from the northern provinces. It seems uncharitable to suppose that the real object the lawmakers had in view was the extension of the time when slavery should be extinct. There is strong circumstantial evidence to show that it was so.

I am unwilling to inflict on your readers a prosy review of the events which agitated the public mind previous to the passing of these provincial acts, but they will have a better idea of this Brazilian slavery question if I do so. You will remember that a congress of agriculturists, called together by the government, was held in Rio de Janeiro in July, 1878. This congress was to consider the various questions that were depressing agriculture and the principle outcome of this great gathering was the decision of the government to send an embassy to China to negotiate a treaty of commerce, and get the sanction of the celestial government to Chinese immigration. This latter measure was considered the best means of averting the inevitable crash which must fall on the agriculture of the country should anything happen to accelerate the emancipation of the slaves. The allowing of the vote necessary for paying the expenses of this mission was warmly opposed by Deputy Joaquin Nabuco, who was supported by other able men in the Chamber of Deputies in Rio de Janeiro. The vote was allowed; the government promising not to bring the Chinese coolies by any government scheme, their object being to pave the way for their introduction by private enterprise.

The discussion and the subsequent arrival of the envoy in London, on his way to China, attracted the attention of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and this body not only sent a petition to the Chinese Minister in London against the Brazilian movement, but wrote a letter thanking Senor Nabuco for the stand he made against the introduction of Chinese

himself a slave." This letter, as might be expected, caused a great commotion throughout the Empire.

True to his word, Nabuco commenced his campaign in August 1880 by a forcible speech in the Chamber of Deputies when the voting of supplies for the department of agriculture came on for consideration. He denounced the sale of slaves at the request of their masters, and other cruelties. A fortnight afterwards he brought forward his bill for emancipation in 1890. The Chamber fixed the 27th of August for the discussion of it, two of the ministers voting in the majority granting leave. The minority, however, pressed the prime minister; so that next day he announced that, if the discussion of such a measure were forced on, the ministry would resign. The Chamber thus bearded by the minister, and having fixed the 27th for the discussion by its vote on the 24th, did not hold sessions on 26th, 27th, and 28th August. On the 30th Nabuco again asked leave, but the Chamber this time rejected the motion for the introduction of the bill by 77 to 18. The prime minister on being pressed for his reasons for making a cabinet question of the introduction of the bill, declared that the Emperor and the government had made up their minds that slavery was to remain as it was fixed in 1871.

Congratulations came pouring in from all parts of the Empire. The minister had saved the country. Agricultural societies were formed for the purpose of resisting any attempts at upsetting the arrangement made in 1871, and at all these meetings addresses were framed thanking the government for the stand they had made.

It was thought that this slave question was settled, but Nabuco, nothing daunted by his defeat in the Chamber, called his friends together at his own residence, and formed an Anti-Slavery Society.

A manifesto was issued on the 7th September 1880, the ninth anniversary of the passing of the slave law. Some able men joined this society and branches were established in some of the other towns. The agricultural interest was entirely against the movement.

The American Minister in Rio de Janeiro wrote a letter detailing the prosperity of the Southern States in North America since the abolition of slavery there, and a banquet was given to this gentleman, Mr. Hilliard, by the Anti-Slavery Society. The speeches on this occasion, particularly that given by the American Minister, enraged some of the members of Parliament. The government was called on to interfere, for here was a minister of a friendly state interfering in their domestic affairs. The debate was an angry one, and showed how they would resent outside interference, and how they could abuse nations and individuals, who did not respect the time-honoured institution of slavery. The government, however, saw no reason either to praise or blame the American Minister, and, in justice to the Prime Minister, we must give him credit for saying that, although the government were for slavery remaining as it is, they respected those who held opposite opinions. It was during these stormy times that the provincial laws were passed putting a stop to the inter-provincial slave trade. Can it be said then that it was a step towards abolition? During these debates the northern provinces were accused of being anti-slavery, and the deputies from the south, while openly declaring themselves as on the pro-slavery side, used threats to compel those from the north to hold on to the arrangement of 1871. One illustrious orator from the south used these words:—"You wish to sell your slaves to us, and then you will by-and-bye ask us to liberate all slaves within the Empire." Another said, alluding to the deputies from the north:—"I look on these people as highwaymen, and for such as these I have my revolver."

We must look to the stoppages of the inter-provincial slave-trade as putting a check on the labour supply to the coffee-producing provinces and putting a limit on the exports of coffee from Rio de Janeiro and Santos. The Ceylon coffee planter may console himself that the competition in that direction will not be more than it is at present, but, if slavery is not reduced more rapidly than the death-rate and the working of the emancipation fund has shewn during the last ten years, we will have to wait some time before there is much diminution in the coffee exports.

(To be continued.)

ITEMS FROM "HERAPATH'S JOURNAL"  
of 24th June.

BUENOS AYRES GREAT SOUTHERN.

The traffic just now shows a decline. That matters little. These are the winter months in those parts, and the traffic varies

general migration of the slave population from the northern to the three coffee producing provinces, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Minas Geraes, and that this movement corresponded with the gradual extension of new coffee fields and the increase of the shipments of coffee. An agitation was started against this interprovincial slave trade, and, strange to say, was carried on principally by the class who had benefited by it—the Sao Paulo planters. In 1879, a law was passed by the provincial assembly at Sao Paulo, imposing a tax of 1,000,000 reis (£100) on each slave entering the province of Sao Paulo from another province. This law was vetoed by the government as unconstitutional. In 1880, the provincial assembly of Rio de Janeiro, when passing the supply bill, included in it a tax of 1,500 milreiros (£150) on each slave being registered, coming from another province, and this part of the bill passed almost unnoticed, and became law on 1st January, 1881. The province of Sao Paulo immediately followed with a law, imposing a tax of 2,000 milreiros (£200) to come in force in February, and Minas Geraes with one for the same amount to come in force also in February, 1881. These taxes were to be paid on registration of slaves coming from one province to another, excepting only three to accompany each family and exempting those that came by inheritance and through judicial execution.

The law of 1881 regulated the machinery for collecting a tax on the transfer of slave property, and, as sales took place, an entry was made in the collector's book. These new provincial laws were prohibitory, inasmuch as the tax was much more than the value of the property, the value of a field hand being about £200. The collector is liable to a fine of 3,000 milreiros (£300) for each slave neglected to be so registered, and the owner to a fine of 1,000 milreiros (£100) if he escaped the time allowed for registration, namely, thirty days.

It is difficult to conceive the motive which prompted the introduction of these laws, for the planters of these provinces were loud in their outcry about the scarcity of labourers, and they were the people who benefited most by the entry of slaves from the northern provinces. It seems uncharitable to suppose that the real object the lawmakers had in view was the extension of the time when slavery should be extinct. There is strong circumstantial evidence to show that it was so.

I am unwilling to inflict on your readers a prosy review of the events which agitated the public mind previous to the passing of these provincial acts, but they will have a better idea of this Brazilian slavery question if I do so. You will remember that a congress of agriculturists, called together by the government, was held in Rio de Janeiro in July, 1878. This congress was to consider the various questions that were depressing agriculture and the principle outcome of this great gathering was the decision of the government to send an embassy to China to negotiate a treaty of commerce, and get the sanction of the celestial government to Chinese immigration. This latter measure was considered the best means of averting the inevitable crash which must fall on the agriculture of the country should anything happen to accelerate the emancipation of the slaves. The allowing of the vote necessary for paying the expenses of this mission was warmly opposed by Deputy Joaquin Nabuco, who was supported by other able men in the Chamber of Deputies in Rio de Janeiro. The vote was allowed; the government promising not to bring the Chinese coolies by any government scheme, their object being to pave the way for their introduction by private enterprise.

The discussion and the subsequent arrival of the envoy in London, on his way to China, attracted the attention of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and this body not only sent a petition to the Chinese Minister in London against the Brazilian movement, but wrote a letter thanking Senor Nabuco for the stand he made against the introduction of Chinese labourers into Brazil. Deputy Nabuco, in reply to the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, dated 8th April 1880, declared his intention to introduce a bill into the Chamber of Deputies in Rio de Janeiro, establishing the date of 1st January 1890 for the entire abolition of slavery throughout the Empire. Here is what he said himself:—"That bill will not be converted this year into law, but introduced every session in a Liberal house by myself or some of my friends, and in a Conservative house by some prominent Conservative abolitionist like Mr. Gusmao Lobo; increasing every year in votes, it will triumph at last. The date remaining immovable, every delay would render the transition period shorter, but it would not be our fault. The frontier of the next decade, I hope, will not be passed by any man calling

vote on the 24th, did not hold sessions on 26th, 27th, and 28th August. On the 30th Nabuco again asked leave, but the Chamber this time rejected the motion for the introduction of the bill by 77 to 18. The prime minister on being pressed for his reasons for making a cabinet question of the introduction of the bill, declared that the Emperor and the government had made up their minds that slavery was to remain as it was fixed in 1871.

Congratulations came pouring in from all parts of the Empire. The minister had saved the country. Agricultural societies were formed for the purpose of resisting any attempts at upsetting the arrangement made in 1871, and at all these meetings addresses were framed thanking the government for the stand they had made.

It was thought that this slave question was settled, but Nabuco, nothing daunted by his defeat in the Chamber, called his friends together at his own residence, and formed an Anti-Slavery Society.

A manifesto was issued on the 7th September 1880, the ninth anniversary of the passing of the slave law. Some able men joined this society and branches were established in some of the other towns. The agricultural interest was entirely against the movement.

The American Minister in Rio de Janeiro wrote a letter detailing the prosperity of the Southern States in North America since the abolition of slavery there, and a banquet was given to this gentleman, Mr. Hilliard, by the Anti-Slavery Society. The speeches on this occasion, particularly that given by the American Minister, enraged some of the members of Parliament. The government was called on to interfere, for here was a minister of a friendly state interfering in their domestic affairs. The debate was an angry one, and showed how they would resent outside interference, and how they could abuse nations and individuals, who did not respect the time-honoured institution of slavery. The government, however, saw no reason either to praise or blame the American Minister, and, in justice to the Prime Minister, we must give him credit for saying that, although the government were for slavery remaining as it is, they respected those who held opposite opinions. It was during these stormy times that the provincial laws were passed putting a stop to the inter-provincial slave trade. Can it be said then that it was a step towards abolition? During these debates the northern provinces were accused of being anti-slavery, and the deputies from the south, while openly declaring themselves as on the pro-slavery side, used threats to compel those from the north to hold on to the arrangement of 1871. One illustrious orator from the south used these words:—"You wish to sell your slaves to us, and then you will by-and-bye ask us to liberate all slaves within the Empire." Another said, alluding to the deputies from the north:—"I look on these people as highwaymen, and for such as these I have my revolver."

We must look to the stoppages of the inter-provincial slave-trade as putting a check on the labour supply to the coffee-producing provinces and putting a limit on the exports of coffee from Rio de Janeiro and Santos. The Ceylon coffee planter may console himself that the competition in that direction will not be more than it is at present, but, if slavery is not reduced more rapidly than the death-rate and the working of the emancipation fund has shewn during the last ten years, we will have to wait some time before there is much diminution in the coffee exports.

(To be continued.)

#### ITEMS FROM "HERAPATH'S JOURNAL" of 24th June.

##### BUENOS AYRES GREAT SOUTHERN.

The traffic just now shows a decline. That matters little. These are the winter months in those parts, and the traffic varies according to the seasons. We believe the line is doing on the whole splendidly.

##### RAILWAYS IN BRAZIL AND URUGUAY.

We learn from the "Anglo-Brazilian Times" that the engineers surveying the new railway guaranteed by the Brazilian Government from Itaqui to Quareme and the Uruguayan frontier have come across extensive and rich beds of iron and copper. This is the railway which will meet the Brazilian Terminus of the North Western of Uruguay Extension line, now about to be completed at the Uruguay frontier, and over which the produce of the mines when developed must find their way to the nearest available port, that of Salto, the Uruguay terminus of the North Western Company.