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SLAVE TRADE. No. 4 (1883).

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REPORTS

ON THE

STATE OF THE SLAVE TRADE

AND

SLAVERY IN MOROCCO.

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.*

1883.

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## Reports on the State of the Slave Trade and Slavery in Morocco.

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### No. 1.

*Earl Granville to Sir J. Drummond Hay.*

Sir, *Foreign Office, April 20, 1883.*  
 I INCLOSE a paragraph which has appeared in the "Pall Mall Gazette," stating that frequent sales of slaves take place at Tangier; and I have to direct you to furnish me with a Report on the state of the Slave Trade and slavery in Morocco, and to obtain Reports from the Consular officers in your district.

I am, &c.  
 (Signed) GRANVILLE.

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### Inclosure in No. 1.

*Extract from the "Pall Mall Gazette" of April 16, 1883.*

THE SLAVE TRAFFIC AT TANGIER.—*Gibraltar, Monday.*—Information was recently sent of the public sale of a number of slaves in Tangier, and it is now stated that this scandal to civilization, almost within sight of a British possession, is of frequent occurrence. A letter received this morning states that another sale took place on Friday, and that the slave was sold for 52 dollars.

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### No. 2.

*Sir J. Drummond Hay to Earl Granville.—(Received May 9.)*

My Lord, *Tangier, May 1, 1883.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 20th ultimo, informing me that the attention of Her Majesty's Government has recently been called to a paragraph in the "Pall Mall Gazette," stating that frequent sales of slaves take place at Tangier, and directing me to furnish your Lordship with a Report on the state of the Slave Trade and slavery in Morocco.

Slaves are occasionally sold in Tangier, but the number sold annually in this town does not, I am told, exceed thirty or forty. They are not brought by ships, and I have never heard of any acts of cruelty or ill-treatment of the slaves when taking them to the place of sale; in fact, had not my attention been called to the article in the "St. James' Gazette" before I received your Lordship's despatch, I should probably not have been apprized that any slaves had recently been sold.

Earl Derby had directed me, in a despatch of the 29th February, 1876, to furnish his Lordship with a Report on the status of slaves in Morocco. I have the honour to refer your Lordship to the Report I transmitted in pursuance of his Lordship's instructions of the 30th March, 1876, as it contains all the information I have to impart on this subject.

I have addressed a Circular letter to the British Consular officers at the western ports, directing them to furnish me with Reports on the state of the Slave Trade and slavery in their respective Consular districts, which, when received, I will transmit to your Lordship.

I have, &c.  
 (Signed) J. H. DRUMMOND HAY.

## No. 3.

*Sir J. Drummond Hay to Earl Granville.—(Received May 29.)*

(Extract.)

*Tangier, May 23, 1883.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 1st instant, I have the honour to inclose copy of a Report on slavery which the Vice-Consul at Laraiche has transmitted.

## Inclosure in No. 3.

*Acting Vice-Consul Forde to Sir J. Drummond Hay.*

Sir,

*Laraiche, May 13, 1883.*

IN pursuance of instructions conveyed in your Excellency's Circular despatch dated 1st instant, I have the honour to report that in Laraiche the sale of slaves is on a very limited scale, there not being more than ten or twelve sold annually. In Alcazar, however, the trade is more extensive, there being an annual sale there of about 100 slaves, which are bought chiefly by Moors from the mountains in the neighbourhood of that town.

I should think that in no part of the world are slaves better, or, perhaps, so well treated, as in this country. A female slave who has children by her master cannot be sold again, and at the decease of her master is free, together with her children. Should a Moor marry his slavess, which is a common practice here, the latter is free from the moment of such marriage, and her offspring likewise. I know several instances of male slaves being intrusted with the management of their masters' farms; a part of the produce of which, in grain, cattle, &c., is set apart for their (slaves') special benefit.

Of course there are cases, but very few, where slaves are cruelly treated; but, as a rule, when a slave is flogged he generally deserves it. A simple proof that slaves here are generally well-treated is that very few attempt to escape, although they, especially the males, have ample opportunities of doing so, and of robbing their masters at the same time.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LEWIS FORDE.

## No. 4.

*Sir J. Drummond Hay to Earl Granville.—(Received June 14.)*

My Lord,

*Tangier, June 7, 1883.*

HAVING observed that a question was put to the Under-Secretary of State by Mr. McCarthy whether there was any truth in a telegram from Gibraltar, published in the London papers, viz., "that a slave (a woman) was admitted to the French hospital who had been compelled by her owner to use her bare feet every day in slacking lime. While she was in hospital her feet fell off, and both of her legs had to be amputated," I desire to place your Lordship in possession of the facts of this case.

A negress—a liberated slave—the servant of a Moor, had by accident stepped into or thrown over her feet a basin of quicklime. No proper remedies were applied, and the feet of the unfortunate woman became a mass of sores, and rendered her unfit for work, so her employer dismissed her, and has become by this heartless act very unpopular among his Mahomedan brethren.

This pitiable creature was observed by a member of my family crawling about the streets, and she obtained permission for the negress to be received in the French hospital. Gangrene having set in, the legs were amputated below the knees. The woman has quite recovered her health, and is now provided for by a member of my family and another charitable lady.

With regard to the sale of slaves in this town, there was one sold on the 20th and one on the 21st ultimo. It is probable that the number of slaves sold in Tangier this year may exceed forty, for wealthy Moors in the interior, in consequence of the agricultural distress during the last four years, send slaves to be sold at the ports, where the inhabitants, who are engaged in trade, are in better circumstances.

Slaves in the service of Mahommedans at Tangier are generally well treated and contented with their lot.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) J. H. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 5.

*Sir J. Drummond Hay to Earl Granville.—(Received June 23.)*

My Lord, *Tangier, June 16, 1883.*  
WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 20th April, and to the despatch that I addressed to your Lordship on the 1st May, regarding slavery in Morocco, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of the Reports of the Consular officers at the Moorish ports on this subject.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) J. H. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 5.

*Vice-Consul Redman to Sir J. Drummond Hay.*

Sir, *Mazagan, May , 1883.*  
I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Circular despatch of the 1st instant, requesting me to report to you, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, on the state of slavery and the Slave Trade in this town and within its Consular districts, and of the number of slaves that are sold annually, and of their treatment, both male and female.

I have now to inform you that the Slave Trade which is carried on in this town, at Azimor, and in the interior of the country within this Consular district, is by the selling of slaves by public auction on the market days, which are held weekly, to the highest bidders, at prices varying from 20 to 30 dollars for children and 30 to 40 dollars for adults of both sexes, and from 250 to 300 slaves, males and females, are annually sold in this manner at these public markets; but the supply and value of slaves varies in accordance with the times, the foregoing being the estimate for ordinary times, whereas with bad harvests and famine in the land the numbers are considerably increased for sale and their value much reduced.

Slaves, both male and female, are invariably badly treated by their owners, but more so with the males, who are subject to severe floggings and other acts of cruelty inflicted upon them; but in many cases this is resorted to through their own misconduct.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) ALFRED REDMAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 5.

*Vice-Consul Lapeen to Sir J. Drummond Hay.*

Sir, *Daralbaida, May 30, 1883.*  
I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's Circular despatch dated the 1st instant, directing me to furnish your Excellency with a Report on the state of the Slave Trade in this town and Consular district.

So far as I have been able to ascertain from the most reliable sources, which I consider the "delal," or auctioneer, and the collectors of gate taxes, the number of both males and females sold during the year may be calculated at from 100 to 120.

In this neighbourhood there are so many "sokos," or public markets, that there is no possibility of approaching anything like a fair estimate of the sales effected.

With respect to the treatment of the slaves, I have not heard any unfavourable report regarding the same, and I think that in town they are treated much the same as ordinary servants are treated by Europeans.

In the country there is a different style of harder work, and slaves there are called

upon to do it; however, I have never heard of ill-treatment; on the contrary, I find that slaves are pretty independent in the country.

I will not fail to mention that at times there are women sold as slaves who appear to have but very little black blood in them, being almost white in the skin.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) JOHN LAPPEN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 5.

*Report by Consul Payton on the Trade in Slaves in the Town of Mogador and the neighbouring District.*

THE slaves brought into this part of Morocco are believed to come mostly from various parts of the Soudan.

They are, in many cases, the spoils of warfare among the tribes of Guinea, Bombara, &c.

Their language is generally Genowera, or that of Guinea, but they rapidly learn Arabic.

From the large market of Timbuctoo, they are brought with trading caravans to a place called Tindouf. Thence they are dispatched in smaller caravans to various parts of the Empire of Morocco. As the majority of them are young children they generally arrive in weak condition, owing to the long journey over, for the most part, a hot and desert country.

In some of the chief towns, for instance, in Morocco and Fez, there is a special slave-market.

In Mogador there is no slave-market, but the public traffic is carried on by means of an auctioneer, who leads his human chattels through the streets, crying out the latest bid.

It is difficult to ascertain accurately the number annually sold by public auction, but from the various computations I have received, I should be inclined to put the number for Mogador at from forty to sixty.

Prices vary according to the state of the country, crops, &c., falling heavily in times of drought and scarcity, when the poorer owners of slaves, as of beasts of burthen, finding themselves unable to afford to buy adequate food for them, put them on the market.

An able-bodied negro was sold by public auction in March last for 7 dollars (1*l.* 8*s.*), whereas in more prosperous seasons his value might have reached as much as 50 dollars, or 10*l.* A little girl of about 10 years old was lately sold for 12 dollars.

The highest prices for female slaves are those paid for virgins. For such as realize the Moorish ideas of beauty, 15*l.* and 20*l.* are by no means outside prices, while *white*, or Mulatto maidens, often of undeniable beauty, would fetch double the last amount, though transactions in this class of slaves are conducted with so much secrecy that trustworthy details are hardly obtainable.

Slaves, both male and female, are *generally* well treated by their Moorish proprietors; kindness to slaves being enjoined in several passages of the Koran, while self-interest naturally prompts most masters to feed their human cattle as well as their horses and mules.

Complaints by a slave against his master may be heard and decided upon by the Kadi (a religious Judge, who administers the law according to the Koran).

In cases of proved ill-treatment, or insufficient food, the general remedy is the putting up of the slave to public auction, to be purchased by another master.

Ill-used slaves sometimes take refuge or sanctuary with influential persons, imploring them to use their influence to have them put up to sale.

As to the social and moral condition of slaves, it may suffice to say that neither law nor custom appears to provide any safeguard for the chastity of girls and the honour of married slaves, or against the separation of husband from wife, and children from parents.

Slaves, unless specially bequeathed, may have to be resold on the death of an owner, and the law can demand the sale of all slaves, even of a cherished concubine, in case of bankruptcy.

Slaves are often hired out by their masters as domestic servants, or sent to make money by selling bread, &c., in the markets, while many of them are skilful mechanics.





The slaves are exposed for sale in the public markets and streets, and march for several hours behind the "delal," or auctioneer, who calls out the highest bid. If very young and without parents, the auctioneer carries the slave on his shoulders.

The persons sold are not limited to the blacks, who are brought principally from the fairs held in the southern parts of this Empire, but include persons of both sexes, of all ages, and of all colours and shades, varying from white to black. Some are sold by private contract, and in many instances free-born girls and children are abducted and sold into slavery.

The Government receive 5 per cent. on the value of the slave sold, of which  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. is required from the seller and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. from the buyer. This tax must be paid before the legal document of sale is allowed to be written.

The Arabs buy slaves (male and female) chiefly for work, and treat them, as a rule, fairly well: but there are exceptions, when they are most cruelly treated, and undergo great hardships. A great many female slaves are bought by Moors in a position of affluence, and by Arabs also, for concubinage and immorality, and these are subjected to the most degrading treatment that can be conceived. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to get access to the places where female slaves of this description are confined. Suffice to imagine unprotected young females, some of whom are handsome, in the hands of savage barbarians, who have virtually the power of death over their victims, for no inquiries are ever made into the causes of death; and the only restraint, therefore, is the slave-owner's pecuniary interest in his slave. I have heard and know of cases of slaves being well treated by their owners, and I have also learnt most distressing cases of cruelty which is inseparable from the principle of slavery.

There are regular traders here who buy and sell slaves, and there are slave-owners who not only avail themselves of the services of their slaves, but keep them like cattle for breeding, and in many instances have even sold their own children. When in Morocco, I was informed of a Sherceef residing in the Atlas Mountains, who received young boys, brought from Sûs and other parts, to render them eunuchs, which atrocious but lucrative trade he practised and carried on regularly, with few fatal cases in the performance of the operation.

Although the Moorish "Shraa" professes to protect Mahommedans in slavery from cruelty on the part of their owners, it is impossible, where there is so much corruption, protracted litigation, and expense, that a person in slavery can in any way avail of it; for no sanctuary or place (with the exception of a foreign Consulate) can afford the slave protection or refuge from an owner, and slaves are not supposed to have any means at their disposal, unless they have stolen their master's property.

I have often exerted my Consular influence to mitigate the sufferings of slaves who have appealed to me for protection, being confident of support at head-quarters; and I have been the means on several occasions of slaves obtaining their liberty by advancing them sums to pay their masters their market value, but generally, the most I have been able to do was to insist upon the change of ownership, and that was gratefully received by the slave. In justice to the local authorities, who are all slave-owners, I must mention that my representations were well received.

In conclusion, I am exceedingly glad to find that some notice is being taken of the Slave Trade in this country, and I hope that the efforts made in the cause of liberty and freedom of mankind may be crowned ere long by the entire abolition of this vile Traffic and of slavery, a step which, I venture to remark, will be in the right direction for the advancement of civilization in this empire of darkness.

(Signed)

GEORGE P HUNOT.

*Saffee, May, 30, 1883.*

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Inclosure 6 in No. 5.

*Mr. Nahon to Sir J. Drummond Hay.*

(Translation.)

Sir,

*Tetuan, June 8, 1883.*

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your Excellency's Circular despatch of the 1st May regarding slavery and the Slave Trade in this Consular district, I have the honour to report that about twenty slaves, of both sexes, are sold annually in this town.

Slaves of either sex are generally well treated and well clothed, and sometimes are put to school and instructed in some industry by their owners.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

ISAAC S. NAHON.

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*Earl Granville to Sir J. Drummond Hay.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, July 2, 1883.*

THE reports on slavery in Morocco, forwarded by you with your despatches of the 1st May and of the 16th June, show that this evil exists in a form and to an extent which it is painful to learn. Though the reports differ as to the treatment which slaves receive at the hands of their masters, they show that men, women, and children are hawked about through the streets of many of the towns and sold by auction, that they may be resold on the death or bankruptcy of their owners; that there is no security against the separation of wives from husbands, or of children from parents; that cruelty is not infrequent, and that the only remedy for which an ill-used slave can hope, who cannot obtain his freedom, is a change of master. No security is provided for the chastity of women, nor for their rescue from degradation. Many instances, perhaps the majority of cases, might be appealed to in which slaves are kindly treated and well cared for, but the fact cannot be gainsaid that the system of slavery exists in the Empire, with some of its most revolting features.

Her Majesty's Government have no ground for interference founded on Conventions, nor do they wish to make protests in individual cases; but they would, in the interest of humanity, make an earnest appeal to the Emperor, and ask him to consider whether the time has not come when he would be ready to place himself on a level with other civilized rulers by taking steps to abolish slavery in his dominions. They are aware of the difficulty which the Government of the Emperor may meet in dealing with a long-established custom, but that difficulty has been found not to be insuperable by other Mahomedan Sovereigns. His Majesty might be assured that any step taken by him in this direction would be welcomed not only in this country, but in the civilized world; whereas the position of his State, as the only territory bordering on the Mediterranean in which no effort is made to combat this evil, must become daily more intolerable in the eyes of all nations, whatever may be their religious creed.

I have to instruct you to make a strong representation to the Moorish Government in this sense, and to lose no opportunity of renewing your efforts whenever a favourable opportunity may offer.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

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