

THE GORDON MEMORIAL.

BY THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

WHEN the Gordon Memorial Committee at the Mansion House decided that the completion of the Hospital at Port Said should be the first charge upon the contributions raised for the GORDON memorial, it carefully provided that the surplus should be devoted to some object to which his heart and life had been given. Of all his various works of human sympathy there was none so vast or so near his heart as the extinction of the slave trade in Africa, and especially in the Soudan. The project of the Hospital at Port Said having been found impracticable, has been withdrawn.

England at this moment has an absolutely free hand in dealing with the slave trade in ~~the Soudan~~, and it is under the highest and weightiest obligations not to withdraw its foot from those afflicted lands until it has rendered the slave trade henceforth impossible. It is first to be remembered that, by the convention of 1877 between the Government of the KHEDIVE and the Government of this country, England has a right to guard all the coasts and waters of Egypt with our cruisers, and that a reciprocal right to search has been interchanged between the two Governments whereby we are empowered to board and examine all the vessels in those waters, to deal summarily with the slave-traders, and to set all captured slaves free. To this may be added that man-stealers are enemies of the human race, and that every Power, Christian or otherwise, has a right to deal with them upon the broad sea.

It is also to be borne in mind that, by the declaration of MR. GLADSTONE, the Soudan south of Wadi Halfa was to be abandoned. It belongs, therefore, no longer to Egypt. It has no Government of its own. Most assuredly it does not belong to the nomad tribes of Arabs, the slave-traders and persecutors of the Soudanese. To whom then does the Soudan belong beyond the frontiers of Egypt? It belongs to the tribes, unwarlike, peaceful, agricultural, and promptly capable of civilisation, who are at this moment harried and carried off with inhuman cruelty and every kind of atrocity by the savage Arab slave raiders. If they were able to use arms in self-defence, the slave-hunters would not

venture to set a foot in their villages. At this time they are unorganised, unarmed, and helpless, a prey to the savage Arab race, and what is worse than this, the slave-raiders are teaching them that the slave-trade is a source of wealth, and are employing them as agents to destroy each other and to sell the women and children for the slave market. The slave-trade is being propagated year by year, and fatally among the tribes of the South, by the murdering Arabs.

There is no bar to the intervention of Christian England in behalf of the people of the Soudan. The Catholic Church, by its head, has solemnly condemned the modern and un-Christian doctrine of non-intervention. No more luminous example could be found of the justice of this condemnation than the condition of the Soudanese tribes. It is calculated that in the basin of the Nile south of Wadi Halfa there cannot be less than eighteen millions of various tribes. Of these the Gallas tribe alone is said to contain about eight millions. They are a people of a much higher type, both physical and moral, than the negroes; and, for many reasons attract more than the other tribes the abominable atrocities of the slave raiders.

Every law of natural humanity and of Christian justice warrants the people of Christian England, both by its Government and by its own free agency, to penetrate the whole field of these oppressed populations, to provide them with the discipline and the means of self defence, and to teach them the arts of peace. We are informed by those who have travelled in the Soudan, that the Arab population by which the millions in the basin of the Nile are at this time harried and driven off into slavery, does not reach to a million. They are not Soudanese, and may be regarded as invaders, aggressors, and foreign enemies. England has a perfect right to intervene and protect the millions that cannot protect themselves against the dealings, I will not say unjust, but ~~inhuman and abominable~~, of savage invading aggressors. I know of only one plea that modern politicians could set up against this doctrine of intervention, namely, that no foreign people has a right to intervene against the will of another people in its internal and political affairs. The man who shall apply this doctrine to the case of the Arabs and Soudanese, does not deserve a serious answer. There is no term in the proposition that is applicable to their case. I may perhaps be asked what form of intervention shall we take. And I say without hesitation the form of a Nile Association analogous to the Association of the Congo. If the waters of the Upper Nile were covered with industry and commerce, the slave trade would die a natural death. Even the Arabs would cease to sell men if they could obtain greater wealth by selling the products of industry. The soil of the Soudan is described as fruitful to exuberance. It can grow corn and cotton and sugar cane and every form of seed. MR. JOHNSTON in his adventurous and valuable experience has ascertained that this ~~simple~~ race are especially apt in agriculture and in the cultivation of the soil. He supplied them with seed, and found habits of simple industry to spring up at once. We need not quote the opinion of SIR SAMUEL BAKER, who has told us that a commercial company with a few steamers on the Nile, and, in the then condition of the country, two military stations by way of a police would have stopped the slave trade; nor need we quote the opinion recently given by MR. STANLEY, that a Commercial Association on the Upper Nile would surely not only extinguish the slave trade, but spread civilization in the basin of the Nile—and not this only, but that the civilization of the Nile and the civilisation of the Congo would, in the end, become confluent. In this way the heart of Africa would be opened to the Christian world. This then is the true memorial of the heroic life and death of CHARLES GORDON.

HENRY E. CARDINAL MANNING, Archbishop

with Subj. Compt



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