

THE NEGRO IN THE NEW WORLD.¹

WHEN, more than four centuries ago, the Portuguese obtained the sanction of the Roman Pontiff to engage in the African slave trade, and, some years later (Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494), Pope Alexander VI. assigned to Portugal the west coast of Africa and to Spain the New World (of which Portugal claimed Brazil, in accordance with the terms of the treaty), it could not have been foreseen that these acts were the first steps in the vastest anthropological experiment the world has ever witnessed, the effects of which for many ages to come are likely to confound and confuse the politics of the Americas. In Portugal itself the population has been transformed into Africanised mongrels, who at the present moment are busily engaged in casting out the representatives of the church that permitted them to begin the process of wholesale racial admixture four hundred years ago.

Negro slavery and the breeding of a mulatto population were by no means novel phenomena in 1494, for even then Egypt had been familiar with them for forty-five centuries; and, in less remote times, Arabia and western Asia, Greece, and Rome, Tunis and Morocco were only too familiar with the black slave and the half-caste. But the coincidence of the introduction of negro slaves into Portugal and the opening up of the New World by the two peninsular kingdoms makes the beginning of the sixteenth century—for the experiment of sending negroes to the West Indies began in 1516—a landmark in the history of the world.

Sir Harry Johnston has given a very complete history, without sparing us any of its appalling horrors, of the iniquitous traffic in black slaves, which ultimately led to the transference from one side of the globe to the other, and that a new continent, of a population (whose descendants now number twenty-five millions), which had grown up in the seclusion of the heart of Africa and had there become divergently specialised from the rest of mankind in bodily structure and mental and moral qualities. He has drawn a most graphic picture of how these negro people behaved in their new home, as they came into contact successively with the aboriginal Americans, and also the Iberians and the northern Europeans, who had settled in the New World.

Nothing has surprised the "lay" reviewers of this book in the newspaper press more than the revelation of the gross inhumanity of the representatives of the north European race (the English and the Dutch) towards the negro slave, when contrasted with the more generous behaviour of the Iberian and other Mediterranean peoples. Lamentable and indisputable as is the fact, the explanation is simple enough. The Mediterranean race was evolved and fashioned in an environment similar to, and perhaps in the same continent as, the African negro, and not only developed mental and moral qualities in many respects closely resembling those of the negro, which explains their mutual understanding the one of the other; but also the black and the brunet race had been in contact for many ages, had inter-

bred, and had come to give equal rights to the offspring of mixed unions.

The blond people of the north, the representatives of a more austere civilisation, had nothing in common with the lazy, lascivious negro, and had no knowledge of or sympathy with him. Thus they came to treat him and his offspring, whether pure or mixed, as an inferior being of low intelligence and dirty habits.

When Mr. Roosevelt (at the time President of the United States) invited Sir Harry Johnston to undertake an investigation of the problems of the negro in the New World, he could not have chosen anyone to accomplish this task better fitted by personal knowledge and exceptionally wide experience of the negro in his native haunts.

Others may possibly have had equal opportunities



FIG. 1.—Type of the Virginian Negro of Slavery Days. From "The Negro in the New World."

of studying the negro in Africa, but certainly no one has made such excellent use of them as Sir Harry Johnston, who has already written eleven volumes on the subject.

With such an intimate knowledge of the essential negro, Sir Harry Johnston was well equipped for the examination of his behaviour under the influence of his altered surroundings in the New World.

In this book he has given us a detailed account, illustrated by maps and hundreds of excellent photographs, of the nature of each territory in the New World occupied by negroes or negroids, its commercial resources and social conditions, the place occupied in it by the black man, and especially the half-caste, and the degree of success and the possibilities for the

¹ "The Negro in the New World." By Sir Harry H. Johnston, G.C.M.G., K.C.B. Pp. xxix+499. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1910.) Price 21s. net.

future in ameliorating the lot and uplifting the coloured people, socially and morally.

Although no one is more fully aware than Sir Harry Johnston of the failings and moral weaknesses of the negro, he takes a very hopeful view—which many persons with a less intimate knowledge of the black man may think unreasonably sanguine—of his future, and especially of the hybrid's prospects, in the New World, provided only that he follows the example and teaching of his great and wise leader, Dr. Booker Washington, who "wants the negro to become the most industrious race in the United States" (p. 407), because only work will exhaust his energies and keep him out of mischief.

The book starts with a statement of Sir Harry Johnston's views on the negro's place in nature, which for the most part are well known to readers of his other books.

It is unfortunate, however, that on the very slender basis of the evidence afforded by the skeletons in the Grimaldi caves (see p. 26) he extends the habitat of



FIG. 2.—Type of Modern Negro; an electrical engineer trained at Tuskegee. From "The Negro in the New World."

the negro over half the continent of Europe and the whole of the British Isles!

It is not as a work of science, however, that this work, with its introductory *vulgarisation* of anthropology, is to be judged, but as a book of exceptional interest, and as the reasoned judgment of a man of wide experience on one of the most difficult sociological problems of the present time.

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GEOLOGICAL CHRONOLOGY.¹

THE vexed question of the age of the earth has passed through several distinct phases. Lyell and his contemporaries, accustomed to dwell on the extreme slowness of geological processes, considered themselves free to make unlimited "drafts on the

¹ "A Preliminary Study of Chemical Denudation." By F. W. Clarke. Pp. 19. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, vol. lvi., No. 5. (Washington, 1910.)

² "The Age of the Earth." By G. F. Becker. Pp. 28. *Ibid.*, vol. lvi., No. 6. (Washington, 1910.)

bank of time"; but, since 1862, this position has been seriously challenged from the physical side. The chief argument brought against it was that, granting the globe to have cooled from a molten state, it would attain its assumed present thermal condition in a few scores of millions of years, only a fraction of which time would be available for the stratigraphical record. If the general body of geologists, influenced by the high authority of Lord Kelvin, have tried to adapt themselves to this narrow limitation, it has not been without reluctance, and some sturdy dissentients have refused any such coercion. To these, during the last few years, welcome support has come from unexpected quarters. The nebular hypothesis of the earth's origin, upon which the estimates of Kelvin and King were tacitly based, has been shaken by Moulton's calculations and other arguments put forward by Chamberlin. Moreover, the remarkable discoveries in the domain of radio-activity have compelled a reconsideration of the thermal state of the globe. Estimates of the earth's age deduced from its supposed rate of cooling clearly become futile if we have no good reason for believing that the earth is a cooling body. On the other hand, from the radio-active properties of various minerals Strutt has deduced geological ages liberal enough for the most extreme uniformitarian.

The debate concerning the age of the earth is thus no longer an issue between geologists and physicists, since the newer school of physics has declared on the side of the ampler chronology. Meanwhile, there has arisen within the body of geologists a formidable minority who contend, on geological grounds, for an estimate of geological time no more elastic than that imposed by the old argument from refrigeration. The discussion has followed two distinct lines, starting on one hand from the rate of accumulation of sediments, and on the other from the rate at which sodium is carried down by rivers into the sea. The interesting memoirs by Mr. Clarke and Dr. Becker, recently published by the Smithsonian Institution, deal mainly with the second mode of approaching the problem, but Becker offers also a revised estimate of the earth's age as calculated from the rate of cooling.

In 1899 Prof. Joly made estimates, first, of the total amount of sodium contained in the ocean, and, secondly, of the amount annually carried down by rivers, and, dividing the one by the other, obtained the quotient 97,600,000 years as the age of the ocean, supposed to be initially of fresh water. If the sea contained some salt from the beginning, this figure must be reduced accordingly. The choice of sodium is dictated by the consideration that this constituent is less removed from sea-water than any other. A relatively small correction is made for salt carried inland by the wind, and it is assumed that there is no other process of importance by which sodium is being continually removed from the oceanic waters. We may note in passing that certain observed facts, such as the evident chemical action of sea-water upon potash-granites, throw some doubt upon this assumption.

The data at Joly's command were very defective, and the main object of Clarke's memoir is to revise the calculation in the light of more recent information. In particular he has drawn upon the large mass of observations relative to the discharge, drainage-areas, and salinity of American rivers contained in the Water-Supply Papers of the United States Geological Survey. He has brought together the available information on the same points for other parts of the world, and indicated where additional observations are especially desirable. The "denudation factor," *i.e.* the number of metric tons annually removed in solution from each square mile of a drainage-basin, varies from 105 for the St. Lawrence to 16 for the Nile, and the