

Congo Atrocities Duplicated

Putumayo Indians on Upper Amazon Enslaved by Rubber Companies and Subjected to Tortures and Cruelties That Overshadow Those of African Districts

Several years ago the world was shocked by revelations of terrible atrocities perpetrated upon natives of the Congo region in Africa by the Belgians under King Leopold. Developments and investigations into conditions in this district proved that the king was actually responsible for and shared in the profits of these cruelties. The toll exacted from the enslaved natives for the production of rubber was found to be never less than perpetual slavery, and often the life of the slave. The natives were held in a subjection so complete that failure to produce the stipulated amount of rubber each week meant flogging, torture, the loss of a finger, a limb or a life. The entire world was aroused by the recitation of these atrocities and pressure was brought upon Belgium to put a stop to them.

But the lesson taught in this instance has not stopped the practice, for there still exist isolated sections where innocent natives are subjected to the cruel and inhuman rule of civilized masters for the enrichment of the latter. Latest of these is the tale of the Putumayo abuses in Peru, the "British Congo," which for dire cruelty and malicious tyranny surpasses and overshadows those of the Congo. The truth about conditions in these districts is just coming to light, following investigations by a special committee appointed by the British House of Commons, and the world stands aghast at the revelations of this committee.

The Putumayo district is located on the upper waters of the Amazon River in Peru. Far from the incursions of civilization, in forest so dense as to defy the advance of the foreigner unused to traversing the wilds of an Amazon jungle, the native Indians lived very much to themselves, caring little for the warpath and only fighting when their home was threatened. For the Putumayo Indian is averse to bloodshed and peaceable by nature. Perhaps this fact made their conquest the more easy, for the enslavement of these tribes began early. Even in 1706 the story of inroads into this district by Spanish slavers was brought to the world, and the business of enslaving South American Indians received quite a stimulus. During the years following Spanish soldiers were stationed at points of vantage along the Amazon to prevent the incursions of Portuguese slavers into this "rich" country. Because of their peaceful dispositions the Indians were easy prey, and the country was reported by a prominent official as "the most favorable district for catching Indians."

Until a world sentiment against the enslaving of humanity, regardless of color, became so intense that civilized nations dared not practice it openly, the districts of the upper Amazon furnished their share of the slaves of

the world. Then civilization found a new slavery, and under the guise of commercialism corporations kept under subjection helpless tribes in places far distant from a disturbing public sentiment. The man who buys his rubbers in the heart of the great city, surrounded by every comfort and necessity, knows nothing of the toll of human life that has been exacted to bring the finished product to his use. The evils of our body politic, the sweat shop, the poor wage of the manufacturer's employe fade into insignificance beside the awful story of cruelty administered upon the defenseless back of the savage, who cannot return the blow. With crude, primitive weapons that cannot cope with the modern firearms of the whites, his tribe reduced to but a fraction of its former strength, ambition killed, strength wasted and courage all fagged out, he can but bow meekly to the subjugation of his master and toll the harder to stave off starvation.

It is no crime to kill an Indian in the Putumayo district. In habits very little above the jungle beast, of intelligence cultivated only to the meager necessities of his uneventful life, wearing no clothing and preparing food only for the present, he presents to the unscrupulous overseer little more than the subservient pack animal. Satisfied with a few beads at first in return for the gourd of rubber, knowing nothing of the value of his toil, the price paid for each day's labor is lessened and the number of hours he must work increased. For the control of the overseer is complete. Gradually, as the system grew, the poor native found it impossible to secure the required amount of rubber, and his pay was withheld until he should bring in the stipend. So he found it impossible to sustain life without putting in the greater part of the 24 hours of each day. If he failed to furnish the stipulated amount he was flogged, sometimes until the bones were bared, given but a crust of bread and kicked out into the forest to make up the shortage. If he tried to escape into the forest to take up again his free life, the hunting party sought him out and brought him back, to sacrifice a finger or a hand for his insubordination. Often the thing that kept him at work was the captivity of his wife or daughter to serve the lusts of the company's employes. Family ties brought him back again and again to camp when he might perhaps have effected his escape. Still finding it impossible to bring in the required amount of rubber each day or week, the youngest members of his family were brought into service and eventually he found that the work of the entire family would barely sustain life. All this was made possible by a complete system of private military patrol and intimidation. And these are the

conditions that exist today as revealed by the late report.

Some time ago an American engineer, W. E. Brandenburg, reported conditions in the Amazon country and the Peruvian government made pretenses at correcting the abuses. Their efforts were mere sham, however, for conditions there today are more revolting than those of the Congo years ago. Sir Roger Casement, who was sent by the foreign office to make a personal investigation, attested to many of the revelations of the Hardenburg expose in his testimony before the board of inquiry. One incident is related in which a small colony of Indians was discovered by scouts and the older members of the family barely had time to escape. They left 18 children behind in the huts, thinking they might be passed by and would later be recovered. The scouts, however, upon finding the children without the adults, brained the entire number by seizing them by the legs and swinging their heads against trees. The testimony showed that old and useless natives were ruthlessly murdered, as were also children too young to be of service. They have been tortured with fire and water and in some cases crucified with their heads downward. The women have been subjected to outrages unspeakable and the men dare not rise up in their defense. Many have been sold into slavery at prices ranging from \$100 to \$300. To kill an Indian is not murder, for he has no human or civil rights. One Indian exhibited a flask of powder, a few fishhooks and some strings of beads as his remuneration for three years' work. And during all this time he had been supplied with barely sufficient food for his wants. In the Congo troubles it was shown that natives were supplied with a fair remuneration and with food for long journeys. In Putumayo instances are related where Indians made journeys of 60 miles with no remuneration and no food for the journey.

Much opposition is found against the cause of foreign missions, the argument being advanced that there is work enough at home. But, eliminating entirely the religious element in the missionary movement, we can find justification for it in the publicity given such abuses as these and the resultant removal of them. For the world is interested in the promotion of the welfare of its people and civilization owes its advance to that element in it which has made it look to the interests of those less favorably situated. The civilized world will rise up and remonstrate against these abuses on the Amazon and those responsible for them will be made to feel the pressure of a greater power. Steps are already being taken to rectify conditions among the Putumayo Indians and the abuses will be stopped.

Would Restore Canteen

Major-General Wood Recommends Return to Old System, Abolished Eleven Years Ago

Major General Leonard Wood has come out in favor of a restoration of the army canteen, an institution that died by act of congress in 1901 and has been the subject of much discussion pro and con since that time. At the time of its passing much bitterness was engendered between its enemies and its exponents, so high did feeling run as to the effect its removal would have upon the army. From time to time since 1901 the advisability of re-establishing the canteen as an army institution has been brought before the American people in one form or another and the old fire of opposition is kindled anew. These outbursts in favor of a re-establishment are prompted by reports that while the number of applicants for the army is increasing, the number of desertions, court-martials and guard-house sentences is increasing in greater proportion. It is doubtful if the canteen as a government institution will ever be re-established, for the growth of prohibition sentiment makes its chances yearly more remote. It is well, however, to consider seriously the conditions that have arisen since the canteen went out of existence, to the end that abuses attendant upon the life of the young soldier may be lessened through the medium of an aroused public sentiment.

The army canteen, as originally established, was no canteen at all. It was simply a sort of clubhouse where the soldiers could gather and pass the idle hours in playing games and partaking of refreshments, all liquors being barred. Later permission was granted to serve beer and wine under the restrictions and supervision of the post officers. Gradually the institution degenerated into a drinking saloon, with all its attendant evils, well regulated in some posts, but grossly neglected in others. The debauchery attendant upon the worst of these places became the subject of severe denunciation, and a cry for the abolition of the nuisance, as it was believed to be, went up from all over the country. Some cried for regulation as the remedy, and these numbered many of the most prominent and reputable men of the country. But the demand for abolition was so strong that congress

yielded and the institution went out of existence.

During all the heated discussions relative to this important matter, General Nelson A. Miles stood unequivocally for abolition. He supported his contention with facts regarding drunkenness among soldiers before and after and laid stress particularly upon the decrease in court-martials after the canteen was destroyed. But conditions are different today, hence the revival of this question.

As soon as the canteen as an army institution disappeared, a new evil began to appear in the shape of a licensed saloon at the border of the camp. The liquor interests were quick to see the opportunity, and in fact, many suspected that the large liquor interests had been strongest among the opponents of the canteen. For, it was pointed out, the canteen could dispense only beer and wine, while a licensed saloon, close enough to the post to command its patronage, could sell anything at all, and there would be no limit to the amount a soldier could drink. So the licensed saloon became a reality and along with it came the brothel and the joint. The result is that today the soldier finds these institutions at his very door and no officer is there to call a halt when he has imbibed too much. Frequent fights and disorderly scenes, a guard-house sentence and sometimes a court-martial follow.

Abundant testimony to these conditions is given in the reports of Secretary of War Stimson and Major-General Wood. Secretary Stimson says he has visited personally forty-nine of the military posts of the country and in every instance found a formidable row of saloons and joints at the very gates of the barracks. He testifies to the spread of certain diseases among the soldiers, which he attributes to the habits and associates of the post saloon. He makes a plea for regulation of the evil through a restoration of the canteen.

On the other hand, those who know the canteen as it was in its last days are loud in remonstrance against its re-establishment. It is reported that, far from being regulated as its exponents would have it, the canteen was the scene of many a debauching episode. Soldiers received credit at the

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army saloon and drank their money before it was received. When payday came, the canteen collector was by the side of the paymaster and read out his claim against the pay check. Many of the soldiers had little of their small wages left when the drink bill had been satisfied. Men who know say that drunkenness was frequent, but that a sympathetic comrade was always on hand to assist the unfortunate soldier to his bunk and sober him off. It is said that the officers had their separate clubrooms close to the canteen where the selection of liquors was not confined to the beer and light refreshments allowed by the government. Other incidents are related to prove the evils attendant upon the canteen, and should the matter come up before congress the fight will be as bitter as formerly.

It is well known that the abolition of the canteen was brought about largely through the efforts of the W. C. T. U. whose object was to take from the government all semblance of a partnership in the liquor business. These forces will line up anew against the canteen should congress see fit to undertake its re-establishment. Whether the outpost saloon would go when the canteen is reopened would have much to do with sentiment in regard to it.

In his annual report Major General Wood sums up his own position on the subject as follows: "The great majority of officers of the army are of the opinion that the re-establishment of the canteen under proper supervision would tend to improve the health, discipline and efficiency of the service through decreasing intemperance and immorality. I concur in this opinion."

Third Impeachment in History of United States

For the third time in the history of the United States a judge has been stripped of his office and forbidden forever to hold office under the Federal government. Robert W. Archbald has been adjudged guilty of using the power of his office to further his own interests and those of his friends while judge of the commerce court. The particular offense related to intrigue with officials of the Erie railroad for certain coal lands in Pennsylvania, thirteen counts being found against him, on five of which he was acquitted. The trial was a long one, having started last summer. The trial is the ninth since the declaration of independence, six of which involved judges, one a senator, one a secretary of war and one a president, Johnson. The convictions have all been in the case of judges, President Johnson having fallen one short of the necessary two-thirds in the senate.

The career of Judge Archbald is an interesting one. In 1885 he was a partner in the Amity Coal Company, which was charged by the supreme court of Pennsylvania with so conducting business that it was "an evasion of the law and a fraud upon the public." Archbald lost all he had in this suit, but continued to rise through the influence of Quay and Penrose. The same year the Amity Coal Company failed he was appointed judge of the Pennsylvania court of common pleas and six years later was made district judge. In 1910 he was named by Taft for a place on the commerce court, but did not take his seat until the following year.



Robert W. Archbald, Lately Shorn of His Juicial Honors

As Soon as Possible.

Paddy Dolan bought a watch from the local jeweler with a guarantee to keep it in order for 12 months. About six months later Paddy took it back because it had stopped.

"You seem to have had an accident with it," said the jeweler.

"A small one, shure enough, sor. About two months ago I was feeding the pig and it fell into the trough."

"But you should have brought it before."

"Shure, Mike. I brought it as soon as I could. We killed the pig only yesterday."—Country Gentleman.

Theodore Roberts, the actor, says he can not afford to pay alimony. Therefore, he goes to jail.

For a badly beaten ruler, the Sultan of Turkey is making a pretty lively fight. Perhaps he is only taking a breathing spell.

\$1,100,000 is a pretty stiff bail to be taxed against 33 men. President Ryan seems to be the most favored, with \$70,000 against him.

Secretary Wilson's 16 years of service have been fruitful ones.

The city of Northampton, Mass., has inaugurated a new experiment in American life—a theater owned by the municipality and operated under its control.

Postoffice officials all over the country are having their innings now. It will take time for the Parcels Post to adjust itself completely to a perfect conformity with the perplexities of our national life.

Now the Southern Pacific stands a good show of losing several million dollars of oil lands in California.

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