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BRITISH EVANGELICALS, NATIVE PEOPLES AND THE CONCEPT OF EMPIRE, 1837-1852

by

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A THESIS

Presented to the Department of History
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

August 1963

APPROVED

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INTRODUCTION

The concern of the English humanitarians for the native peoples of the empire did not end with the emancipation of negro slaves in 1833. The spiritual and material welfare of the non-Europeans continued to receive the solicitous attention of various organizations and societies. Most prominent among these were the great missionary societies; but there were lesser bodies devoted to the elevation of primitive peoples. The Aborigines Protection Society was one such organization. Boasting a small, but remarkable, membership, its influence was considerable in the early Victorian era when humanitarianism held such wide sway in British policy and opinion.

The adherents of this Society, principally the followers and colleagues of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, may be termed evangelical humanitarians. The term evangelical humanitarian denotes the more restrictive body of humanitarians whose opinions rested almost exclusively upon the tenets of the evangelical faith, and whose motives were more primarily religious rather than philosophical. Piety and Christian sentiment provided its driving force.

Yet all evangelical humanitarians were not simply "other-worldly." Though the great Church and Wesleyan

Missionary Societies naturally placed their first emphasis upon things spiritual, they were not unmindful of the material needs of the "heathen." It was, however, the Aborigines Protection Society which, among the evangelicals, took as its prime concern the physical needs of the native peoples under the British flag. Thus its professed aim was to minister to the earthly wants of the aboriginal peoples, complementing the ministry of the missionary bodies. Evangelicalism, motivating men such as Lord Shaftesbury, contributed significantly to a variety of social reforms in nineteenth century England. Buxton and his followers showed a similar concern for the ill-used natives in the far reaches of the empire. This preoccupation with the native, praised by some and denounced by others, colored the evangelical humanitarian outlook on many imperial questions, and led them to formulate distinctive principles with respect to the empire.

The problem of native peoples from 1833 to mid-century had broad ramifications which embraced such diverse topics as land settlement, immigration, trusteeship, annexation, colonial administration, and self-government. To such topics the evangelical humanitarians often addressed themselves. At times they appeared quite in tune with their age; at others they seemed at odds

with prevailing trends. Always their concern for African Negroes, New Zealand Maoris, or Australian blackfellows--on occasions quite short-sighted and without a deep understanding of the problems faced--determined their position.

The years under consideration, 1837-1852, were momentous in English life and politics. It was the era of the factory acts, of corn law repeal, of Chartism. This domestic background, however, seems scarcely reflected in the literature of the Aborigines Protection Society. Its efforts were so single-minded as to exclude all extraneous concerns. Committed to the protection of native peoples, it maintained a rigid devotion to that single end. For that reason, the history of the Society in this era may be studied without any extensive consideration of many of the contemporary issues.

There is no recent adequate biography of the founder of the Society, and its president until his death in 1845, Thomas Fowell Buxton. His Memoirs, published by his son Charles shortly after his death, give valuable information concerning his politics and principles. The only recent work is a brief biography by R. H. Mottram entitled Buxton the Liberator.[1] Much of this small volume,

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[1] R. H. Mottram, Buxton the Liberator (London, 1946)

however, is merely a paraphrase of the Memoirs. It is extremely lauditory and uncritical, and entirely lacks documentation. Some effort has been made, therefore, to sketch the pertinent aspects of Buxton's career as founder of the Society, drawing principally on the Memoirs, his own writing on Africa, and the records of his parliamentary activities, particularly as chairman of the select committee of 1836-37 on the aborigines in the empire. The imprint of Buxton on this parliamentary committee and on the society that sprang from its investigations is unmistakable.

The two decades after the slave emancipation act were important in the history of the empire. In this era colonization and its kindred problems of self-government, annexation, and native policy were examined and re-examined. The end of this period was marked by significant changes in the empire, for mid-century found the issue of colonial self-government widely debated, and a large degree of legislative independence won by Australia, New Zealand and South Africa in new constitutional acts passed by the Westminster parliament. By 1850 the high-tide of evangelical humanitarian influence had passed, but the principles of trusteeship had been widely diffused throughout the empire. After 1850, the interests of the British public and of parliament moved steadily in other

directions. The native question was raised less frequently. Issues such as the Eastern Question were commanding a larger share of Englishmen's attention. Accordingly the role of the Aborigines Protection Society declined. While it continued to function long after the terminal date of this study, its place in English life seems to have diminished greatly. The termination in 1854 of its own periodical, the Colonial Intelligencer, is symptomatic of its declining virility. Despite the limited size of the Aborigines Protection Society it took an active part in the wide discussion of empire in these formative years prior to mid-century. Whether petitioning parliament or publishing its numerous pamphlets, its defense of the native peoples of the empire was adamant.

Opposition was natural. Clearly, many interests in England were little concerned with the welfare of natives in distant lands. Certain colonial interests were frankly opposed to the aims of the Society. Among the most idealistic of these opponents was Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the famous originator of the system of scientific colonization and the leader of a faction of colonial reformers who boasted a faith in the future of the British empire when many pessimistic observers forecast its dissolution. The antagonism between the scientific colonizers and the evangelical humanitarians has received

wide attention. Less often noticed were the efforts at cooperation which were made between the Wakefield interests and the Aborigines Protection Society. That these efforts failed was in large part a matter of their respective emphases and was not due to any diametrically opposing views between them.

In many ways the Aborigines Protection Society was as devoted to the preservation of the empire as was the Wakefield group. And in these formative years, when patterns and principles of imperial policy were developed and defined, the evangelical humanitarians contributed significantly to the process. At times sounding like Manchestrian free traders, at others closely resembling the scientific colonizers themselves, the one constant thread unifying their viewpoint was their impassioned and unwavering concern for native peoples. Very much the children of their age--suffering both the shortcomings and sharing the visions of their fellow Englishmen--the spokesman for the Aborigines Protection Society strove diligently to shape the course of British imperial policy and legislation. If they lacked absolute consistency, it was because they thought first of the simple welfare of the native, and not of broad policy. Their concept of empire was therefore incidental to their first concern, but nevertheless something of a concept of empire did

emerge from their writings. For them, the empire of Great Britain and the empire of Christ were to be coterminous. Within its limits the native population were to enjoy equal social, civil and political status with their white fellow-subjects, together with the blessings of the Gospel. Opportunities in the fields of education, employment, and self-government, which only in our present day are being slowly conceded, were to be theirs. All the benefits of civilization and Christianity were to be freely available to all under British dominion. In short, the empire was to be a vast instrument of benevolence in which there was no place for selfish aims or inhumane individuals. Impractical idealism it may have been; but its impact is perceptible at many points in subsequent British colonial policy.

CHAPTER I

THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON AND EVANGELICAL HUMANITARIANISM

Critics denounce the evangelical humanitarians for giving more attention to the evils of slavery in the far corners of the empire than to the immediate abuses of the domestic scene. In their own day the well-known political writer, William Cobbett, criticized members of the Clapham sect--perhaps the most famous segment of evangelicalism in the era--for their tender sensitivity to the lot of the enslaved African, and their callous disregard of the suffering chimney sweep or the exploited British female laborer. These charges have been echoed by recent writers also. Eric Williams denounces the prominent Claphamite, William Wilberforce, for being familiar with the conditions existing in a slave ship while ignoring what went on "at the bottom of a mine shaft."[1] A brief examination of the career of the man on whom Wilberforce laid his mantle may reveal the over-simplification such statements contain.

Thomas Fowell Buxton ranked prominently among

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[1]Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (Chapel Hill, 1944), 182

those humanitarians who labored in behalf of the native peoples of the empire after emancipation. In 1823, Wilberforce pressed him to enter upon "the holy enterprise" of freeing the negro slaves, and for the next ten years Buxton devoted himself to this cause. The proprietor of a brewery at Spitalfields, Buxton sat in parliament as a Whig member for Weymouth from his initial election in 1818 until his defeat in 1837. A high point in his career came when he raised the emancipation question before the newly-reformed House of Commons in 1833, garnering the extensive support of the Whigs and the unanimous support of the Radicals to carry the issue.[1] Black slavery ended that year in every portion of the globe where the British flag flew. Buxton's last two years in parliament, as chairman of the select committee on the treatment of aborigines within the empire, he largely devoted to this related question.

From 1837 until his death in 1845, Buxton gave himself to his chosen cause through other than parliamentary media, namely, through the Aborigines Protection Society and the ill-fated African Civilization Society. The former, founded by him in 1837, continued its efforts

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[1] S. Maccoby, English Radicalism, 1832-1852 (London, 1935), 350, 351.

through the nineteenth century, while the latter, despite the royal patronage of Prince Albert, enjoyed only a brief and unfortunate existence.

Though nominally a Whig, Buxton professed an independent political outlook. His attitude is reflected in a letter written in his early parliamentary career.

> My line is distinctly drawn. I care but little about party politics. I vote as I like; sometimes pro and sometimes con; but I feel the greatest interest on subjects such as the slave trade, the condition of the poor, prisons, and criminal law; to these I devote myself and should be quite content never to give another vote upon a party question....[1]

Buxton did press for legal reforms related to the reduction of the death penalty for certain crimes, reasoning on grounds akin to Benthamite philosophy.[2] He was also actively engaged in efforts at prison reform. With such interests, Buxton might on occasion be found voting with the parliamentary Radicals, a fact that distressed his spiritual companion, the noted evangelical Churchman, Charles Simeon. Thus the latter wrote to Buxton:

> A sweet savour of love remained upon my spirit for a long time after [visiting you], and I am not sure that it has evaporated yet. But I do not know that

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[1] Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton to J. H. North, Esq., April 19, 1819, Memoirs of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, edited by his son, Charles. Second Edition (London, 1849), 93.

[2] Buxton, Memoirs, 102.

> I shall not thrash you for supporting the Radicals. I look to you under God, to be an instrument of great Good in the House of Commons; and I would not that you subvert the influence which your habits and talents are so calculated to command....[1]

Buxton's brother-in-law, John Joseph Gurney, also found his "Independence of party" cause for concern. In a warm personal letter Gurney warned that such a course might lead him away "from sound Whiggism." On the other hand, he told Buxton that one must not "admit any check" to progress in the moral, political, or religious sphere. And "especial care" was to be taken to avoid "the spirit of Toryism." "I mean," the correspondent continued, "that spirit which bears the worst things with endless apathy, because they are old; and with which reason and even humanity are nothing."[2] Nevertheless, Buxton's Whiggism was apparently sound enough. To echo his own words, he had a "hardy attachment to Whig principles."[3] The young man who in his early parliamentary career often voted with the Radicals, was no Radical himself.

Although he had found in a speech on behalf of the Peterloo victims of 1819 by Sir Francis Burdett, a

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[1]Charles Simeon to Buxton, January 14, 1820, Buxton, Memoirs, 102.

[2]J. J. Gurney to Buxton, April 7, 1818, Buxton, Memoirs, 83.

[3]Buxton, Memoirs, 295.

leading Radical of the day, "the fairest display of masterly understanding" he had heard,[1] most aspects of the Radical program met with his firmest opposition in the House. Buxton's social conscience was as keen as that of the Radicals. But his was religiously motivated. He might concur in their humane objectives, but he distrusted their means and deprecated their irreligion. This is just how he expressed himself to his uncle shortly after his arrival in parliament. "I quite agree with you in reprobating the Radicals. I am persuaded that their object is the subversion of religion and the constitution...."[2]

Buxton's reform and humanitarian interests had in fact pre-dated his active entry into parliamentary politics, and may well have been non-partisan in spirit. William Wilberforce was sufficiently impressed with his efforts on behalf of the Spitalfields workers to address a congratulatory letter to him in 1816--two years before his election to parliament. And again, relative to Buxton's pamphlet entitled An Enquiry Whether Crime Be Produced or Prevented by Our Present System of Prison Discipline, the old Claphamite expressed the hope that

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[1]William Harris, History of the Radical Party in Parliament (London, 1885), 137.

[2]Buxton to Charles Buxton, Esq., November 1819, Buxton, Memoirs, 95.

Buxton would soon serve the cause of the "oppressed and friendless" in parliament as well as with the pen. "I claim you as an ally in this blessed league," Wilberforce declared, seeking his talents for the cause of the slave.[1]

Through the years, Buxton's basically religious orientation turned him increasingly toward perhaps the most spectacular aspect of nineteenth century evangelicalism--the missionary movement and the varied activities on behalf of the native peoples of the empire. There was apparently not enough time for him to devote his attention to both domestic abuses and the problems of the empire. Yet even in the years when Buxton's paramount attention was fixed upon his select committee on the aborigines in British possessions, he still retained much of his old concern. In 1837, the M.P. for Weymouth rose to support Lord John Russell in a bill for the reduction of capital punishment for a variety of lesser offenses. His statement on that occasion reveals that he was clearly in sympathy with the most enlightened opinion on the subject in this era.[2] Through the same period Buxton frequently debated the Irish Church Bill. Church rates there should

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[1] Wilberforce to Buxton, Nov. 28, 1816, Buxton, Memoirs, 63; Wilberforce to Buxton, undated, Ibid, 77.

[2] London Times, May 20, 1837, 3.

be abolished, he maintained, "for the sake of the Church itself and for the sake of religion." If wealth and "Prodigal endowment" had been capable of making Ireland Anglican, there would not have been a Catholic left in that land.[1] The seriousness with which he assailed the problem is revealed in one of his prayers.

> Help me, oh Lord, in forming a right judgement of the critical affairs of the Irish Church. Direct me aright, and let not my love of liberal policy on the one hand, nor the fear of the resentment and reproach of the evangelical clergy on the other lead me astray.[2]

Regardless of his political alignment, the interests of the slaves and of the aboriginal peoples were his first concern. The following that he acquired in the wake of his select committee and in the ranks of the Aborigines Protection Society was almost exclusively devoted to the affairs of the far-flung empire and not to domestic conditions. The fact of the matter seems to be that the cause of the natives did not lend itself to rigid party division. The Whig ministry of Lord John Russell, in which the third Earl Grey headed the colonial office (1846-1852), earned the most adamant opposition of

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[1] London Times, April 3, 1835, 4; June 2, 1835, 4; March 14, 1837, 4; May 24, 1837, 3.

[2] Buxton, Memoirs, 390.

Aborigines Protection Society, while no ministers received more plaudits from Buxton's followers than Charles Grant, Lord Glenelg, who served in Melbourne's Whig ministry for nearly four years (1835-1839). The Society frequently asserted its desire to avoid partisanship.[1] Generally speaking, the humanitarians represented all parties, and party affiliation was no measure of one's sentiments in such matters.

After 1833, the evangelical humanitarians aimed at three general objectives: the ending of the slave trade by foreign powers, the completion of emancipation in fact as well as in theory, and the protection of backward peoples. Buxton retained an active interest in all of these goals. Although much of his time and energy was devoted to the protection of the aboriginal peoples of the empire, he did not overlook the slavery issue and the continuing foreign slave trade. Indeed, the question of the foreign slave trade always paralleled his concern for the native populations under the Union Jack. On one occasion Buxton asked for a postponement of his own motion respecting the treatment of aborigines so that the issue of the continuing slave trade might be examined

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[1] The Colonial Intelligencer; or, Aborigines' Friend (London) III (1851), 323.

with a view to exerting effective pressures on those foreign powers who continued to offend in this matter.[1]

The slave emancipation act of 1833 was not an unqualified victory for the humanitarian forces, for a system of apprenticeship was substituted as a transitional measure prior to the granting of complete freedom. The apprenticeship system was widely debated, and in this dispute Buxton found himself engulfed. His position with respect to it reveals that there was little of the fanatic in him. When he was leading the cause of emancipation during the twenties, he was badgered by many impatient with his gradualism.[2] And after emancipation this same cautious disposition was evident. The attack upon the apprenticeship system sprang from a far more fanatical man than the member for Weymouth.

It was Joseph Sturge who spearheaded the attack on this new "evil." Through his inflamatory writings he sought to foster agitation which could be utilized in his Central Negro Emancipation Committee. Buxton opposed

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[1] Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd Series, May 12, 1835, XXVII, 1039; May 19, 1835, XXVII, 1233; June 19, 1835, XXVIII, 918. See also, July 5, 1836, XXXIV, 12-66, hereafter cited as Hansard.

[2] David Brian Davis, "The Emergence of Immediatism in British and American Anti-Slavery Thought," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLIV (1962), 222.

this organization,[1] although he declared his own opposition to compulsory apprenticeship.[2] Apparently Buxton was somewhat uncertain as to the best course in this matter, but he moved quickly to a more rigid opposition to apprenticeship in any form or for any period.[3] However, Buxton's role in the ending of the system was minor. To the famous Whig parliamentarian, Henry Brougham, must go the credit for its abandonment.

Joseph Sturge and his following are important to this account because of the influence they acquired in humanitarian circles. In April 1839, Sturge formed the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.[4] Its predecessor, the British Anti-Slavery Society, had been dominated

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[1] William Law Mathieson, British Slavery and Its Abolition, 1823-1838 (London, 1926), 283-285.

[2] Harriet, Martineau, The History of England During the Thirty Years' Peace: 1816-1840 (London, 1850), II, 101.

[3] Hansard, 1838, XLII, 43. W. E. Gladstone in his well-known defense of the planters of the West Indies took pains to point out that Buxton and the Select Committee of 1836 had expressed no disapproval of the apprenticeship system and found it "not unfavorable to the momentous change from slavery to freedom...."

[4] First Annual Report of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for the Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade Throughout the World. Presented to the General Meeting held in Exeter Hall, on Wednesday, June 24th, 1840 (London, 1840), 14.

by Buxton. The new society was Sturge's. Buxton served on its committee at its inception, and he sought to make it clear that his own newly founded African Civilization Society (1840) was in no way a rival to this group. As for Sturge, he and his society pressed for more rigorous action against the evils inflicted upon the natives of Africa. Increasingly, he seems to have placed himself in the role of antagonist and rival to the Buxton group.[1] Despite this, Buxton maintained his position among the evangelical humanitarians. Most of his following in the Aborigines Protection Society, including his Quaker in-laws, the Gurneys and the Frys, backed Buxton's scheme for the civilization of Africa.[2] Many Wesleyans, including Jabez Bunting, the leading Methodist cleric of the day, and John Beecham of the Wesleyan Missionary Society supported him. Many Baptists and Presbyterians also closed rank behind him.[3]

Whatever Sturge's attitude may have been, certainly through the Aborigines Protection Society Buxton showed

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[1]J. Gallagher, "Fowell Buxton and the New African Policy, 1838-1842," The Cambridge Historical Journal, X (1950), 48; David E. Swift, Joseph John Gurney: Banker, Reformer, and Quaker (Middletown, Conn., 1962), 236.

[2]Swift, Gurney, 236.

[3]Gallagher, "Fowell Buxton and The New African Policy," Cambridge Historical Journal X (1950), 48.

no unbecoming rivalry. Its annual report of 1840 professed satisfaction with the work of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.[1] A dozen years later (and long after Buxton's death) Sturge still seemed to have viewed the other society with misgivings. Proposals for a merger of the two societies--the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society and the Aborigines Protection Society--were made, but were turned down by the Honorary Secretary of the latter, Dr. Hodgkin, who declared the move impractical, while defending the society from charges that it had abandoned its original principles.[2]

Buxton's scheme for African civilization may best be considered elsewhere. His influence through the Aborigines Protection Society was far greater than through his African Civilization Society whose fortunes were as brief as they were disasterous. The roots of the Aborigines Protection Society lie in the select committee of the House of Commons on the treatment of aborigines in

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, Third Annual Report, 1840, 11.

[2] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1852), 65. Joseph Sturge, who was present at this auxiliary meeting of May 27, 1852, professed gratification upon assurances by Dr. Hodgkin, that the Society had not abandoned its principles, particularly in his (Hodgkin's) denial of any action in the Aborigines Protection Society in the interest of an independent Liberia.

British possessions which met in 1836 and 1837. To this committee we now turn.

Thomas Buxton was the moving force behind the committee, initiating and guiding the lengthy investigations undertaken by parliament into the reported physical degeneration of the empire's natives. He controlled it firmly, and undoubtedly it embodied his deepest convictions. According to his Memoirs, the object of the committee was "to prove" the "destructive cruelty" to which the natives had been subjected, and secondarily to demonstrate the great capacity for improvement which the aborigines possessed.[1] A recent authority has declared that the reformer simply set out "to embody in his report the views with which he had started."[2] Work upon this select committee occupied most of Buxton's two closing years in parliament. In June 1837, the drafting of the report was finished. In July, the general election occasioned by the accession of the new monarch closed his career in the House of Commons.

Obviously, before emancipation in 1833 humanitarian interest extended beyond the slaves to the great

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[1] Buxton, Memoirs, 425.

[2] W. P. Morrell, British Colonial Policy in the Age of Peel and Russell (Oxford, 1930), 25.

masses of native peoples who had not fallen upon the white man's bondage. The fact that contact between European and aborigine almost universally proved detrimental to the latter physically, socially and morally was widely publicized and generally acknowledged. That their numbers were declining alarmingly was reported from many sources. The diseases of civilized men, the frequent skirmishes between settler and native, the sordid exploitation by unscrupulous traders or adventurers, were but a few of the reasons advanced to explain the approaching catastrophe. Pioneers such as Samuel Marsden of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand and the Rev. Dr. John Philip of the London Missionary Society in South Africa did much to bring the impending annihilation of the native peoples to the public attention.[1] The extension of the frontiers of European colonial settlement in the 1820's and 1830's, with its inevitable clash between native and settler, focused attention upon this question. It remained for Buxton to crystalize the concern expressed by many.

This was a colonizing age. And Buxton believed that the humanitarian forces must be marshalled to make

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[1] J. Holland Rose, A. P. Newton, E. A. Benians, editors, Cambridge History of the British Empire (Cambridge, 1940), II, 264; Morrell, Colonial Policy in Age of Peel and Russell, 23.

their influence felt in colonial policy.[1] Of most immediate concern was the treatment of the Bantus of South Africa. In March 1835, Buxton brought their plight to the attention of the House. He expressed concern over the "sanguinary proceedings",[2] telling his colleagues that he hoped the treatment of the natives would "undergo strict revision." He was certain, Buxton continued, "that our treatment of them had been such as to make every honest man blush." The so-called commando system, whereby white settlers conducted forays into native territory to recover allegedly stolen cattle, also came under his denunciation.[3]

In July 1835, Buxton brought forth his motion for a select committee to examine the entire question of the imperial government's relationship to the aboriginal peoples. Buxton charged that the unenlightened and inhumane treatment of native peoples was responsible for

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[1]Morrell, Colonial Policy in Age of Peel and Russell, 23.

[2]His reference was apparently to one of the several Kaffir wars. In this year, the Queen Adelaide Territory was seized by Governor D'Urban, who was subsequently ordered to return it. Paul Knaplund, in Cambridge History of the British Empire, II, 281-282, suggest that this was "perhaps the high water mark in missionary influence at the colonial office."

[3]Hansard, March 10, 1835, XXVI, 729.

the decline in their numbers within the empire. It was his "firm opinion" that kindness would be "far preferable" to the harsh injustice that had marked nearly all previous contact between the European and the black man. In his view, the present system with respect to the natives was "entirely unworthy of a great nation." Apparently in illustration of the beneficial effects that kindness wrought, Buxton dilated upon the fact that, in the recent Kaffir disturbances, the missionaries--of all whites, the most completely at the mercy of the native peoples--had been left untouched. Indeed, they had been able to render service to other Europeans in the more remote districts. At any rate, in the light of the general deterioration of the native peoples of the empire, Buxton called for a select committee to examine these affairs.

In response, Sir George Grey, under-secretary for the colonies, professed himself in accord with the principles espoused by Buxton, but questioned the calling of such a committee so near to the prorogation of parliament. Then too, in the light of the very fact stated by Buxton with respect to the missionaries, the under-secretary questioned whether British influence had been as "universally prejudicial" as it was often painted.

Nevertheless, Buxton's motion for a committee was carried.[1]

Buxton was made chairman of the committee, and it was to serve his purposes admirably. A formidable body of evidence was accumulated, much of it coming from missionary sources. The great names of the missionary societies were represented--John Beecham of the Wesleyan Society, Dandeson Coates, lay secretary of the Church Missionary Society, and the secretary of the London Missionary Society, the Reverend William Ellis. The convictions of the missionary interests were amply aired. Certain of their opponents were admitted, but the weight of their evidence was quickly lost amid the volume of testimony from the "friends of the aborigines."

The young William E. Gladstone, champion of the planter class before his political conversion to liberalism, noted in retrospect that the members of the select committee included but few from the conservative party (he being one of them), and challenged the objectivity of their deliberations.[2]

The tenor of the committee's investigations was certainly less than impartial. But despite its biased

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[1] Hansard, July 14, 1835, XXIX, 539-552; London Times, July 15, 1835, 2.

[2] Hansard, March 30, 1838, XLII, 226.

approach--or perhaps because of it--the report of the select committee provides a valuable clue to the total outlook of the missionary interests in colonization and in the conduct of empire. The recommendations set forth by the committee, in the light of its lengthy investigations, provide a valuable guide in reconstructing the evangelical concept of British imperial commitment. Its report suggested that a number of general principles should be immediately adopted by the Crown, determining all future relationships with the native peoples of the empire.

These general principles set forth by the committee included a provision that the protection of the natives should be the duty of the imperial government through parliament in London or through the colonial governors. All contracts for service between a native and any colonist should be strictly regulated and limited. The sale of intoxicating beverages should be prohibited. The direct purchase of land from the natives should be forbidden. All annexations or acquisitions of land must be sanctioned by an act of parliament. Funds for the education of the primitive peoples of a colony were to be charged to the revenue of that colony. Both with respect to treaties and to the administration of justice, the greatest care was to be taken to ensure the utmost well-being of the aborigines. Christian missionaries alone

were to be encouraged in their direct relationships with the native tribes and peoples.

The past history of British and foreign colonial activity was summarized, and its alleged errors exposed. The whole course of action pursued with respect to native peoples--and most especially the Kaffir tribesmen of South Africa--was frought with inhumanity. The widespread oppression of the aborigines was an evil "not altogether unfit to be compared" to that of the slave trade. Such oppression, while "of comparatively recent origin," could lay "no claim to indulgence." "Imperceptable and unhallowed" in its development, it lacked even the shadow of legislative sanction. And while the variety of conditions made one overall prescription impossible, the report continued, the very core of the problem lay not in a consciously devised design, but rather in the lack of any scheme whatsoever. The system to be condemned was not product of deliberate calculation. The one recurrent denominator rather was "the uncertainty and vascillation of our policy."

"Your committee cannot too forcefully recommend that no exertion should be spared, and no time lost in distinctly settling and clarifying the principles which shall henceforth guide and govern our intercourse with

those vast multitudes of uncivilized tribes."[1]

Colonization there might be--or perhaps must be. But it was time, Buxton and his followers believed, for the nation to take a firm stand against the myriad abuses that had crept into settler-native relationships. Not individuals, but the system, comprised the object of the committee's attentions. The broad principles enunciated, the lofty idealism expressed, reveal the noble aspirations of evangelical humanitarianism. Their failure to set forth concrete recommendations stands in sad contrast. It was one thing to point out the evils against a backdrop of abstract principles; it was another to formulate concrete proposals. Yet if they failed to pinpoint solutions, the committee did not hesitate to pinpoint the alleged causes--chief among them was the acquisitive, expansive character of European colonization.

The impact of Buxton's work in this parliamentary enquiry is not to be doubted. Sir Robert Peel, addressing parliament a decade later, reiterated its significance. With special reference to New Zealand, the baronet recalled the strong feeling engendered among the public

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[1] "Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines (British Possessions)" House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1837, VII, 43, 75ff, hereafter cited as "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P.

with respect to the injustice to the aborigines. He recalled how Sir Fowell Buxton had devoted his "great talents to the cause of humanity;" how the select committee of 1836 had been established "at the insistence" of the same gentleman; and how the entire force of "public feeling" had been shaped and hence the course of British action altered.[1] Mr. G. W. Hope, under-secretary for the colonies, likewise stressed the change of opinion in England which, since the mid-thirities, had forbidden many of the old practices with respect to native peoples.[2] W. E. Gladstone, addressing parliament in 1851, declared that he had never seen a member of parliament "discharge his duty with more zeal, energy and ability" than had Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton in the select committee. A total change of policy had resulted. Gladstone did not, however, concur that this change had been for the best. As a matter of fact the wars with the South African tribes had been "more bloody, costly and ruinous" than they had ever been before.[3] But whether for better or for worse,

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[1] Hansard, June 19, 1845, LXXXI, 945.

[2] Hansard, June 18, 1845, LXXXI, 764.

[3] Hansard, April 15, 1851, CXVI, 263. Gladstone was here speaking against a new committee of inquiry into the affairs of the Bantu peoples.

Buxton's influence was recognized.

At this moment of triumph, Buxton's parliamentary career ended. The succession of Victoria to the throne occasioned a new election. Increasing Tory pressure--aspects of which were of questionable morality according to Buxton's Memoirs--resulted in his defeat. Thereafter, Buxton could give his fullest attention to the Aborigines Protection Society, founded by him the same year. He molded and fashioned this society as distinctively as he had his parliamentary committee.

CHAPTER II

THE ABORIGINES PROTECTION SOCIETY

While the select committee on aborigines was still amassing its impressive survey, the activities of many evangelical humanitarians were channelled into a new organization also designed to investigate and publicize the conditions of the natives of the empire. The Aborigines Protection Society was born in the same congenial atmosphere that had permitted the convening of the parliamentary committee under Buxton in 1836. Buxton was the founder of the Society and its guiding spirit from its inception in 1837 until his death in 1845.

> "Our's is an age of societies," declared James Stephen.
>
> For the redress of every oppression that is done under the sun, there is a public meeting. For the cure of every sorrow by which our land or our race can be visited, there are patrons, vice-presidents, and secretaries. For the diffusion of every blessing of which mankind can partake in common, there is a committee.[1]

The anti-slavery societies, the societies for civilizing and colonizing, all pursued their particular

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[1] Sir James Stephen, Essays in Ecclesiatical Biography, (London, 1849), II, 382.

objects. But nowhere for the evangelical humanitarian did there appear a more widespread, a more compelling cause than that of the myriad native peoples who daily came into closer contact with the advancing tide of European colonization. Although professedly receiving its initial impulse from the select committee on aborigines within the British empire, its original intention was to embrace native peoples outside British possessions as well.[1]

The Aborigines Protection Society made a rather inauspicious entry upon the humanitarian scene. Its inception apparently escaped the notice of the London Times although within a year or two accounts of its meetings were frequently in that paper's columns. If the Aborigines Protection Society came quietly to birth, certain of its projects and the prominence of several of its members lifted it into public view before very long. Its ranks included some leading churchmen and a few members of parliament. Its publications claimed the public attention from time to time. Perhaps most widely known was William Howitt's Colonization and Christianity.[2]

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 10.

[2] William Howitt, Colonization and Christianity: A popular history of the treatment of Natives by the Europeans in all their Colonies (London, 1838)

This "most combative of radical Quakers"[1] presented a blood-stained history of the European relations with the aboriginal populations of the world in a most vivid fashion. The Society's first major publication was, appropriately enough, a reprint of the Report of the Select Committee on Aboriginal Tribes. Supplementing the report with its own commentary, the Society in this pamphlet professed to concur almost entirely with the findings of the parliamentary committee, takings its recommendations as a basis for the Society's future program.[2] Beyond such occasional publications, the Society eventually sought to increase its voice and influence among politicans and the public alike by establishing a regular periodical. Its first plans in this direction came to nothing, and it was not until 1847 that the Society was finally able to fulfill this undertaking. In that year the Colonial Intelligencer was established. The effort was not wasted, for the paper's influence was considerable.[3]

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[1]Maccoby, English Radicalism, 363.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Aboriginal Tribes, reprinted with comments (London, 1837), 155 pp.

[3]Maccoby, English Radicalism, 363, 364.

In the preceding decade the periodical literature on behalf of the oppressed native had been uncertain at best. The old British Emancipator, organ of the Anti-Slavery Society of London, was superceded in 1840 by a "newspaper", announced by Sturge's British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter.[1] This publication, while giving some attention to the aborigines' plight, had as its first concern the abolition of slavery by all foreign powers. Until 1847, therefore, the Aborigines Protection Society lacked a publication devoting regular space to its chosen cause.

However, the Annual Reports of the Aborigines Protection Society were printed and circulated as widely as possible. For a time, also, a digest of the Society's correspondence, petitions, and various documents were printed in a series of Extracts, for the purpose of familiarizing the public with its activities.[2] By such

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[1] British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, First Annual Report, 1840, 16. The Aborigines Protection Society seems not to have resented this publication, for it referred to it in its own paper as "our esteemed contemporary." Colonial Intelligencer, III (1850), 87. If there was any rivalry, as Galligher, "Fowell Buxton and The New African Policy," Cambridge Historical Journal, X (1950), 48, suggests, it was not apparently reciprocated by Buxton's follower.

[2] The initiation of this series of Extracts was announced in the Aborigines Protection Society, Fourth Annual Report, 1841, 7. Only two volumes were published before

means the Society sought to marshall opinion on behalf of its principles.

The aims of the Aborigines Protection Society were set forth simply and clearly in its first annual report: "To assist in protecting the defenseless, and promoting the advancement of uncivilized tribes."[1] The committee of the Society made explicit its concept of the role of the new body as the natural successor to the earlier anti-slavery movement.

> "The abhored and nefarious slave traffic, which has engaged for so long a period the indefatigable labours of a noble band of British philanthropists for its suppression and annihiliation, can scarcely be regarded as /more/ atrocious in its character, or destructive in its consequences, than the system of modern colonization as hitherto pursued."

The two questions were "initially blended" and, for that reason, the committee declared, the same spirit which called for the suppression of the one, could not rest without a "corresponding effort" to "rescue and elevate" the native peoples of the Empire also.[2]

One detects a note of genuine optimism in this

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this project was abandoned.

[1]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 4.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 7.

first report. Looking back to past days, it decried the "avarice and ambition," the "lust of conquest, fame and wealth," which had made the potentially beneficial contacts of Britain with the aboriginal world "a mere instrument of evil." "A new era has, however, we trust already begun to dawn," the report suggested confidentally. By way of example, the committee pointed to the dispatch to the governor of Cape Colony, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, in 1835, ordering the abandonment of territories seized in the recent Kaffir War--"the most comprehensive, the most statesmanlike, the most British, the most Christian document of all" with respect to the native peoples of the Empire. The British public was at last awakening from its "criminal indifference." And the explanation for past apathy was not difficult to find. The committee placed the blame on the influence of "powerful commercial bodies" in England, and "interested parties in our colonies, in and out of government," who distorted or suppressed the facts.[1]

The whole report is flavored with an atmosphere of righteous zeal, a profession of purest motive, a conviction of most worthy objectives. Yet they shrank

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 8, 9.

"almost instinctively" from the magnitude of the task and the prospect of such obstacles as the "gigantic efforts of modern commerce" and the "restless spirit of adventure" placed in their way, the committee declared with an air of pious dedication.[1] Although the Society did gain some influential adherents, its principles were never even partially implemented, so it is impossible to judge whether its ideals might have been converted into concrete measures.[2] The Society recognized, it declared, the need of "a legislative measure" with respect to the native peoples connected with British colonies and commerce. "Such a measure is thought to be indispensible," the report contended, "but this society, aware of its magnitude and difficulty, only ventures to call it to the attention of the Government and Legislature, without attempting to draw a bill." The great evils of the contemporary empire were then reiterated. The native was exploited and his very existence was endangered. Selfish interests pursued their own narrow ends with impunity under the British aegis.

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[1] Ibid, 7.

[2] Some authorities harshly condemn what they see as a vast gap between the Society's lofty principles, and its utter lack of practical proposals. Morrell, British Colonial Policy in the Age of Peel and Russell, 26; Keith Sinclair, The Origins of the Maori Wars (Wellington, N.Z., 1957), 24.

Vascillation, rather than resolution, marked the administration of colonial affairs. Such were some of the empire's problems. But because the Society wanted to be "left at liberty to select" the particular focus of its attention, the committee professed a reluctance "to deliniate exact objects and means."[1]

The objects and means of the Society are set forth in general terms, however, in its Constitution. To assist and protect the native was the broad design. Whereas the missionary societies had only occasionally interfered on behalf of the civil and political interests of the aborigines, the Aborigines Protection Society intended to make such matters its first consideration. To this end, it sought first to collect information on such affairs, and, second, to communicate it "in cheap publications" to "ensure the extension of correct opinions." Certain types of cases, the Constitution declared, would undoubtedly require the interference of the Legislature, and in such instances the necessary appeals would be made to Parliament. Justice for the native was to be obtained by an "improved administration of law," but the Society hoped also through its efforts to reveal to the European

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 28.

that a conciliatory attitude, rather than a policy of oppression and violence, would be in their own best interests. Complete civilization and the real happiness of mankind could never be secured, the Constitution concluded, by anything less than "the diffusion of Christian Principles."[1] In short, its stated purpose was to propagandize the public and pressure official circles in the interest of their chosen cause.

The basic character of the Aborigines Protection Society from its foundation had been religious. The tone of its religious character was set by evangelicalism. The spokesmen of the Society took pains to place it in the tradition of Wilberforce and the other names prominently associated with the evangelical movement and with the Clapham Sect in particular. Its membership from Buxton down through its principal officers were men of deep religious conviction. Many were clergymen. Quakerism was particularly well represented in its ranks. In no way did Buxton or the Society imagine themselves outside the ranks of evangelical endeavor in general. "As members of the Aborigines Protection Society," their appeal to the several missionary societies asserted, "we

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, /Constitution of the Society/ (London, 1837), 2-6.

are induced to solicit your attention to the existence and claims of a society which labours in the same field as yourselves. . . . " The Society was designed "to aid and second, and give permanancy to the sacred work which is more particularly yours. . . . " And for that reason, the appeal concluded, the Society hoped that the missionary interests would recognize them "as brothers and associates," and bear in mind that the Society only sought to strengthen itself in order to render more" "effectual help" in the missionary labors.[1] The Society professed a firm conviction that the hand of Providence was upon its efforts.[2]

Missions were not the only means, but they were the best means of advancing civilization among the native peoples. The Aborigines Protection Society would assist them by relieving the missionary organizations "as much as possible [of] all political and merchantile occupations, to which they [had] been occasionally unavoidably subjects." In this manner, the missionaries could concentrate upon their main labor.[3]

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Extracts, II (1841), 72.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 28.

[3]Aborigines Protection Society, Second Annual Report, 1839, 6.

During the first years of the Society a close relationship did exist with the missionary movement. Buxton was a frequent lecturer at meetings of the various missionary bodies, and he was a director of the Church Missionary Society. The Aborigines Protection Society's reports abounded in allusions to their many mutual interests. The good relationships between the personnel of these societies is attested by the frequent participation of various missionary officials in the activities of the Aborigines Protection Society. J. J. Freeman, the secretary of the London Missionary Society was a "much esteemed" member.[1] The Society also numbered among its adherents missionaries of the reputation of the Rev. Dr. John Philip,[2] and the Rev. Samuel Marsden, pioneer in New Zealand mission work.[3] Petitions and requests from various missionary interests to the Society were often presented.

Despite this continued relationship the Aborigines Protection Society by mid-century complained almost

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, II (1848), 134.

[2] Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851) 336.

[3] Aborigines Protection Society, Second Annual Report, 1839, 2.

bitterly of the failure of the missionary societies to adequately support their efforts. The committee expressed disappointment at "the small amount of ostensible countenance which it received from Missionary Societies of all denominations." For that reason they addressed a new appeal to the several missionary committees. The tone of the appeal was pleading. Acknowledging that the missionary societies existed "essentially for the promotion of the spiritual and religious welfare of the benighted heathen nations," they nevertheless could prove effective in promoting the physical and cultural well-being of the native populations. Their "prominent and effectual part" in furnishing the evidence for the select committee of 1836 had not been forgotten. And for this reason the Aborigines Protection Society professed to crave the backing of the missionary societies, both in supporting efforts to secure native rights, and in publicizing the natives plight to the English homeland.[1]

Relationships did not improve. The various societies remained cool to the advances of the Aborigines Protection Society. Apparently perplexed by this, the Society returned again and again to the problem in its

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851), 211-213.

annual meetings, expressing its disappointment at the lack of support its efforts at the social and political elevation of the native had received from the missionary bodies who themselves had done little in this area.[1]

Possibly the loss to the Society of Buxton's prestige with his death in 1845 may account in part for the indifference of the missionary societies to this kindred organization. Certainly Buxton's role in the Aborigines Protection Society had been paramount. The briefest survey of the society's records revealed this. The First Annual Report abounded in adulation for the founder. Dr. Hodgkin, Secretary of the Society, expressed the gratitude of the committee to Buxton to whom they accorded "the honor of being recognized as substantially the Father and Founder of the Aborigines Protection Society." In this same vein the warm expressions continued.[2] But if his guidance was cherished by his followers in life, his death was lamented the more. The committee expressed the gravest sense of bereavement in their account of his demise. There then appears to have been a vacuum in leadership, for his replacement was not

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Fifteenth Annual Report, 1852, 25.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 10.

made for some time. No one approaching his stature was apparently available, and the office remained vacant until Buxton's brother-in-law, Samuel Gurney was elected to the post in the following year. The Society's finances wavered for a time. Several economies were instituted in the already modest budget. But the Society recovered it vitality within the two following years, and the launching of its periodical, the Colonial Intelligencer, marked a new era of influence and vigor.

Whatever may have been the actual decline and recovery of the Aborigines Protection Society, the mercurial spirit of the organization in the face of its task is readily evident. Launched in an atmosphere of humanitarian zeal, the society had recognized the magnitude of its undertaking, and had confidently been prepared to assault the evils that the parliamentary committee had unearthed in such dramatic fashion. The leadership of the Aborigines Protection Society, in its second annual report, declared confidently that a survey of its own work during its brief existence would "show the progress already made toward the fulfillment of the task the Society had undertaken."[1] And the next year the committee continued its

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Second Annual Report, 1839, 10.

confident report. How might the rights of the natives be preserved in the present and future? "By the force of public opinion, correctly taught, extensively spread, and expressed with deliberate firmness," they declared. "If the English public were instructed as to the truth and justice of the cause," the committee predicted, "it would find advocates wherever there was a sense of sorrow for wrong done and cruelty inflicted...."[1] "Your Committee cannot but congratulate themselves and their constituents on the recognition of the principles of the Aborigines Protection Society, which appears more and more broadly on the face of the new schemes of colonization, and already strikingly contrasts with recent periods."[2] So the Committee envisioned the society's position in 1840.

Before many years had gone by, however, it appears that a growing realization of the tenacity and grim determination of the opposing forces began to dawn upon the members of the Committee. The ninth report dwells at length upon the difficulties faced, and the continuing suffering of the unfortunates first delineated in

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Third Annual Report, 1840, 9.

[2]Ibid, 36.

the Buxton parliamentary investigation of a decade before. The reports excited sympathy at home, the Committee contended, but they had a difficult effect in the colonies. "A feeling of resentment is excited in any colony, when the sufferings of its Aborigines are held up in the mother country for commiseration and redress...."[1] And while the society acknowledged "gratefully" the adoption of measures on the part of the colonial office,""in many respects consonant with the views entertained by the society," many, many native rights were still violated.[2] Thus it is difficult to isolate the Society's actual temper in these years. While delineating these discouragements, they confessed also that the government had been "second to none in expression of friendly feelings toward the Aborigines, and in making provision for their benefit." Nor was this the only triumph. "No inconsiderable portion of our public," a spokesman for the Society asserted, "has evidently participated in the same feeling; and the Colonizing Companies, from their own disposition, and in accordance with public opinion, have formed regulations having more or less a congenial

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Ninth Annual Report, 1846, 9.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Eighth Annual Report, 1845, 2.

character."[1] It would seem the Society's verdict on its own effectiveness was mixed at this time.

Concluding the first decade of its existance, the Aborigines Protection Society informed its adherents regretfully that it could report no great triumph in its striving. Yet, though the work was often "arduous and discouraging," the Committee had not despaired.[2] But by 1850, the tone of the annual meeting appears to have been one of near frustration. The principal speaker, the Reverend John Burnett, dwelt extensively upon the character and intensity of the opposition, scarcely alluding to the Society's own positive efforts and accomplishments. Strong personal and self-interested reasons motivated those who thwarted their humanitarian efforts, the speaker stated. It arose in "powerful quarters, political and commercial." The press had launched assaults upon the society, Burnett complained, but its motives were obvious. A great newspaper had many interest to serve, and not alone the disinterested one of philanthrophy. Other speakers decried "the obliquy" heaped upon them, while the more optimistic

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[1] Appendix to the Seventh and Eighth Annual Reports of the Aborigines Protection Society (London, 1846), 61.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, Tenth Annual Report, 1847, 9.

took comfort in the fact that the Society had aroused enough sympathy to protect the Aborigines, as well as they had.[1]

Again, at the annual meeting of May, 1853 the same theme dominated. One distressed speaker bemoaned the taunts and opposition of much of the press. We are smiled at, he declared, though "the smile was almost a sneer--in a more important assembly than this." This reference was apparently to the Commons, for his speech was followed by one designating the Society's opponents more precisely. "Legislators, who condemn our proceedings, are so, some by inheritance, some by election, and some, it must not be concealed by corruption. These people laugh and sneer at the Aborigines Protection Society."[2] So the tone of the meeting was set.

The Colonial Intelligencer of the same year again broached the problem of public indifference. "We must... admit that we are not a popular Society, and that our objects take no increased hold on the public mind, although the opportunity has of late years been certainly afforded for popular support." Then, as if to find some consolation, the anonymous writer declared that it seemed clear

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Thirteenth Annual Report, 1850, 10.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Sixteenth Annual Report, 1853, 12, 13.

that the Society's labors passed unnoticed because "it is not in what it does, but in what it hinders from being done, that its chief merit lies."[1] By the mid-fifties, the greatest concern of the Aborigines Protection Society seems to have been the general apathy of the British public.[2] The tide of humanitarian feeling had turned. Other problems had grasped the public attention. For one thing of course, for the first time in a generation the British Army was actively engaged in European affairs. The age that had made the Aborigines Protection Society possible was giving way to a different era. Still, in helping to awaken a sense of obligation on the part of Englishmen for the primitive peoples of the empire, the Society had helped pave the way for the characteristically British policy of imperial trusteeship, and had indeed strengthened the notion that was in future generations to be termed the "white man's burden."

While the Society was religiously oriented, it did display a variety of interests which also made lasting contributions in several fields of study. From its

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1853), 299.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, Seventeenth Annual Report, 1854, 1; Eighteenth Annual Report, 1855, 1.

earliest days, a lively interest in various related activities is apparent. For example, frequent reference was made to the Ethnological Society of Paris, whose professed purpose was simply to study and diffuse information on primitive peoples.[1] In its early enthusiasm, the Aborigines Protection Society founded a library for the purpose of broadening public knowledge of the native peoples, and laid plans (ultimately unfulfilled) for a museum of primitive culture. This interest, which might be seen as an early contribution to the study of anthropology, led the Society to arrange for a display of aboriginal handicraft at the great Crystal Palace exhibition of 1851.[2]

While declaring that the purposes of the Society were not scientific or geographical, the Colonial Intelligencer on several occasions published material which seems clearly to have aimed at popularizing knowledge of the vast new areas of the world then unfolding to the explorer. To cite only a few examples, the July 1850 issue contained a lengthy description of a "newly

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Second Annual Report, 1839, 25ff. Third Annual Report, 1840, 6ff.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 24; Thirteenth Annual Report, 1850, 7.

discovered inland lake," in Africa. For many years the interior of Africa had been considered a vast wasteland, denoted on maps as "the Great Desert." This was clearly not the case. The author ventured the hope that Europeans would not now seek their own interest to the exclusion of the natives in that area.[1] A later issue of the same year contained the further materials regarding the discovery of the sources of the Nile.[2] This and similar reports, some dealing with papers read before the Geographical Society, revealed still further the parallel interest of the Aborigines Protection Society that made it more than simply a would-be instrument of spiritual conversion. The Society expressed these multiple interests many times, but one example will suffice. Continuing inroads by the Boers against the Cape natives led the Colonial Intelligencer to protest "not on political grounds, but in the interest of religion, humanity, and science."[3]

By any means possible, the Aborigines Protection Society sought to remedy the injustice which yearly multiplied the suffering of the native and threatened his very existence. When humanitarianism commanded less

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, III (1850), 36ff.

[2] Ibid, 100.

[3] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1853), 243.

attention, the Society's inability to interest the public left its membership with an increasing sense of defeat. Its numbers were never large, but the Aborigines Protection Society represented the noble aspirations of a unique age in European colonization and expansion.

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIETY FOR THE CIVILIZATION OF AFRICA

The evangelical humanitarian concept of Empire envisioned Britain as the great defender of the native races whose very existence was threatened by the exploiting, expanding European civilization. Buxton and his followers wished to arouse the conscience of England and the continent on behalf of primitive peoples. But they did not make their appeal only at an idealistic level. Early Victorian economic thought placed great stress on the importance of self-interest as a motivating factor in human behavior, and the evangelical humanitarians were prepared to enlist this force in their cause. Humane and mundane motives therefore became mixed. Philanthropy would be no less inviting because it also offered the prospect of economic returns.

Nowhere is this conjunction of what later empire-builders described as "philanthropy plus five per-cent" more clearly illustrated than in Buxton's plans for the advancement of Africa, which led to the founding of the Society for the Civilization of Africa in 1839, the publication of his widely-read volume, The African Slave

Trade and Its Remedy,[1] and the famous Niger Expedition of 1841. The trans-Atlantic slave traffic was still extensive in the 1830's. Although England had ended her slave trade in 1807 other European powers continued their nefarious business.

Buxton firmly believed that the slave trade in Africa must inevitably decline as the volume of legitimate trade rose. The premise was not original, but the vigor with which he attempted to institute a system based upon it gave Buxton a prominence among humanitarians and gained official attention.

The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy was published by Buxton in 1839 to publicize and popularize his views on the efficacy of extending trade and commerce among the African natives. His suggestion for sending an expedition to the Niger River for the purpose of initiating such activities was enthusiastically grasped by many humanitarians, although some doubted that the project was practical. The Society for the Civilization of Africa was formed in the same year, and received valuable assistance in the royal patronage of Prince Albert who presided over its general meeting in June 1840.

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[1]Thomas Fowell Buxton, The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy (London, 1840).

The Society laid plans for the Niger Expedition, and preparations went forward on a lavish scale through 1840 and into 1841. Vessels and equipment deemed sufficient for a deep penetration of the river were acquired with governmental assistance. Buxton hoped that a lucrative trade in palm oil might be established with the natives, turning them from the sale of their brothers and proving an attractive area for European enterprise.

In Parliament some opposition was expressed to the scheme by those who doubted whether penetration of the Niger was possible to the extent that the plan required. Concern was voiced for the outlay of government funds which were likely to be wasted if Buxton's enthusiastic estimates of the expedition's potentials proved wrong.[1] But Buxton also enjoyed wide support, including the cooperation of successive Colonial Secretaries. Lord Glenelg, a director of the Church Missionary Society, had been very friendly toward Buxton's scheme in its formative stages, offering his full support. His successor, Lord Normanby, was equally helpful during his brief months in office. Finally, Lord John Russell, as Colonial Secretary, gave his assent to the project, noting that it offered a good chance of substituting "an innocent and profitable

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[1] Hansard, February 16, 1841, LVI, 692-702.

commerce" for the evil traffic that had previously plagued Africa.[1] The Whig journalists staunchly backed his venture. "If England does nothing, nothing will be done. If the government does nothing, nothing will be done as it should be. Private adventurers, pursuing their own ends in their own ways, cannot act largely or systematically enough. . . ."[2]

The middle decades of the nineteenth century often have been called the hey-day of laissez faire. However, humanitarian considerations sometimes led to the setting aside of laissez faire principles. Amelioration of the working conditions of British women and children in factories and mines required governmental regulation and supervision; likewise the movement for the protection and civilization of the Empire's natives. Both desired an alteration of present policies which tended to oppress and dehumanize the weak. If the remedy entailed increased governmental activity, so it must be.

This was essentially Buxton's position, although he had reservations about the extent to which government

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[1]Letter, Lord John Russell, to Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, 26th December, 1839, in the Appendix to Buxton, Memoirs, 555.

[2]"The Expedition to the Niger," Edinburgh Review, LXXII (Oct. 1840-Jan. 1841), 477.

could safely be used to humanitarian ends. In the Niger Expedition, Buxton attempted to enlist economic motivation and self-interest in the cause of the African Negro. It was not shamefacedly, but frankly done. Official assistance was to be invoked only when absolutely necessary.

Some evangelical humanitarians were businessmen; some were not. The balance of these factors varied with the individual. Buxton embodied both. The report of his select committee of 1837, after delineating the results of the exploitative, oppresaive colonization of the past, announced its intention of demonstrating that "the opposite course of conduct," quite aside from any notion of duty, was truly preferable. A more friendly and humane policy would promote "the civil and commercial interests of Great Britain."[1] As the aborigines learned useful trades and became more industrious, they provided both a market and a source of supply for England. The committee contended that the native wars which frequently occurred were calamitous because they interrupted the free flow of trade.[2]

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[1] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P. 1837, VII, 5.

[2] Ibid., 73, 74.

The theme of humanitarian idealism is again and again accompanied by the theme of economic self-interest in the projects undertaken by Buxton. It is found in the literature of the Aborigines Protection Society. On one occasion, Dr. Hodgkin, the Society's honorary secretary, advised the parliamentary undersecretary for the Colonies that the Government should ensure the adoption of the most liberal principles in commercial relations with the natives of the Empire, so that they would come to feel and appreciate the advantages of a better system of exchange than they had previously enjoyed. Not only would the natives benefit, but England's trade would reap the rewards.[1] One of the Society's early publications, outlining a proposed system of legislation for the native peoples within the Empire, reiterated the same theme--though the synthesis in this instance seems less comfortable.

> "Yes, on selfish, on sordid, on mere commercial grounds (if such motives can be necessary for just legislation), it might be demonstrated that the acquirement of wealth and power, would in the end be greater, and far more permanent not only to the individual members of a colony, but to the country colonizing:- by affording political protection to the native inhabitants,

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[1] Dr. Hodgkin to Benjamin Hawes, M.P., March 27, 1838, Aborigines Protection Society, On the British Colonization of New Zealand (London, 1846), 51. /Appendix/

> securing to them justice in their mutual relations, and dealing out to them with the hand of charity and Christian forebearance...."[1]

While Britain was extending her political and commercial relations rapidly, Englishmen must be careful not to defraud those with whom they came in contact in an effort to grasp the world's commerce. If commercial intercourse between nations was to prospect, it must be of reciprocal benefit. When such an equitable course was followed, Britain would have the satisfaction of knowing that she was not only spreading civilization, religion, and the arts, but also her own dominion, commerce and influence.[2]

Although the Society admitted the often unhappy results of past commercial contact between heathen and European, it did not admit that such destruction was inevitable. Quite the contrary was true. Prior results revealed only the lack of civilized behavior on our part. Even "the interests of commerce" might have been developed to a far greater degree had they been under "the restraints

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[1]Standish Motte, Outline of a System of Legislation, for Securing Protection to the aboriginal inhabitants of all countries colonized by Great Britain, extending them political and social rights, ameliorating their condition and promoting their civilization. Drawn up on the request of the Committee of the "Aborigines Protection Society," for the purpose of being laid before the government (London, 1840), 8.

[2]Ibid., 9, 27.

of religion and of true civilization."[1]

Such considerations were of course not original with Buxton's immediate following. Henry Venn, when Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, is reported to have declared that "when a missionary has been abroad twenty years, he is worth ten thousand pounds a year to British Commerce.[2] The Committee of the Church Missionary Society approved the appointment of a consular agent of the British Government to New Zealand (1833) "both to watch over our commercial interests...and, more especially, with a view of repressing the outrages and wrongs which have heretofore been perpetrated by British subjects, to a frightful extent."[3] Secretary Coates indicated

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1853), 196.

[2] J. N. Ogilvie, Our Empire's Debt to Missions /The Duff Missionary Lectures, 1923/ (London, 1923), 251.

[3] Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East. Thirty-third year, 1832 to 1833 (London, 1833), 61; Aarne A. Koskinen, Missionary Influence as a Political Factor in the Pacific Islands (Helsinki, 1953), 138, states,"...distinctly observable were the commercial interests revealed in the activities of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand." On the other hand Klaus E. Knorr, British Colonial Theories, 1570-1850, with a forward by H. A. Innis, (Toronto, 1944), 384, remarks, "the missionaries who went out to convert native tribes in the Pacific areas were not the allies of traders and colonists. Their sole motive was religious zeal."

that insofar as the Church Missionary Society was concerned its efforts undoubtedly forwarded the spread of civilization and education, and in consequence of this must certainly have the "same beneficial consequences with respect to commerce."[1]

Buxton was so sure of the superiority of every aspect of European culture over African culture and that the native would adopt a Victorian attitude toward wealth, thrift, hard work, and self-improvement if only he were shown the benefits, that he determined to provide a graphic illustration through the Society for African Civilization and the Niger Expedition.

In keeping with the widely announced conviction of the missionaries and the professed champions of the aborigines, the lessons of European economics along with his ability to grasp the teachings of Christianity. Proceeding in this vein, Buxton stated:

> I do not dream of attempting to persuade the African, by appealing merely to his reason or his conscience, to renounce gainful guilt, and to forego those inhuman pursuits which gratify his cupidity, and supply his wants. But when the appeal we have made is to his interests, and when his passions are enlisted on our side, there is nothing chimerical in

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[1] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 510.

> the hope that he may be brought to exchange slender profits, with danger, for abundant gain, with security and peace.[1]

This basic assumption was entirely in keeping with early Victorian economic ideas of the value of enlightened self-interest to the general welfare. The native, through practical education, should be shown the uprightness of Britain's intentions in establishing contact with him. Only experimentally could the African be convinced that his own best interests were to be served by engaging in the legitimate trade of the products of Africa's soil instead of in the slave trade which offered only a "miserable" return at infinite cost in suffering and strife. Buxton believed that slave labor was less efficient than free labor, and that not only the African chiefs who engaged in the traffic, but the economic system based on slavery suffered. Slavery was not only a crime but a blunder.[2]

Once the potentials of Africa were known, private initiative could be employed to develop the region's economy. Farms and factories could be established to produce goods for exchange with Britain's products. To launch such a project, however, governmental assistance

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[1]Buxton, Slave Trade and Remedy, 8.

[2]Buxton, Slave Trade and Remedy, 8-10.

was clearly needed. In its early stages private endeavour must work in partnership with government. Each had a rightful part. In distinguishing their respective areas, however, Buxton was not entirely clear. At times he designated protection and preservation of peace as government's only tasks, but at others he asserted that it should establish strategic bases and strengthen its naval forces in Africa in order to thwart the slave trade of foreign powers. Clearly, however, where private initiative was possible, it was to be left in such hands.[1]

Buxton believed the educational task should be jointly shared by the several missionary societies by mutual agreement, under the protecting aegis of the Society for the Civilization of Africa. The religious and moral education of the African should accompany their industrial and economic education. Africa could be rescued "by the Bible and the plough."[2]

Fulfilling the role that Buxton and his evangelical humanitarian followers believed was her's, Britain should take the lead in opening Africa to trade and industry, but she must pledge that she sought no special favors for herself in that continent. Specifically,

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[1]Buxton, Slave Trade and Remedy, 8, 519.

[2]Buxton, Slave Trade and Remedy, 451, 483.

Britain should deny any attempt to provide special privileges for her subjects, to establish any customs systems, or to otherwise discriminate against other nationals. The scheme involved no monopolies and no plans of conquest. If other nations emulated Britain's example and participated in legitimate trade with Africa, it would only advance the objects of the humanitarians. Buxton was advocating a policy of free trade for Africa.[1]

Buxton was quick to dispel any idea that his project for Africa involved any formal imperial commitment of the sort which in the past had proved so unsatisfactory. There was to be no repetition of the course which had led England into such deep involvement in an Indian empire. No new empire of that sort was to be erected in Africa. His concept of Britain's relations there conform closely to the notion of informal empire that some recent scholars have used to describe early Victorian attitudes on the subject.[2] "What is the value to Britain of the sovereignty of a few hundred

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[1]Buxton, Slave Trade and Remedy, 443.

[2]John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," Economic History Review, Second Series, VI (1953), 1ff.

square miles," Buxton asked,

> . . .as compared with that of bringing forward into the market of the world millions of customers, who may be taught to grow the raw materials which we require, and who require the manufactured commodities which we produce? The one is a trivial and insignificant matter; the other is a subject worthy of the most anxious solicitude of the most accomplished statesmen.[1]

It is clear that an important and central premise of the evangelical humanitarianism lay at the base of Buxton's scheme for Africa. Economic affairs had important implications for the programs of the friends of the aborigines, and economic forces might be sanctified to their holy purposes. Mixed motives were not a sign of hypocrisy. The principles upon which Englishmen should deal with the dark continent might be economic or benevolent, directed exclusively to Africa's benefit, or mingled with a view to their own interests. Buxton explicitly stated that he thought they might properly be combined. The merchant, the philantropist, the patriot, and the Christian could all agree on the value of a legitimate and unimpeded commericial relationship between

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[1] Buxton, Slave Trade and Remedy, 453, 454. The Edinburgh Review reported that a storm of protest had broken out in the "merchantile community" over the degree of governmental interference which had taken place in the Niger. This faction denounced the "intermeddling of Government in matters which would prosper far better without its aid." "The Expedition to the Niger," Edinburgh Review LXXII (Oct. 1840-Jan. 1841), 456.

England and Africa.[1]

When Sir Robert Peel, inspired by the principles of free trade, reduced all duties on raw materials in 1842, a friend asked Buxton what he thought of the new tariffs. "I look at it, as at everything else, with an eye to Africa; and I think lowering the duty on timber, rice, and many other things, can hardly fail to be productive of benefit for us."[2]

The Niger Expedition set out for the unknown regions of West Africa in 1841. Within a few months disaster struck. The adverse climate, with its tropical diseases, claimed many of the Expedition's members. Shipwreck decimated the fleet. News of its failure to penetrate the depths of the Niger and of the tragic loss of life and property reached England the following year. Buxton and his followers were mercilessly excoriated. The Tory Ministry that had just come to power launched an investigation into the affair, and

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[1]Buxton, Slave Trade and Remedy, 315, 441.

[2]Buxton to Dr. Lushington, May 14, 1842, Buxton, Memoirs, 567. Here, Buxton displayed a marked independence of party, for the Whigs vigorously denounced Peel's tariff reforms, complaining that the Prime Minister had indeed stolen the Whig's program.

the philanthropy of those who had proposed alleviating Africa's natives in this manner was widely discredited. Critics blamed over-optimistic estimates of the efficacy of legitimate trade for the project's failure and accused headstrong and proud humanitarians of faulty appraisal of the size of the task.[1] In 1843, the Society for the Civilization of Africa was disbanded to the satisfaction of Buxton's opponents who took it as evidence that the days of Buxton's power were in eclipse. He died two years later, his dream of assisting African natives by teaching them the possibilities of legitimate commerce and making Englishmen aware of the benefits of honorable and peaceful relationships with the African still unfulfilled.

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[1]Herman Merivale, Lectures on Colonization and Colonies (Oxford, 1928), 311.

CHAPTER IV

THE EVANGELICAL HUMANITARIAN AS IMPERIALIST

Missionary imperialism is a term that has been widely employed to describe the aspects of missionary endeavor that, on many occasions, entailed the transplanting of what was considered a superior upon an inferior culture. It is instructive to examine the position taken by Buxton and his followers on this issue. Were they missionary imperialists?

It might be said at the outset that if one means by imperialism a militant and aggressive scramble for the areas of the earth's surface not already in European hands, then imperialism among the British evangelical humanitarians need hardly be considered. But if imperialism may instead incorporate a sense of mission, both patriotic and religious, which, if it was at times reluctant to see the bounds of empire stretched, was at least equally slow to concede to its shrinking, it will become evident that such sentiments were certainly part of their outlook.[1] In addition, if one recognizes that

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[1]Morrell, British Colonial Policy in the Age of Peel and Russell, 45, makes such a distinction regarding the "imperialism" of Sir James Stephen.

imperialism may take other paths than formal annexation,[1] many positions taken by the evangelical humanitarians may be considered imperialistic.

The evangelical humanitarians did not always agree with each other on imperial affairs. Organized evangelical humanitarianism was not monolithic. Although some important officers of the Church and Wesleyan Missionary Societies assisted Buxton's parliamentary committee, although Buxton and many members of the Aborigines Protection Society were respected members of the missionary bodies, there was often a division of opinion among them regarding colonial policy. Even individuals often failed to show any great degree of consistency in their positions.

A consideration of basic importance in assessing the attitudes of evangelical humanitarians on the question of imperial expansion is the fact that the decade of the forties was a time of intense immigration and settlement. One writer has termed it a period of "colonization mania."[2] The tide of immigration, particularly to an area

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[1]The most recent and well-known work on this topic is Gallagher and Robinson, "Imperialism of Free Trade," Economic History Review, Second Series, VI (1953), 1, 2.

[2]Fred H. Hutchins, The Colonial Land and Immigration Commission (Philadelphia, 1931), 270

like New Zealand, was virtually impossible to stem. In the face of it the British Government was powerless.[1] Thus, New Zealand was annexed, not in order to form a colony, but because the islands were in fact already occupied by British settlers. Law and order was required. And, besides this, the natives had to be protected. This last consideration was probably the most important in moving Britain to claim the region.[2]

These conditions of necessity colored the viewpoint of many of the evangelical humanitarians on the question of the colonies and the empire. Some seem to have accepted European expansion more gracefully than others. For some it was a fact to be reckoned with. For others it was to be rejected or ignored. Undoubtedly, as one writer has suggested, certain of these missionary-minded humanitarians simply failed to grasp actual conditions.[3] Certainly there was an ambivalence among the evangelical humanitarians upon the question of Britain's relationships to her far-flung domains and her even more widely scattered subjects.

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[1]Johannes S. Marais, The Colonization of New Zealand (London, 1927), 34.

[2]Sinclair, Maori Wars, 1.

[3]Marais, Colonization of New Zealand, 34.

Buxton's select committee of 1836 and 1837 devoted some attention to the problem of British expansion. The tenor of much of the missionary testimony displayed a keen loyalty to Britannia. If colonization must come, then let it be English. But evangelical humanitarian attitudes were not only defensive. There was a positive pride in Britain's world-wide domains. The Church Missionary Secretary might oppose outright annexation of an area such as New Zealand, but he favored a continued and increased influence over the native chiefs by the Government because of the region's political importance. "It is unquestionably the key to India on the one hand, as the Cape of Good Hope is on the other." And therefore, Secretary Coates concluded,

> I conceive it to be a matter of deep importance to this country to secure a friendly influence over the chiefs of New Zealand, and the more because I believe that there is no doubt that other powers have at different times contemplated obtaining ascendency in New Zealand, by colonizing it.[1]

The report of the select committee formulated something of a holding policy respecting Britain's overseas commitments. Having once accepted the responsibility given her by God, Britain could not abandon her charges,

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[1] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 519.

Englishmen could not doubt that their office was to carry civilization and humanity abroad.[1] The motivation was religious; the conclusion meant the retention of Britain's colonies. For the evangelical humanitarian, consideration of the native came first. His spiritual and physical needs must be ministered to. The chief purpose of the missionaries and their sympathizers was not the aggrandisment of the British Empire, but rather the building of the "Empire of Christ."[2] It was not their intention that colonization should follow evangelization of the native, as in the case of the Maori, but if it did they took comfort, and some pride, in the fact that it was English.[3]

The Aborigines Protection Society was also deeply convinced of England's solemn obligations and weighty responsibilities across the face of the globe. By the very nature of its interests, the Aborigines Protection

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[1] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837, VII, 72.

[2] Ogilvie, Our Empire's Debt to Missions, 26. One recent authority maintains that although the early Pacific missionaries might have been "consciously working in favor of their own country," none were then thinking of themselves as founders of a British Pacific Empire. W. P. Morrell, Britain in the Pacific Islands. (Oxford, 1960), vii, lxiii, lxiv.

[3] H. C. Fancourt, The Advance of the Missionaries: Being the Expansion of the Church Missionary Society Mission South of the Bay of Islands, 1833-1840 (Wellington, N.Z., 1939), 109.

Society was committed to an outward-looking policy of British dominion. The first resolution of the first annual meeting of the Society demonstrated this. There it was unanimously carried that:

> Contemplating the vast extent of the Colonial Dependencies of Great Britain, with the important influence for good or evil necessarily exercised by them over the Aboriginal tribes in or near these dependencies, this meeting rejoices in the formation of a Society having for its special object to watch over an protect the interests of the natives. . . .[1]

Its founder, Buxton, made his concept of Britain's role among nations even more explicit. Britain had been entrusted with Christianity and it was her national duty to relieve the sufferings of the oppressed races of the world. Although England's past had many blemishes upon it respecting her treatment of the native peoples of the Empire, it was her task to lead the way in establishing enlightened policies in the future. Thus, Buxton called on all Christian nations to join in a concerted effort to elevate the aborigines. But if they did not, Britain must undertake the task alone.[2]

For the followers of Buxton, acts of injustice to native peoples was not only un-Christian, they were

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 5.

[2]Buxton, Slave Trade and Remedy, 272, 513, 528.

un-English.[1] For the Aborigines Protection Society, support of its objectives displayed the soundest patriotism.[2]

The patriotism of the evangelical humanitarians became most pronounced when the native peoples in the environs of Britain's colonies were threatened by foreign intervention. The Aborigines Protection Society looked with divided feelings upon the prospect of French commercial expansion in West Africa. Acknowledging that the introduction of commerce could become an instrument of civilization, it expressed doubt about the French venture because of that country's record in the Sudan.[3] In New Zealand also, the prospect of French settlement moved the evangelical missionary forces to press Britain into taking the steps necessary to prevent the loss of the islands,

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Ninth Annual Report, 1846, 25.

[2]Colonial Intelligencer, II (1848), 136. The Church Missionary Society closely identified Christian conduct with patriotism. "The true Christian must be a Patriot.... He will strive to sanctify her wealth, her commerce, her influence . . . that his native land might become the Evangelizer of the world. Church Missionary Society, Proceedings, 1840-1841, 25.

[3]Aborigines Protection Society, Fourth Annual Report, 1841, 11.

and their native population, to a foreign power.[1]

Far more the object of evangelical humanitarian condemnation were the South African Dutch. Boer animosity for the English missionary had a lengthy background.[2] The climax of Boer discontent with English domination which resulted in the Great Trek of 1837 corresponds roughly with the zenith of evangelical humanitarian influence in England. This migration of the Cape Dutch was in large measure a reaction against British ideas of government, religion, and social relations.[3] But the Trek did not give them a free hand in their own affairs or afford them any relief from the watchful eye of the English humanitarians who watched their treatment of the African native with care.

The Aborigines Protection Society was deeply concerned with the peril in which the aborigines beyond Cape Colony were placed by the emigration of the Boers. It called for the extension of British control beyond the

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[1] Hansard, 1842, LXII, 499.

[2] Works such as the Rev. Dr. John Philip, Researches on South Africa aroused Boer animosity for their criticism of Boer conduct toward the native.

[3] J. Holland Rose, A. P. Newton, E. A. Benians, eds., The Cambridge History of the British Empire, (Cambridge, 1940), II, 307.

frontier in defense of the native tribes.[1] Later, the Society addressed appeals to Lord John Russell, Secretary of State for War and Colonies, drawing his attention to the "destructive inroads" of the Boers among the blacks to the northeast of the Cape.[2] When reports arose that Britain might annex the region, the Aborigines Protection Society supported such a move because Britain would again control the Boers,[3] and upon the annexations of Natal in 1843, the Society expressed satisfaction.[4] Glenelg's policy of withdrawal was therefore reversed in the case of Natal with the approval of the Aborigines Protection Society.

When British annexation did not prevent continuing Boer encroachment upon the native tribes, however, the Society resumed its complaints. New native tribes were threatened by the Dutch settlers, and British protection must be extended to them. "Into what the Caffre now is, his kinsman, the Zoolah, may eventually be transformed,"

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 23.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Extracts, II (1841), 21.

[3]Aborigines Protection Society, Fourth Annual Report, 1841, 15, 16.

[4]Aborigines Protection Society, Sixth Annual Report, 1843, 14, 15.

it warned.[1] In subsequent years, as the Boers pushed into the Transvaal, the Society decried the "rapine and slaughter" that they wreaked upon the aborigines.[2] Additional indignation was stirred by the continued interference of the Boers with the work of the English missionaries.[3] A patriotic conviction of Britain's moral superiority could easily lead to an expansionist logic which watched the expansion of the Empire with satisfaction.

The Aborigines Protection Society was not always enthusiastic about the extension of empire. Jealous of native land holdings, the Society opposed the continuation of white settlement in the Orange River Sovereignty in 1852, but the prospect of British withdrawal from the region raised even greater consternation. In defining its concept of British commitment in the region, the Society came close to the principle of trusteeship. Against the European settler, the native required the protection of the British Government. British law and

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, Seventh Annual Report, 1844, 17-20.

[2] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1852), 161. By the Sand River Convention of January 1852, the independence of the Transvaal was recognized, largely because its distance from the Cape made any other course impossible. The Transvaal Boers were also the most intransigent of the South African Dutch.

[3] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1853), 212.

protection was needed, therefore British sovereignty must be retained. But such sovereignty must be exercised "only for the well-being of the inhabitants.[1]

In Australia and New Zealand, as in South Africa, the abiding problem for the evangelical humanitarian was the manner in which British intervention on behalf of the native might be effected without compromising his independence, or threatening his continued existence by the influx of European colonists which was encouraged by the establishment of order. If the reign of British order was needed in Africa, it was equally necessary at the antipodes. How could the benefits of institutions be extended without encouraging the contact of white and native which had been so disasterous in the past?

The spokesmen for the evangelical missionary societies adopted rather ambiguous positions on the question. Particularly in the case of the New Zealand Maori, the missionaries would have preferred an exclusive

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[1]Address of the Aborigines Protection Society to the Duke of Newcastle, Secretary of State for Colonies /as of December, 1852/ printed in Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1853), 226. In the instance of the Orange River Sovereignty as in the case of Natal, the British Government only reluctantly extended control after Sir Harry Smith had initiated the expansion soon after his appointment as Governor in 1847. A very recent and detailed study of the question is found in, John S. Galbraith, Reluctant Empire: British Policy on the South African Frontier, 1834-1854 (Los Angeles, 1963), 226ff.

contact. The natural attractiveness and obvious capacities for development which the Maori demonstrated made him a special object of their solicitude. In 1835, the missionaries of New Zealand were instrumental in the adoption of a Declaration of Independence by many of the New Zealand tribesmen. The Church Missionary Society supported this step, and denied the legality of any annexation proposals as a violation of the principles of international law. It advocated, however, the delegation of more authority and power to a British resident in the islands so that British influence might be increased to the benefit of the native. British influence would provide an effective restraint upon the exploitative practices of the white, but it would also contribute to the moral, social, and religious improvement of the native. In short, while the Church Missionary Society denied England the right to make New Zealand a formal part of the Empire, it insisted that the benefits of British civilization be extended to the New Zealander.[1]

As the influx of settlers continued, it became evident to the New Zealand missionary interests that this

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[1]Testimony of Dandeson Coates before the select committee of 1836 on Aborigines and before the select committee of 1837-1838 on New Zealand. "Report of Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 510-512; "Report of New Zealand Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837-38, XXI, 574.

type of informal influence would not insure Britain's moral dominance. The threat of foreign colonization made formal annexation necessary, so missionary officials sought the best means of bringing it about while preserving the largest degree of native independence. In January 1840, Colonel William Hobson was sent out by the British government to negotiate the cession of sovereignty by the New Zealand tribes. The Church Missionary Society played a prominent role in the consummation of Hobson's efforts.[1] The natives were guaranteed possession of their lands, and were assured all the rights of British subjects, in return for ceding the sovereignty of the islands to the Crown. The Church Missionary Society had decided to abandon its policy of non-annexation because it came to realize that the sort of influence it had envisioned, by which tribes might have been brought to recognize "a sort of protectorate," while preferable, was not possible.[2] As the Church Missionary Society viewed the Waitangi annexation, no landed property had been transferred from the native. British influence had been assured dominance

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[1]Church Missionary Society, Proceedings, 1839-1840, 87.

[2]Testimony of Dandeson Coates before the select committee of 1840 on New Zealand, "Report of the New Zealand Committee," H.C.S.P., 1840, VII, 538-541.

to the exclusion of any other European power. The New Zealand native had chosen to come under British dominance of their own will, and they had surrendered no rights. Spokesmen for the bther evangelical missionary bodies presented the same general interpretation of the form any British annexation must take.[1]

The Aborigines Protection Society was naturally deeply involved in the agonizing problem of the nature of Britain's relationship with these native territories. Shortly after the annexation of New Zealand, the Society reviewed, not without serious qualms, the fashion in which it had come about. New Zealand, after being recognized as independent,[2] had been subsequently

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[1] "Report of the New Zealand Committee," H.C.S.P., 1840, VII, 502, 503, 513, 514. Questioned on this matter before Buxton's committee of 1836, 1837, most missionary spokesmen had only the vaguest notions of how such annexed areas were to be administered. Some admitted that they could see little possibility of extending British order without making such areas outright British possessions. "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 64, 65, 98, 99, 204.

[2] In 1835 the much-ridiculed Declaration of Independence was drawn up between various Maori chiefs with the aid of the missionaries. Together with the national flag and other external emblems of sovereignty this tribal nation presented a farcical picture indeed among peoples who scarcely comprehended the entire affair. The so-called United Tribes of New Zealand--some thirty in number--was surely visionary. See K. L. P. Martin, Missionaries and Annexation in the Pacific (London, 1924), 35.

colonized by Englishmen. The British government had for a time withstood this "irregular colonization" and had refused to give "any official sanction" to it. But at length New Zealand was proclaimed a colony when it became clear that British abstention in the region endangered the interests of colonist and native alike. The crucial questions of land acquisition and native rights remained unsolved, so it was the Society's purpose "to secure a measure of mercy and justice to that people."[1]

Nor was the Aborigines Protection Society reassured in the following years with respect to the acquisition of New Zealand sovereignty. Without examining the merits of the grounds on which England acquired New Zealand, the assumption of sovereignty "by any powerful and civilized nation" over any other "independent people, less powerful and enlightened, or even barbarian" could only be defended on the "broad basis of consolidating the general welfare of mankind by promoting the grand objects of civilization." Immediately the native races failed to benefit from such a relationship, no justification was possible.[2] Here of course is the notion of

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Extracts, II (1841), 49.

[2]Colonial Intelligencer, I (1847), 98-99.

trusteeship again. And by this norm, in the view of the Aborigines Protection Society, the British acquisition of New Zealand did not measure up well.

The Society found little to commend the advice of those English residents of New Zealand who had called for annexation--including the many missionaries whose original position had favored the recognition of New Zealand as an independent nation. If the contrived recognition of independence had proved inadvisable, the subsequent assumption of sovereignty could no more be condoned in the Society's view. The Society believed that between the recognition of independence and the assumption of sovereignty many of the missionaries, who had come to support the latter, had "imbibed the mania for land-jobbing," and thus had sought "to render their estates marketable under the protection of British power and laws." Had the missionaries upheld their sacred trust, much greater portions of the aboriginal world would have been preserved "under the auspices of the Anglo-Saxon race." Nevertheless, the Aborigines Protection Society gave its qualified assent to the method employed at Waitangi. "When the British Government did assume the sovereignty [of New Zealand] it was wise, as it was a Christian policy, not to usurp power, but to acquire it

in the confidence and affection of the people."[1] The Society's position on the entire question of the extension of British sovereignty is summed up in the following words. "If possession of territory, or an extension of sovereign power be our object, it must be based upon natural justice; which is so comprehensive in its nature, that it embraces in its scope, alike the rights of an individual or a nation, the title to possession of an acre or of a continent."[2]

It would seem that during the entire decade of the 1840's the evangelical humanitarians were wrestling--either consciously or unconsciously--with the problem of defining a type of sovereignty which would fulfill their purpose of protecting the aborigines without further opening the floodgates of colonization. Among the witnesses before Buxton's Committee, there was evidence of uncertainty as to whether sovereignty could be divorced from outright possession. Some, of course, did not think deeply enough about the matter to realize the problem existed. And certainly no clear position emerged from

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, I (1848), 205. While concurring in the Waitangi Treaty, the Aborigines Protection Society certainly showed a remarkable independence of the missionary bodies in its criticisms of the annexation policy in general.

[2] Motte, Outline of a System of Legislation, 9.

them. Toward the end of the decade in which the Treaty of Waitangi was drafted the Aborigines Protection Society still insisted on the possibility of a distinction. In fact, the Society claimed a growing acceptance beyond humanitarian ranks for its position. The distinction it made was of this sort. The British crown had acquired a "simple magisterial" jurisdiction and not a "territorial" jurisdiction in New Zealand. The right of property had not been attained "in the soil by virtue of the royal prerogative." The Treaty was binding on both the New Zealander and the Englishman, each party possessing "peculiar rights" which could not be "infringed" without "giving to the injured a constitutional remedy." Specifically, the natives retained "a right of property in the whole soil." As for the Crown, beyond its magisterial jurisdiction, it held a right of preemption--a right of first purchase on any portions of land sold by the natives.[1] Whether a distinction between magisterial and territorial sovereignty in fact existed, the Aborigines Protection Society, in seeking to reconcile their expanding protection with the status quo so far as

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, II (1849), 163. Later the Society became extremely critical of the government right of preemption which worked, according to its spokesman, a hardship on the natives.

colonization was concerned, claimed it as a valid principle.

The Treaty of Waitangi was labeled a missionary document by its opponents,[1] and certainly it marked a high point in their influence. The British Government and the missionary societies accepted the necessity of annexation in the face of increased European emigration to the antipodes and mounting foreign interest in the region. Hobson's instructions from the Colonial Office therefore read: "the necessity for the interposition of Government has become too evident to admit of any further inaction."[2] As faulty as the Waitangi Treaty might appear to the evangelical humanitarians in retrospect, they supported it because it represented the free concurrence of the native peoples of the region. They had reached out for the protecting aegis of the British Empire. Britain's role must be selfless.

The economic and political value of the Empire was increasingly questioned by many people in the middle

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[1]Edward Jerningham Wakefield, Adventures in New Zealand from 1839 to 1844 (London, 1845), 7.

[2]Excerpt from the instructions to Captain Hobson, cited in T. Lindsay Buick, The Treaty of Waitangi: How New Zealand Became a British Colony. Third Edition (New Plymouth, N.Z., 1936), 71.

third of the nineteenth century. But the followers of Buxton could not conclude their evaluation of the Empire there. The returns to England in terms of prestige, power, or treasure were only secondary considerations. The Empire was to be a harbor for the oppressed natives, and its role could not be abandoned lightly. In this sense, the Aborigines Protection Society and its adherents were missionary imperialists.

CHAPTER V

PROTECTING NATIVE PEOPLES

The evangelical humanitarians were opposed to the extension of British influence unless it could be made to serve the welfare of the native. They favored the extension of British law as long as its benefits were conferred equally on all British subjects. Its guarantees must be extended to the aborigines; its restrictions must be applied to the European in his relations with them. Their attitudes toward the spread of British influence, British law, and the British flag, affected their outlook on the question of colonization. In those decades when the stream of emigrants flowed in unprecedented numbers to the far-flung regions of the earth, the missionary bodies, the Aborigines Protection Society, and those of kindred sympathy were faced with no theoretical problem. Colonization there was and would be. Could any just system of colonization be found?

There was much criticism by missionary officials and adherents of the Aborigines Protection Society of many aspects of colonization. Many colonization schemes were denounced for their selfish spirit by the Society's

membership.[1] Indeed, the consistently damaging record of European colonization had helped call the Society into existence. At its first annual meeting, two motions were entertained and unanimously adopted, calling for "an unremitting caution and vigilance in reference to all schemes of colonization," and noting that "the past effects of colonization had been not only "derogatory to the national character," but "greatly injurious to the success of Christian Missions."[2]

Buxton's select committee had considered the question of colonization in some detail. Dandeson Coates testified that while he favored the wielding of moral and social influence upon the native chiefs, in the case of New Zealand, the Church Missionary Society stood "against the colonization" of those islands. Although he did not conceive colonization to be "necessarily productive of destructive consequences," yet it had generally led to that result, and for that reason there was nothing he would "deprecate" more than the colonization of New Zealand.[3] His opposition to New Zealand

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Twelfth Annual Report, 1849, 9.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 6.

[3]"Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 519.

colonization led to his publication of an outspoken pamphlet condemning the proposed schemes of the New Zealand Company.[1] In it he rejected the widely repeated argument for colonization which pointed to England's "redundant" population. Englishmen had no right to seek relief from any inconvenience that pressed upon them by "casting" their surplus population "on the shores of New Zealand." Colonists possessing "coercive powers" occasioned "collision and blood-shed." The missionaries, on the other hand, had "simply the religious and social good of the people in view." A vast difference existed between these two types of contact, Coates insisted. Then a plaintive plea followed. "Only let New Zealand be spared from Colonization, and the Mission have its free and unrestricted course for one half century more, and the great political and moral problem will be solved. . . ."[2] Other missionary testimony expressed the

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[1]The New Zealand Company replaced the New Zealand Association when for a second time a charter bill for Wakefield's Association was rejected by the Commons. See Paul Bloomfield, Edward Gibbon Wakefield: Builder of the British Commonwealth (London, 1961), 206.

[2]Dandeson Coates, The Principles, Objects, and Plans of the New Zealand Association Examined, in a Letter to the Right Honorable Lord Glenelg, Secretary of State for the Colonies (London, 1837), 14, 41. The transportation of criminal elements to Britain's colonies was particularly condemned by the evangelical humanitarians. The Aborigines Protection Society publicized the evils of the

same misgivings and reservations respecting white settlement. The committee's evidence strongly suggested that colonization was very undesirable.

Yet the relentless tide of colonization continued to flow, and the missionary interests were forced to recognize its inevitable character. Before the select committee on New Zealand Coates grudgingly conceded the influx of Europeans had indeed altered the situation. In view of this, Coates stated that the Church Missionary committee would favor annexation of new territories through the Crown, but would still oppose its acquisition by some private company of individuals. The Reverend John Beecham expressed the Wesleyan society's view. "If colonization could have been altogether prevented, it would have been far more agreeable to the views that we entertain as a missionary society." However, circumstances as they were, the Wesleyan secretary concluded that the annexation of New Zealand by the British government was "perhaps the best that existing circumstances

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practice frequently and in 1848, when the Government at Westminster contemplated establishing a penal colony in South Africa, it petitioned the Commons through one of its members, Edward North Buxton, M.P. Colonial Intelligencer, II (1849), 201. The Society shared this view with Sir William Molesworth and other Scientific Colonizers who found transportation detrimental to the Empire. See H. E. Egerton, ed., Sir William Molesworth, Selected Speeches on Questions relating to Colonial Policy (London, 1903), 29, 34.

would permit."[1] Beecham and his society professed to be merely facing the obvious.

For all the opposition of these societies to white colonization, there was indeed another side to their outlook. On occasion they took a far less adamant stand. They were forced to recognize reality. Beecham stated his society's position shortly and simply in a letter to Lord Eliot, chairman of the New Zealand Committee (1840). "While we, as a missionary society, are averse to colonization, our missionaries are instructed to conduct themselves peacefully, and show all possible good will to our fellow countryman. . . ."[2] In certain instances one may find something of a pro-colonial attitude. Again, let it be repeated that there was no one unified outlook among evangelical humanitarians on the subject of empire. Undoubtedly in many quarters their feelings were mixed. Many of the missionaries, sensing the direction of events, at once desired and feared the coming of the settler as the floodtide grew in the forties.[3]

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[1] "Report of the Committee on New Zealand," H.C.S.P., 1840, VII, 540, 547, 551.

[2] Beecham to the Right Honorable Lord Eliot, July 23, 1840, Ibid., 640.

[3] G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Society (London, 1921-22), III, 227.

The Aborigines Protection Society was in the same position. It had resolutely opposed the colonization of New Zealand, which, in the words of its secretary, Dr. Hodgkin, was already "tolerably well peopled." Some unpopulated region should instead be made the object of colonization.[1] But the Aborigines Protection Society was not a relentless foe of the enlightened variety of colonization. There was "a certain vast difficulty" in forming colonies among the natives "without compromising their independence, and involving their ultimate depression, poverty and ruin." Yet, the first annual report explained, it was not the object of the Society "to create difficulties in the way of emigration and colonization." It contemplated with satisfaction "the extension, on just and liberal principles, of Colonial Establishments, under the paternal sway of an enlightened British government, as a means of relief of the unemployed portion of the home community, and offering new sources of industry, trade, and commerce."[2]

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[1]Hodgkin to Benjamin Hawes, M.P., Mar. 27, 1837, in the appendix to Aborigines Protection Society, The British Colonization of New Zealand, 51.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 20.

Taken as a whole, the position of the committee respecting the prospects of colonization was rather optimistic. Admittedly, in many quarters a "tone of despondency" prevailed over the ultimate condition of the colored races, the report continued. But, it contended:

> We cannot admit the doctrine that the establishment of a civilized community in the neighbourhood of uncivilized tribes, must be injurious to the latter, without supposing something extremely defective and improper in the regulations and principles of the former. Let these be corrected and the evils must diminish.[1]

In following years the Society's support of "legitimate colonization" was reiterated. The membership acknowledged that the "severe pressure" of population had led to emigration among the manufacturing and laboring classes, and there could be no doubt that "this diffusion and spreading" of civilized peoples was intended "in the great purposes of providence" to bring about "incalculable good." The colonist and the merchant had a duty to "promote and regulate" emigration to the utmost benefit of colony and homeland. Yet there was the native inhabitant

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 26. The Society restated its position in its second report, pressing Parliament to create a system of colonization "of a character to combine all institutions that experience had proved to be beneficial, and exclude as far as may be done in human affairs, all occasions of the frightful evils which have hitherto been disgracefully frequent." Aborigines Protection Society, Second Annual Report, 1839, 21.

to consider also. In the light of all these considerations, the Society announced that "the labourer and manufacturer of England, the poor settler who is the advance guard of civilization" and "the native Lord of the yet uncultivated soil" were "equally the objects" of its interest.[1] When it came to settling disturbances in the colonies, the Aborigines Protection Society claimed as much concern for the interests of the colonists as for the native tribes. Certainly, the Society contended, it did not wish to see the misconduct of the few imputed to the settlers as a whole.[2]

The Aborigines Protection Society was still reiterating at mid-century its support for a just and mutually beneficial system of colonization. After the furious colonizing activities of the forties, it still professed its faith in colonization of the right sort. "The Society has ever been the true friend, not the

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Third Annual Report, 1840, 6; Aborigines Protection Society, Extracts, II, 1841, 89.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Ninth Annual Report, 1846, 9; Colonial Intelligencer, I (1847), 55; Aborigines Protection Society, British Colonization of New Zealand, 14. By mid-century some important colonial interests were represented in the Society's membership, notably the Cape colonists in the person of Mr. John Fairbairn, who sought to garner the Society's support for a new constitution for the Cape. Aborigines Protection Society, Fourteenth Annual Report, 1851, printed in the Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851), 236.

opponent, of colonization, and has never desired to limit the honest extension of the British dominion," the Colonial Intelligencer repeated.[1]

Buxton, the members of his society, and others of like mind believed that the system of colonization failed to incorporate adequate safeguards for the aborigines. Again and again it was "the system" that was criticized. The report of Buxton's committee stressed this.

> With respect, however, to our investigations, we wish it to be understood that it is not against individuals, much less against colonists or military bodies, that we would direct our reprehension. . . . We are convinced that a large body of both are well and kindly disposed toward the natives; but it is the system that has been permitted to prevail in the colonies, which, in our opinion, requires a complete alteration.[2]

Having criticized the policies of the past, some constructive recommendations were clearly called for. The chief witnesses before Buxton's committee suggested that beneficial changes were possible. Coates, despite his anti-colonizing outlook, expressed the belief that great improvement could be made. Beecham called for a "better

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1852), 50.

[2] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837, VII, 44.

system" to replace the "very defective and injurious" one pursued particularly in South Africa. While he would not "profess to contrive all the machinery of a new system, or describe it in all the detail of its minute provisions," said Beecham, he had some suggestions to offer with respect to the Bantu. Then followed five recommendations, hardly profound and certainly not novel. Among the most necessary characteristics of "a new system" must be justice toward the native (including compensation for land, the recognition of their civil rights, the provision of proper influence under philanthropic and Christian institutions, the dispensing of equitable justice which would neither aggravate nor oppress). Secondly, he recommended a series of intelligible and generally-understood treaties with the "principal chiefs." Thirdly, laws must be "equal in operation" on colonist and native alike. Again, rules and regulations must be promptly administered, and, lastly, they must be consistent in order to inspire confidence. Such a new system should be enforced on the tribal members by individual native chiefs and not by military force or any other form of coercion, the Wesleyan secretary concluded.[1]

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[1] "Report of Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 514, 515, 521.

The Aborigines Protection Society constantly advocated the adoption of a new system of colonization which would be at once a source of properity to England and a means of relief and elevation to the aboriginal population.[1] As the course of British relations with the natives of the empire continued to deteriorate about mid-century, most notably in the case of the continued Kaffir wars and the extensive unrest among the Maoris, the Society assumed a rather omniscient attitude. It claimed its advice had been overlooked. The results were clear. Warfare with the Kaffir was the product neither of "Kaffir hostility" nor of "Kaffir theft," as was often claimed. It was the result of a conspiracy of certain "designing parties," to whom the excitement in the colonies could be attributed. To them a new Kaffir war seemed desirable for the large sums expended on such a venture, the subsequent acquisition of land, the spoils, the military advancement growing out of it. In short, Britain's system of colonization was wrong because it permitted selfish motives to control it.[2]

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, I (1847), 171; II (1849), 207.

[2] Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851), 151. Addressing Governor Cathcart, on his appointment to the Cape, the Society professed to see, in retrospect, a justification for all its contentions regarding colonization. Events in South Africa, the Society found, "fully

Secretary Beecham lent his pen to the cause of the aborigines in a pamphlet published in 1838. It was often pointed out, he stated by way of introduction, that England "principally" owed its wealth and greatness as a manufacturing and commercial nation to her colonial empire. But the question should also be raised, where are "the original possessers of those countries in which we have our most flourishing colonies?" Results being what they were, Beecham then posed the question, why past colonization had been so disasterous to native inhabitants? His answer seems to exemplify the evangelical humanitarian position. "The evils inflicted upon Aboriginal tribes and nations by our past Colonization are not to be regarded as accidental, but as naturally arising from wrong principles, or radical defects inherent in the system which has been pursued."[1]

What form should British colonization have taken in the eyes of the evangelical humanitarians? What were

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sustained" its views. Christian colonization, based on altruistic principles, had not been adopted. Wars with the Kaffir continued, and similar disturbances could be anticipated wherever these inequities continued. Colonial Intelligencer, III (1852), 372.

[1]John Beecham, Remarks on Colonization in General with an Examination of the Proposals of the Association which has been Formed for Colonizing New Zealand, Second Edition (London, 1838), 3.

the tenets of the evangelical humanitarian conception of "Christian colonization"? Although one cannot turn to any single piece of writing to discover the essential points of the evangelical humanitarian concept of Christian colonization, the broad outlines of their ideal may be summarized under a few headings. It would be misleading to pretend that these notions were ever viewed as forming part of any rational whole. Still, there appears to have been something of a consensus, deliberate or not, among those who in the name of Christ's Gospel sought to protect the empire's native peoples and prepare them for the life to come.

The crux of the system of Christian colonization was, as might be expected, the treatment of the native population. The chief evil of past colonization had been the abuse to which aboriginal peoples had been subjected. The paramount characteristic of the new system was to be the fair and equitable treatment of these primitives. Every aspect of white emigration and settlement must be conducted with due consideration to this question. Thus, the position of the evangelical humanitarians on colonial self-government, colonial law, land policy, on treaties and frontiers, can be viewed as aspects of this system of Christian colonization.

Above all, the natives must be protected from the

wily and often violent actions of the white settlers. The Aborigines Protection Society took as one of its foremost aims, the marshalling of English public opinion for the protection of the aboriginal peoples of the empire. And it found satisfaction in the degree of success it achieved in this area. On one occasion, when an anonymous military officer, refrained from distributing firearms to an unnamed group of natives, declaring "we shall have Mrs. Fry [Elizabeth Fry, the Quaker sister-in-law of Buxton] and the Philanthropists upon us on our return," the Aborigines Protection Society reported the event with pride.[1]

The evangelical humanitarians, however, had more concrete plans for the protection of the natives than the mere mustering of public sentiment. The report of Buxton's committee recommended the creation of an office of "Protector of the Natives." This official, according to the recommendations of the committee, would become personally acquainted with his native charges. He could thus gain a "personal knowledge" of them. Among his diverse duties would be the overseeing of education. The Protector would seek to discover "the type of labour least

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, Ninth Annual Report, 1846, 9.

foreign to them." He would help formulate a "temporary code" for regulating their conduct until they had achieved a sufficient degree of civilization to abide by civilized norms. Then, too, this officer should fill the position of coroner, in the event of a native's death. He should also act as magistrate, providing for prosecution and defense when the regulations governing the native tribes were violated. It would be the Protector's duty, the Select Committee concluded, to make regular reports which would be transmitted to London in order that the home government could be thoroughly and currently posted upon the affairs and welfare of the aborigines within the empire.[1]

Early in 1838, the system of Protectors of the Aborigines was established in the Australian colonies, much to the satisfaction of the Aborigines Protection Society.[2] The Society continued to encourage the appointing of such officials. But in addition to increasing their numbers, the Society maintained that more frequent reports should be made by them to Parliament. Still, the Society cautioned that necessary as the appointment of

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[1] "Report of Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837, VII, 82.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 22.

such protectors was, such an office should not be "contemplated as a permanent institution." They voiced two objections to this. First, instead of fostering "a state of equality" between natives and European, the office of protector would tend to promote a continued notion of inequality. In the second place, such a protector could not be expected to sustain his impartiality because of the vast disparity between "his clients and their oppressors." His "probity" might restrain him from "actually joining the aggressor," but there would still be a temptation "to the indolent omission of duty" because of the feeble resources for redress at his disposal and the inadequate prospects of "any efficient inspection" by the "appointed government" due to the distances involved. The only real and lasting cure, the committee concluded, was for the natives to learn the value of "their exertions and improvements."[1]

Although in 1840 the Aborigines Protection Society sponsored the publication of the work of Standish Motte, entitled An Outline of a System of Legislation for the Benefit of the Aborigines,[2] which set forth in some

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Second Annual Report, 1839, 21, 22.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Fourth Annual Report, 1841, 6.

detail a system of protectors to guarantee native rights throughout the Empire, its misgivings concerning the value of the system as it was working in New South Wales at the time were growing. Its objections were simple and straightforward.

The Protector's function was merely negative, the Society criticized. The Protector lacked resources in land or funds. Thus his position was weak. He was simply a salaried official. And his duties were limited to seeking to preserve a balance of justice between the conflicting sides. "Justice is hard to administer," the Committee commented, "when famine is decreed for one party, and the fruits of spoilation to the other...."[1]

In this instance, the Aborigines Protection Society was moving rapidly toward a position more amenable to that of the New Zealand Company[2] than to that of the Church Missionary Society.[3] Nor did their position

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Third Annual Report, 1840, 32, 33.

[2]"Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords Appointed to Inquire Into the Present State of the Islands of New Zealand," H.C.S.P., 1837, 1838, XXI, 660. Mr. Evans, spokesman for the New Zealand Company expressed strong doubt about the system of Protectors before the Select Committee on New Zealand which convened at this time on the ground that such a position would place too much power in one hand. The Aborigines Protection Society's objection was, of course, on the ground that he lacked power, but both factions disliked the system.

[3]Church Missionary Society, Forty-first year, Proceedings, 1840-1841, 95. In approving the release of

change in the subsequent years. As the ineffectiveness of the protectors in performing their duties became increasingly evident, the Aborigines Protection Society increasingly criticized the system.[1] Finally the Society condemned the appointment of protectors altogether. In the vast majority of cases the protector failed to assist the natives. And he offended the colonists. While it was grateful for the individual cases of kindness shown towards the natives, the Committee professed, it continued to "deplore" the "continued absence of any efficient system of protection."[2]

The office of Protector of the Aborigines was abandoned in 1847.[3] It had proved a dismal failure to

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one of their missionaries, Mr. George Clarke, to take the position of chief protector in New Zealand, the Church Missionary Society indicated their high hopes for the new office.

[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Fourth Annual Report, 1841, 23, 24; Aborigines Protection Society, Extracts, II, 1841, 28. Official criticism was also growing. Governor Gipps of Australia became an adamant opponent of the system, complaining strongly to Russell and Stanley at the Colonial Office.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Sixth Annual Report, 1843, 18; Aborigines Protection Society, Eighth Annual Report, 1845, 17. The latter report condemned it on the basis of its expense as well.

[3]William Pember Reeves, The Long White Cloud (London, 1924) 172; Sinclair, Maori Wars, 35; Samuel Clyde McCulloch, "Sir George Gipps and Easter Australia's Policy Towards the Aborigines, 1838-1846," Journal of Modern History, XXXIII (1961), 268. It seems to be

friend and foe alike.

The Aborigines Protection Society was persuaded that the genuine path of improvement for the primitive peoples of the empire lay in a sort of self-help. A system of protectors could be a temporary measure at best. A lasting solution to the native's situation lay in stimulating them to elevate themselves. Therefore, the essential task was education.

When Buxton's committee dealt with the relationship of native and European, it had one professed conviction regarding the former: the aborigines were men

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generally agreed that a lack of understanding on the part of the officials was responsible for their failure, rather than any intentional malice for self-interest. Unfortunately, a series of minor disputes arose between protectors and colonists. One notable example was that of Mr. George Clarke, Chief Protector of the Aborigines in New Zealand, who became involved in personal land disputes which occupied no little part of his attention, as well as that of the Governor and even the Colonial Secretary. "Further Papers Relative to New Zealand. Correspondence of Governor Grey," H.C.S.P., 1847, 48, XLIII 490-491. It is not surprising then that such activities brought down the full weight of criticism by the New Zealand Company who found the self-interest of the protector and his assistant (who was his own son) ample proof of the hypocrisy of the missionary position on the protectors. Directors of the New Zealand Company, Twelfth Annual Report, printed in "Report of the Committee on New Zealand," H.C.S.P., 1844, XIII, 792-798. See also, Wakefield, Adventure in New Zealand, 382, 383.

with capacities in many ways equal to their white brethren. It was an indisputable fact, the committee reported, that the negro race had a real capacity "for mental culture" and "a good average intellect."[1]

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[1] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837, VII, 58.

CHAPTER VI

NATIVE RIGHTS

When the missionary came with the Gospel to the far reaches of the empire, he brought with him much else besides. He represented a different culture and it was inevitable that it should leave a deep impression upon the native society wherever contact was made. Often tribal stratification was threatened by the inroads of the European. Opponents of the missionary frequently denounced the suddenness and completeness of the changes which the former advocated. The radical uprooting of any native hierarchy, which might accompany the efforts of the white man to civilize the "heathen," could create wide unrest and uncertainty among the native population.[1] Some missionaries did indeed object to efforts to preserve "the peculiarities of the natives," but many were

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[1] Wakefield, Adventure in New Zealand, 382. As the son of the great colonial reformer, E. G. Wakefield, the author was apparently imbued with the same conviction of the necessity of preserving a hierarchical society for the natives, as well as preserving it for the whites who left the society of their homeland for the colonies. The senior Wakefield had elaborate and rather fanciful plans for reviving a variety of medieval heraldry among the natives within reach of his colonization plans.

prepared to see tribal structure preserved as far as it was compatible with civilized moral standards. Native chiefs might be placed in positions of authority which would preserve their status, and make them useful instruments of order.[1] Before Buxton's committe, he testified that "to strengthen the hands of the genuine chiefs indirectly, /would/ be a wise endeavor on the part of the colonial government, in laying down a permanent system of intercourse with this /the Bantu/ people. . . ."[2] The Aborigines Protection Society seems to have come to roughly the same conclusion. It praised a proposed system of annuities for the New Zealand natives, which was to be set up by the British Government. Yet it was not enough to simply pay the chiefs for services rendered to the Government, the Society contended. It was most anxious to see a system introduced that would dignify the native leaders. Since the natives had been deprived of their "hereditary influence" over their people, it was the conviction of the Society that they should be elevated to responsible positions which they would then hold in the

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[1]Motte, Outline, 16; Coates, Principles, Objects, Plans, 33. Beecham, Remarks on Colonization, 34.

[2]"Report of Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 703.

Queen's name. In such a manner their image could be enhanced "not only socially, but morally." An additional advantage of such a scheme, the Society contended, would be the incentive that the prospect of such honor would create among all the native populations. Their allegiance would thereby be strengthened. If the British government wished to inspire confidence among the primitives of the Empire, the best means was not to "buy over one or more of the chiefs." This looked too much like a bribe. More ideally, the natives should be given a "direct and systematic interest" in the legislative functions of their territory. They would support a system of government which not only promoted their economic interests, but which was the source of social advancement to them.[1]

In South Africa, the so-called frontier between the British colony and native territory was only an imaginary line that had caused much trouble by "the establishment of different systems of administration and justice in juxtaposition." If it were abolished, if similar "laws and rights" were to prevail over the entire region of British influence, if the natives were no longer dominated as "conquered tributaries by foreign rulers,"

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, II (1848), 113.

how much more desirable the situation. Native self-government, loyalty freely given because of the obvious advantages that accrued, persuasion rather than compulsion, these advantages would remove the temptation to "throw off a connection" which would then bring "honour" rather than "degredation." In such a system, the chiefs personal authority might be increased rather than obliterated.[1] Such an outlook seemed to foreshadow the "dual mandate" system of Sir Frederick Lugard in the early twentieth century.[2]

In accordance with these views, the Aborigines Protection Society continued to assert its support of a "systematic and comprehensive organization" of the native tribes "in union with" the Cape Colony, whereby native society would be secured and preserved under the British aegis.[3]

In official circles, at the same time, the importance of preserving something of the original structure

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[1]Letter, Dr. Hodgkin to J. J. Freeman, Secretary of the London Missionary Society, November 20, 1848, Colonial Intelligencer, II (1849), 136, 137.

[2]Sir Frederick D. Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa (Edinburgh and London, 1923), 193, 194.

[3]Colonial Intelligencer, II (1849), 135. British Kaffraria was something of an experiment in this direction, but while the Society at first saw bright prospects for it,

of native society was recognized. Earl Grey, while Secretary for War and Colonies, expressed concern for the continued differentiation of the chiefs in South Africa. With the introduction of "a more regular system of government," Grey told Sir Harry Smith, Governor of the Cape, it was desirable to substitute "salaries and emoluments" sufficient to maintain them in the manner to which they were accustomed. In return the government could expect their cooperation in sustaining sound law and policy.[1] With such advice, the Aborigines Protection Society would have had little room to quarrel.

It was natural that those who styled themselves the friends of the aborigines should seek to avail their charges of the protection provided to British subjects in general. The equal protection of the law, and the legitimate rights of British subjects therefore became an oft-repeated dictum of Buxton's followers. The question of the native's status within the empire arose during the investigations of Buxton's committee. Most

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its enthusiasm quickly cooled as the system proved highly unsatisfactory.

[1]Despatch, Earl Grey to Governor H. G. Smith, January 7, 1851, in Earl Grey, The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration, (London, 1853), II, 490, 491; George R. Mellor, British Imperial Trusteeship, 1783-1850 (London, 1951), 262ff.

missionary spokesmen seemed to assume that any annexation of native territory would, of necessity, make those aborigines within the region "fellow subjects." They were also convinced of the desire on the part of the native populations to submit themselves to the Crown and gain the protection that it afforded, and of their capacity to become useful participants in the administration of order and justice.[1]

The Aborigines Protection Society always championed the native claim to equal protection before the law. "That Act that makes the territory a part of the British Empire, unquestionably places within the protection of the British government and law, the native and the soil. . . ."[2] The aborigines within British colonies and settlements should be admitted "to the fullest participation in all the rights and privileges of British Subjects." The same act which gave Britain new dominion, also gave the native

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[1] "Report of Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 70, 382, 384, 515. Buxton, as chairman, displayed a marked partiality on this subject. He vigorously defended the missionaries for advising their natives to seek redress for wrongs from the King. Particularly, he came to the defense of the Rev. Dr. Philip, who had done much to make the Hottentot aware of his rights as a British subject.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 22.

extensive rights.[1] Unfortunately according to the Society, these rights were seldom recognized, and the Society could only continue to reiterate its claims on their behalf.[2]

When Australian Colonies Government Bill was drafted in 1850, providing for extended colonial participation in governing its affairs, the Aborigines Protection Society protested to Lord John Russell that it made no provision "for imparting to the natives the privileges of British subjects."[3] As for the New Zealand natives, having been adopted "with their brethren as British subjects," they were entitled "to participate in the paternal care of the Home Government." Even those natives in the most remote regions of the colonies, untouched by English settlers, should be granted the benefits of British order and justice.[4] Respecting South Africa, the Society objected to the proposed

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Third Annual Report, 1840, 6; Eleventh Annual Report, printed in the Colonial Intelligencer, II (1848), 15.

[2]Colonial Intelligencer, II (1848), 60.

[3]Aborigines Protection Society, Thirteenth Annual Report, 1850, 4, 5.

[4]Letter, Dr. Hodgkin to Mr. Hawes, no date, Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851), 203.

withdrawal of English authority from the area between the Orange and Vaal Rivers because such a move would deprive the natives of the rights as British subjects.[1] For Buxton's followers there was no question as to the claims which the native could rightfully make upon the imperial government as the subjects of the British monarch.

The practical implications of these rights commanded considerable attention of the committee on aborigines and remained of lively interest to evangelical humanitarians. A very basic problem was that of the system of law under which the natives of the empire were to be regulated. It was easy enough for the civilizing philanthropist to discard native mores that were repulsive to his sense of civilized behavior. But how much of native customs could be retained? It was also difficult to find a common set of legal procedures in cases involving the aborigines and the white colonists. Frequently it appeared that the champion of the natives was prepared to leave the coercive side of justice operative only against the European. No consistent principles seemed to emerge either from the select

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1852), 52. The withdrawal was consummated in the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854.

committee of 1837, or from the pages of the Aborigines Protection Society's publications on this topic. It was natural enough that, for all the protests of basic friendship for settler and native alike, the prime concern of the aborigines' friends should place emphasis upon the legal restraints on the whites while leaving those upon the natives vague and ill-defined.

The Reverend John Beecham's testimony before Buxton's committee provides an excellent example of this outlook. Sir Rufine Donkin asked the Wesleyan Secretary whether he thought any arrangement of colonial courts would be possible in which "even-handed protection" could be afforded to both native and white. Beecham acknowledged that he did not know whether "both objects" could be "practically secured" within one court system. He contended, however, that it would be possible for the British government to exert "such an influence over the native chiefs," that they would be led to adopt a "corresponding arrangement" by which natives would be subjected to appropriate justice for their misdemeanors "in their own way." Donkin pronounced Beecham's theories impractical, and proceeded to undermine the Wesleyan's whole position. Beecham was rescued from his quandry only by chairman Buxton's intervention. "Do you not think there is this distinction," Buxton interjected,

"that if a European chooses to go among savages he must subject himself to the consequences, but that if he chooses to go among savages we have a control over him, and ought to take care that he will not injure or kill the people." Beecham concurred in this refinement of his position.[1]

In the recommendations of the committee in the following year it was maintained that the natives in the vicinity should be encouraged "to concur in devising some simple and effectual method of bringing to justice such of their own people as might be guilty against the Queens subjects...."[2] But the matter was still only vaguely dealt with. Within or without the actual bounds of the Empire, the natives seemed obviously to require special treatment before the law. The question was whether native law should prevail in native districts? And should European laws be modified in the natives' interest?[3]

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[1] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 514.

[2] Ibid, 1837, VII, 80.

[3] Sinclair, Maori Wars, 36, deals with these specific questions relative to the Maoris.

The Aborigines Protection Society maintained that the native chiefs were to be allowed to administer their own laws in purely native and local matters. In litigation between native and colonist, undoubtedly English local law would prevail. But if this were to be so, then the native must be given a voice in promulgating "those laws upon which their interest depends. . . ."[1] Thus, the question of native participation in the legislative procedures of the colonies was raised. The Society advocated that the native be admitted to the franchise and given representation in the colonial assemblies.

However, there was another question which may be briefly touched upon in passing. This concerned the admission of native evidence in colonial courts, with its attendant questions of the validity of oaths administered to aborigines, their qualification as jurors, and the whole basic problem of their capacity to fathom a European legal system and its procedures. The select committee of 1837 gave attention to the question on various occasions.[2] Respecting the natives of Australia, the Aborigines Protection Society prepared a statement

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, I (1847), 101.

[2] "Report of Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837, VII, 17, 59.

to the effect that "the safety and elevation of the natives," of those portions of the globe where British colonies or settlements were established, was in no small measure connected with their admission to give evidence in English courts. Clearly the rejection of their evidence made them "virtually outlaws in their own Native Land." The "cruel and atrocious" European could carry on their oppression with impunity. The statement continued that the Society had had a bill drawn up to remedy this defect, but it had not met "the approbation of the Colonial Office." Native evidence should be admitted, it concluded.[1]

The crux of the problem was the administering of the oath to those to whom its meaning would be entirely lost, or at least, only dimly perceived. A movement was initiated in New South Wales for the admission of native testimony without the administering of the oath. Indeed, in 1840, Governor Hutt of that colony approved an act to this effect. Although the act was disallowed by Lord John Russell, then Secretary of State for War and Colonies,

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[1]Statement from the Aborigines Protection Society, signed July 30, 1839, in Historical Records of Australia, Series I, Government Dispatches to and from England (Published by the Library Committee of the Commonwealth Parliament, 1823-1825), XX (Feb, 1839 to Sept., 1840) 303.

the Aborigines Protection Society professed to take hope in the official disposition toward the subject.[1] However, it was the Society's continuing cry that limitation on the admission of evidence in the colonial courts of New South Wales and the other Australian settlements was increasingly to the detriment of the aborigines.[2]

There was another way in which the evangelical humanitarians sought to protect the native in his relations with the European colonist. Through the drafting of recognized treaties with the native tribes within the vicinity of white colonization, it was possible that contact could be regulated and the aborigines' rights preserved. When Colonial Secretary Glenelg ordered the native territory of Adelaide, South Africa, returned to those tribes from which it had been seized by Cape Governor D'Urban in 1834, he recommended a series of treaties to stabilize the natives' position along the notorious Cape frontier. For some humanitarians such a proposal seemed

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Extracts, II, 1841, 171. An act of the imperial government of 1843 authorized the legislatures of certain British colonies to pass laws, under certain circumstances, for the admission of unsworn testimony in both civil and criminal proceedings. See Mellor, British Imperial Trusteeship, 304, 305.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Eighth Annual Report, 1845, 17; Ninth Annual Report, 1846, 12.

advisable. Dr. John Philip, testifying before Buxton's committee in 1836, expounded his considered views on the Cape frontier question, which were largely in keeping with Glenelg's proposal. Philip had long called for the assembling of the Kaffir chiefs with the Cape Governor for the purpose of drawing up a treaty of mutual assistance under the guiding hand of the British official. Uniting Kaffirland in such a manner would provide order, check injustice, and prevent oppression. Withdrawal from the native territory, and its independent organization under a British-supervised treaty system therefore met with Philip's favor.[1]

The select committee on aborigines showed some misgivings about the expediency of treaties with native peoples, professing concern over the manner in which Europeans of "superior sagacity" tended to interpret such agreements to their exclusive advantage. Nevertheless, the committee in its recommendations expressed

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[1] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1836, VII, 613, 614, 701. Such practices as the notorious commando system, whereby the colonists conducted forays across the frontier, seizing native cattle, were forcefully condemned by Philip. The treaty system would presumably aim at ending this practice. The Boers deeply resented these actions by the British government, and it was the reversal of D'Urban's annexation which was the final incentive to the Great Trek. See E. L. Woodward, The Age of Reform: 1815-1879 (Oxford, 1958), 381.

approval of Glenelg's instructions to Governor D'Urban. The Colonial Secretary had called for treaties with each native chief in both the native tongue and in English. The proposed treaties were to exclude the white settlers from native territory, provide for enforcement of law upon the natives by their own chiefs, regularize commercial contact, and in general, end the unofficial and often vindictive forays of frontier settlers against alleged native rustlers.[1] These were the benefits that the select committee foresaw in such a system.

Sir Andreas Stockenstrom was designated by Glenelg to negotiate this series of treaties. And the so-called Stockenstrom system became a popular rallying point for the Aborigines Protection Society and its adherents. To some extent at least, Glenelg's actions in this matter were a product of the pressures brought to bear on him by Buxton and his followers.[2] The Society took steps to carefully lay its feelings regarding the frontier treaty system before him,[3] and it continued to

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[1] "Report of Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837, VII, 80, 81.

[2] Mellor, British Imperial Trusteeship, 256, 257.

[3] Aborigines Protection Society, First Annual Report, 1838, 16, 17.

defend the Stockenstrom Treaties in subsequent years, although the system came under increasing attack. At first it was able to report that tranquility had been restored and that cattle stealing had diminished; but nothing had been done to regularize commercial relations between the native tribes and the colony.[1] As the assaults upon the treaties increased, the Society stood by the system, noting that the arbitrary appropriations of the settlers had not resumed and that relations were better than they had been before its institution. Only grudgingly, as the treaties were actually being revoked and the system abandoned, did the Society acknowledge their failure to really solve native-settler relationships along the frontier.[2]

Stockenstrom's own declining popularity with the colonists had led to his removal in 1839. His successor's had tried unsuccessfully to modify the treaty system, but the so-called War of the Axe (1846-1847) brought about its demise. The truth of the matter was that in many respects the Kaffirs were not the "injured innocents" that Glenelg and Evangelical Humanitarians often supposed

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Third Annual Report, 1840, 12, 13.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Seventh Annual Report, 1844, 20, 21.

them to be.[1]

Earl Grey, coming to the Colonial Secretaryship in Russell's first Cabinet (1846), was no less opposed to annexation than Glenelg had been. Accordingly, he sought to adopt "an intermediate stage between annexation and laissez faire." The chiefs were to accept British protection, and recognize her authority. But white farmers were to be excluded from the native territory. Reluctantly, however, Grey acceded to the position taken by the Cape Governor, and the Kaffir Territory to the northeast of the Cape was annexed. The annexation proved less than satisfactory, and new Kaffir troubles arose.

These developments only confirmed the Aborigines Protection Society in its own convictions. An unnamed contributor to the Colonial Intelligencer editorialized with a self-assurance which must certainly have done little to foster good will among its opponents or in official circles. D'Urban's original annexation[2] had curtailed the power of the Kaffir Chiefs in a fashion which could not fail to provoke more distrust.

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[1]Meller, British Imperial Trusteeship, 255.

[2]On the Eastern Frontier of the Cape, 1834, 1835, see Cambridge History of the British Empire, II, 354.

Undoubtedly, the article continued, sincerity and humanity had been factors in this move. Surely Sir Benjamin D'Urban had sought to further the natives transition from barbarism to civilization. The colonists, on the other hand, were pleased with the prospect of land and labour which such an annexation would provide. King William, "to his lasting honour," however, had refused to condone the annexation. So, for a time the Kaffir chiefs had retained their positions. With Sir Andreas Stockenstrom, the writer recapitulated, the efforts to bring peace to the frontier and civilization and Christianity to the native were entrusted. "His removal from office blasted the hope which had been entertained by the friends of the natives." The system itself had always been improperly carried out, and, hence, misunderstanding and conflict continued.

At this point, the charges of the writer against the colonists became polemical. Justice demanded, the article continued, that the true causes of the Kaffir war be aired. "It is all but certain that the excitement of the Colonists has been mainly promoted by designing parties...." For them, the prospect of large sums to be expended, the land and spoils which might be acquired, the military promotions in view, were

powerful motivations.[1] This continued injustice had so aggravated the situation that the Imperial Government had been obliged to once more take the region under its control. The renewed Kaffir war was proof enough that this annexation was no solution to native discontent. The Cape treaties had failed through a willful conspiracy of the selfish interests which had thwarted the basically sound policy of Stockenstrom. Disillusionment with the course of South African affairs grew within the Society in the forties. In 1840, they had found hope in "the guidance of good government" for the aboriginal peoples of the Cape and its environs,[2] but in 1852 they confessed that "in South Africa, little, if any, good /had/ been effected by the interference of the Government with the

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851), 150, 152. It is interesting, in the light of this appraisal by the Society, to note their position upon the creation of British Kaffraria as a separate imperial dependency out of the old Queen Adelaide province. President Gurney professed to see Sir Harry Smith's actions in creating Kaffirland as an employment of the principle of equal status for the natives as British subjects. Colonial Intelligencer, II (1845), 15. The following issue of the Intelligencer declared that the plan of organization in Kaffiraria seemed to be working "admirably." Colonial Intelligencer, II (1848), 57. Other references were also made to the plan of organization whereby the natives participated in "the maintainence of good order and suppression of crime." A good treatment of the organization of Kaffraria is found in Mellor, British Imperial Trusteeship, 258-260.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, Third Annual Report, 1840, 13.

native tribes."[1]

The other famous treaty system in which the evangelical humanitarians took a lively interest was the New Zealand settlement, known as the Treaty of Waitangi. This famous document, drawn up in 1840, guaranteed to the chiefs of the signatory tribes and to their people undisputed possession of all their lands and of their rights as British subjects in return for the cession of sovereignty over all the territories held by the member tribes. The treaty became the subject of bitter controversy. The protracted debate on New Zealand in the parliamentary session of 1845, five years after the signing of Waitangi, revealed all the hostility which that treaty had created. The Church Missionary Society's role in its promotion was thoroughly aired. The fiery radical, Roebuck, denounced what he termed the "cant" which held sway among the so-called humanitarians, influencing the government.[2] Even a member of the Church Missionary Society, a Mr. Mangles, addressed the House concerning the "missionocracy" which had swamped New Zealand. In the course of his polemic, he launched a

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1852), 159.

[2] Hansard, July 21, 1845, LXXXII, 845.

personal attack upon Dandeson Coates and the local New Zealand missionaries for their meddling in colonial affairs.[1] The most widely-known of all the protagonists was Charles Buller, the disciple of Wakefield and a foremost colonial reformer. Had the treaty been fairly assessed, Buller asserted, he would have had no quarrel with it. But its significance had been grossly misrepresented. "...[W]hen an attempt is made to elevate this Treaty to an equality with the Treaties of Westphalia and Vienna, to make it the basis of a system of law, and to rest on it our title to the possession of New Zealand, I must pray the House to pause a little, and inquire into the intrinsic worth of the document...."[2] The more moderate voice of Sir Robert Peel did not deny the treaty's shortcomings. He only cautioned his colleagues to recognize their responsibility for the first initiation of the policies of 1840. "It is not the Executive Government, but you, who are responsible; for you agreed to the address to the Crown [on New Zealand's problems]; you are responsible for the appointment of the Committee [of] enquiry into aboriginal

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[1] Hansard, June 19, 1845, LXXXI, 890-893.

[2] Hansard, June 17, 1845, LXXXI, 684.

conditions7; and you are responsible for the doctrine laid down in their reports. . . ." Thus, through Parliament's influence public opinion had been aroused, and it had been through its influence that Colonial Secretaries had acted with respect to New Zealand.[1]

Conflicts over the interpretation of the treaty plagued colonial officials for many years after its promulgation. Did the native land claim include all the soil of the region or only that actually in use? Grey and the settlers favored the latter interpretation. The Aborigines Protection Society, along with the missionary societies and others of like interest favored the former.[2] Waitangi was a clear victory neither for the colonizers nor for the humanitarians, but it did assure British possession of New Zealand. Colonist and humanitarian alike could find satisfaction in this. Of utmost importance for the evangelical humanitarian was the fact that the treaty had formally recognized the rights of the native as a subject of the Crown, and had established formal limitations upon the exploiting settler. As the demand for aboriginal lands increased the guardians of the native

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[1] Hansard, June 19, 1845, LXXXI, 954.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, Eighth Annual Report, 1845, 19, 20.

were able to point to the Waitangi Treaty and their interpretation of its safeguards.

CHAPTER VII

THE EVANGELICAL HUMANITARIANS AND SCIENTIFIC COLONIZATION

Land was the principle form of property possessed by the natives; and land was what the immigrating classes of England sought. Thus, in Britain's colonies of settlement, land became the crux and core of many controversies between those who championed the natives' cause and those to whom the vast stretches of soil and forest offered the providential solution to the burgeoning population problem at home. Nowhere did the antagonism between the evangelical humanitarians and the professional colonizers in the period from 1837 to 1852 become more vitriolic than at this point.

Foremost in the ranks of the professional colonizers was Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Wakefield's enthusiasm for colonies persisted in spite of the declaration of free traders that colonies were expensive luxuries, and the governmental view that colonies were troublesome, ungrateful and of little worth. Wakefield explained the reasons for the slow growth of colonies as shortage of capital, shortage of labor, and too widely dispersed settlement as colonists acquired large tracts of land

for speculative purposes. Convinced that past colonization policies were wrong, he proposed to substitute a scientific system of colonization. In order to attract necessary capital, he planned to create a pool of cheap labor by making it difficult for new immigrants to buy land. Land was not to be given away, but to be sold at a sufficiently high price in small family-sized tracts. Income from land sales was to accumulate into an emigration fund to bring Britain's poor the long, expensive journey to Australia or New Zealand. When he set up the New Zealand Company in 1839, he hoped that people from all ranks of British society would join so as to create a "Little England" overseas.

Although Wakefield's various plans during these years for the colonization of Australia and New Zealand stirred little favorable response among officials of the Colonial Office, his principles of land distribution were influential in the revised land regulations of the Colonial Office after 1830. His central principle of land sale at a fixed price and the utilization of this revenue to underwrite the emigration of carefully selected settlers, was accepted by the Government. In addition, annual parliamentary grants in aid of emigration to the Colonial Land and Emigration Board after 1840, replacing the more arbitrary and unorganized "shovelling out of

paupers" that previously had prevailed in the Colonial Office, gave evidence of Wakefield's influence.[1]

The Wakefield interests, however, faced vigorous opposition. In the Colonial Office, the permanent under-secretary, Sir James Stephen, son of a leading evangelical and himself a director of the Church Missionary Society, frequently recommended measures countering the plans of the systematic colonizers. Stephen believed the Wakefield projects for colonization in New Zealand and Australia would involve the Colonial Office in new problems, additional expense, and would be harmful to the well-being of the natives.

The Church Missionary Society also proved a constant critic of Wakefield's land schemes. When the New Zealand Company sought governmental approval for its program, the Society impugned the motivation of the Company's directors. Secretary Coates, on behalf of the missionary body, claimed that since the Company's motives were entirely secular their professions of altruism were insincere.[2] Not only motivation but method came under

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[1]See Cambridge History of British Empire, II, 449-451; R. G. Riddell, "A Study in the Land Policy of the Colonial Office, 1762-1855," Canadian Historical Review, XVIII (1937), 400. This is not to say that from this time Wakefield's views predominated.

[2]Coates, Principles, Objects, Plans, 13.

the secretary's attack. If, as Wakefield recommended, the settlers were to pay the Company a price for their land above that paid by the Company to the native, this would become a great source of strife. He feared settlers would either seek to deal directly with the natives, or they would leave the settlement. Therefore, the steady supply of labor and the orderly settlement of land which Wakefield envisioned as a result of his system of land sale through the New Zealand Company would not materialize.[1]

The Wesleyan Missionary Society expressed similar doubts about the New Zealand Company. While examining in detail mechanics of the plan and the danger inherent in it for the natives of the region, the central reason for its distrust of Wakefield and his followers was simply and unequivocally given by its secretary, the Rev. John Beecham.

> If the /scientific colonizers/ were a number of gentlemen, united together on the same principle as that on which Missionary Societies are based, having no purpose of their own, but aiming solely to promote the welfare of the natives, their arguments in favour of Colonization, as the only remedy for the evils inflicted by our countrymen upon the New Zealanders, would deserve

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[1]Coates, Principles, Plans, Objects, 23.

most serious consideration. . . .[1]

As a matter of fact, the scientific colonizers always expressed the highest humanitarian principles with respect to natives. A significant part of the Wakefield scheme was devoted to the theoretical provision for the well-being of native peoples touched by systematic colonization. If the evangelical humanitarians were forced to admit that theirs was a day of colonization, and to seek to sanctify the process which they could not stop, so too the scientific colonizers were forced to concede that it was a day of widespread humanitarian zeal and to provide accordingly in their colonizing schemes. The Aborigines Protection Society also had the deepest interest in Wakefield's systematic colonization program. It was as concerned as the missionary societies that native land rights should be secured, and it was deeply sensitive to the missionary outlook. Despite the strong missionary influence in the Aborigines Society, the expressions of its leaders concerning scientific colonization were far less truculent than those of the missionary spokesmen. Although the Aborigines Protection Society had reservations concerning Wakefield's New Zealand Company plan of 1839, it did take a more optimistic view

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[1]Beecham, Remarks on Colonization, 60.

of emigration schemes and gave more credence to Wakefield's professed philanthropy than did either of the missionary societies.[1] Certainly its publications showed a marked moderation when referring to the land companies inspired by Wakefield, both for New Zealand and for Australia. Why was this so?

There may be considerable validity in the assertion that the Aborigines Protection Society saw, if dimly, a hope that in a project like that of the New Zealand Company humanitarian ideals might triumph.[2] Furthermore, in the person of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the Society placed considerable confidence. If the Aborigines Protection Society was left in uncertainty about the actual conduct of land company agents, there was some room for comfort in the precepts that professedly moved the founder. As a cousin of Elizabeth Fry (and hence a distant relative of Buxton), and of Quaker extraction himself, it is not surprising that Wakefield displayed some humanitarian concern for social conditions at home. His early concern for prison reform was undoubtedly

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[1] Sinclair, Maori Wars, 24, states that the Aborigines Protection Society "accepted Wakefield's case for emigration, and supported his schemes, convinced that colonization would be tempered with humanity." In the light of certain of the Society's literature this contention seems extreme.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, Extracts, II (1841), 87.

motivated by his own sojourn in Newgate prison for the rash abduction of a young heiress, but a broader basis of reform-mindedness than this runs through his writing and speeches.[1] In part, at least, these domestic concerns turned his attention to the colonies as a source of relief.

Thus, the Aborigines Protection Society was at first favorably disposed toward scientific colonization.

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[1]There is support for the thesis that basically humanitarian motives underlay Wakefield's system, not only from his most staunch supporters, but from others of more neutral persuasion. R. Garnet, Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Colonization of South Australia and New Zealand (London, 1898), 193, 211, asserts, "there seems no reason to charge the New Zealand Company with indifference to the well-being of the native race...." Elsewhere he states, "The language of the New Zealand directors breathes the spirit of justice and humanity...." A. J. Harrop, The Amazing Career of Edward Gibbon Wakefield (London, 1928), 92, 93, attests to the interests of his subject in civilizing New Zealand aborigines, leading them "to embrace the language, customs, religion, and social ties of the superior race...." Irma O'Connor, Edward Gibbon Wakefield (London, 1929), 132, denounces the Church Missionary Society for its shortsighted opposition to Wakefield's schemes and their benevolence. Buick, The Treaty of Waitangi, 46, a less friendly writer, also acknowledges the philanthropy underlying the principles of Wakefield's New Zealand scheme. Some more recent scholars, however, have been less charitable in their appraisals. John Millar, Early Victorian New Zealand: A Study of Racial Tensions and Social Attitudes, 1839-1852 (London, 1958), 6ff. minimizes the philanthropy toward the natives in Wakefield's New Zealand scheme by laying stress on its absurd aspects. Wakefield's motivation in devising a scheme for native amelioration was to "reconcile everybody to his own plans." Provisions for the native were as "fanciful" as for the colonists, Millar concludes. Sinclair, Maori Wars, 49, maintains that though the scheme "added some colour to the view that the Company was a humanitarian body, it did not disguise, except for the optimistic aborigines protectionists, that

Two of the avowed objects of Wakefield's system of controlled and scientific colonization commended themselves to the evangelical humanitarian followers of Buxton. One of the anticipated results of Wakefield's land schemes was the removal of conditions fostering slavery. Negro slavery might be ended by parliamentary decree, but the conditions favoring it were not necessarily eliminated. Plentiful land, declared Wakefield, was a necessary concomitant of slavery. Where land was cheap everyone tended to become a land owner. Consequently, society fragmented into "as many fractions as there are individuals." But to obtain the "greater productiveness of combined labour," men were led to obtain slaves. "Freemen will not, but slaves may be forced to, work in combination," he asserted. The lesson according to Wakefield was clear. Restrict available land and free labor would be available. Slavery would not ensue.[1]

Wakefield's philanthropy was directed towards England's poor and England's capitalists."

[1] "Report of the Select Committee on the Disposal of Waste Lands in the British Colonies," H.C.S.P., 1836, XI, 557ff., 616ff. He was careful to add, however, that his scheme did not entail concentration of population, but rather the controlled expansion of colonial land so that the transition from free laborer to landed proprietor would be gradual, providing always an adequate labor supply without allocating a man permanently to the role of landless laborer.

A second important aspect of Wakefield's program was also in accord with the broadest aims of the champions of the aborigines. Wakefield proposed to prevent colonists from spreading themselves at will throughout Britain's overseas domains. He objected to the continuation of haphazard, unregulated colonizing activity. This desire harmonized closely with the position of evangelical humanitarians who saw the greatest danger to the native peoples of the empire in the uncontrolled contact of native and European.

The points of disagreement between the evangelical humanitarians and the scientific colonizers became apparent only when the respective means, the actual policies advocated by the two sides, were revealed. The evangelical humanitarians placed first stress upon the soul of the native; the scientific colonizers thought first of his physical condition. This variation in emphasis bred diverse trends in conduct. The former gave close attention to the means of ministering to the spiritual needs of the natives, and stressed missionary work, education and instruction in the faith. And the Aborigines Protection Society, though its avowed purpose was to supplement the spiritual ministry of the missionaries with a more earthly ministry, would surely acknowledge the prior claims of the Gospel. The concern for physical

needs, for civil rights, for the general welfare of the aborigines was an adjunct of the missionary impulse.

For the Wakefield group, on the other hand, the spreading of the gospel, the spiritual ministry of the colonizer, was an adjunct to the major purposes of the colonization movement. The followers of Buxton were vague concerning the practical problems of colonization. The followers of Wakefield were equally obscure with respect to the problems of evangelization. Their respective positions were only expressions of the broader problem: should Christianity precede civilization or should civilization precede Christianization? The division between them was not between a policy of humanity and inhumanity; it was a divergence upon method.

Wakefield professed a desire to improve the physical condition of the native tribes wherever they came in contact with his projects. The New Zealand Company, he asserted, was intent on preserving the native race. The manner in which this was to be accomplished, however, was different than that proposed by Buxton and his followers. A system of native reserves was the key to the Wakefield plan. Before the select committee on New Zealand (1840), Wakefield affirmed that the great purpose of his proposed reserve system was "to prevent, as much as possible, in the change from savage to civilized

life, the degradation of the natives and the superiority of the new settlers, and hence the jealousies and perhaps quarrels which [were] likely to arise out of such a state of things." The New Zealand Company aimed at creating a "superior order of people by giving them a private property in land."[1]

These lands, however, in Wakefield's view should be distributed among the holdings of the white settlers, not segregated in some remote region. Reserves were not new, Wakefield admitted, but his method of distributing them was. And this was the key to preserving the natives. Indeed, if they were to survive at all, he contended, it would only be in this fashion. In such a system the contact between European and native would be greater, and the prospect of elevation more promising. Assimilation of the races was his professed goal.[2]

By this system of native reserves, Wakefield planned to preserve the hierarchical structure of native

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[1] "Report of the Committee on New Zealand," H.C.S.P., 1840, VII, 494.

[2] Certainly, this viewpoint must have met with misgivings among those who had espoused the missionary cause, and who, like the Aborigines Protection Society, had constantly deplored the undesirable moral effects that close contact between the settler and the native had often brought. Yet the Society continued to insist upon lauding the good intentions and principles of the New Zealand Company. British Colonization of New Zealand, vi.

society. The chiefs should receive plentiful land. The lesser natives should receive none. Hence, the lesser would work for wages as was customary in civilized lands. And the chiefs would be drawn into civilized society. They might even intermarry in the better classes, since their landed interests would place them on a level with the landed settlers. This native gentry would then, according to Wakefield's plan, "protect the inferior classes of their own race."[1]

The New Zealand Company considered the main advantage to the natives of the Wakefield land system not in the actual price paid directly to them for land by the company, but rather in the value that would accumulate in all the land when colonization took place. The value of the reserves would increase as settlement in their environs increased. The Company proposed to establish trustees for the purpose of protecting the natives' interests in their reserve land which would be held inalienably. Thus, although the initial sum given the aborigines for their land was small, the Company defended its plan on the grounds that these reserves would reimburse them amply. It was not difficult for the skeptical

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[1] "Report of the Committee on New Zealand," H.C.S.P., 1840, VII, 492-495. See also, Millar, Early Victorian New Zealand, 8, 9.

to ask, as some representing the missionary interest did, just how generous the plan was which took all the land from the natives and prided itself in the benevolence of returning a tenth part of it to them.[1]

Wakefield's humanitarian schemes were untried. The missionary interests tended to disparage them; the Aborigines Protection Society doubted the soundness of many aspects of them, but it was prepared to see whether some good would not come from them. The antagonisms between the Church Missionary Society and the New Zealand Company grew steadily more vitriolic.

The Church Missionary Society became particularly vulnerable to the criticisms of the Wakefield group because of some unfortunate developments resulting from the Society's policy on land purchase by their missionaries. Undoubtedly innocently begun, the land holdings of the Church missionaries in New Zealand became extensive enough to raise some questions by the mid-thirties. Recognizing the need of the missionaries to provide something for the future of their children, the Society permitted any missionary in the field to make a modest purchase of land

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[1] "Report of the Committee on New Zealand," H.C.S.P., 1840, VII, 531, 533, 592. Beecham raised this question before the select committee of 1840 on New Zealand.

so that the increment of its value would provide an education fund or a sum to start them in business. Certain purchases far surpassed this modest extent, however, and opened the door for charges of land speculation and hypocrisy. Wakefield and his followers seized upon this development to counter the assaults of the Church Missionary Society upon scientific colonization. The efforts of the missionaries to exclude white settlers could plausibly be explained in terms of their selfish desires to complete their mundane designs. To their own satisfaction at least, the scientific colonizers therefore were able to establish their own claims to superior benevolence and high-mindedness.[1]

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[1] Wakefield led the assault before the select committee on New Zealand (1837-1838), H.C.S.P., 1837, 1838, XXI, 587, and again before the select committee on New Zealand (1840), H.C.S.P., 1840, VII, 469, 504, 505, 543-550, 612-615. Missionary "land-sharking" was the reason for the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi which established a "farcical" native independence and a "Levitical republic" controlled by the missionaries according to Wakefield. In the Commons, the most famous attack upon the land policies of the Church Missionary Society was launched by Charles Buller, the widely known Radical and follower of Wakefield. Hansard, 1845, LXXVIII, 666; LXXXI, 670; LXXXII, 312ff. E. J. Wakefield, in his book, Adventures in New Zealand, 5, 6, 392, makes much of the superior philanthropy guiding the scientific colonizers over the hypocritical professions of the missionary interests. The Wesleyan Missionary Society were able to avert these land-jobbing charges because they had maintained an absolute prohibition upon private purchases by their missionaries.

The New Zealand Company, which was a joint stock venture, proceeded without governmental sanction to carry on colonizing activity in New Zealand, sending out a group of settlers in 1840 and arranging for the purchase of lands from the Maoris by its agents. In this unauthorized fashion the Company continued its activity until a charter was granted in 1841. But the Company was plagued with so many difficulties, not the least of which was the hasty and ill-defined nature of their land claims, that its fortunes declined until further assistance was given by the Russell Government in 1846. Still unable to put its affairs in order, the New Zealand Company surrendered its charter in 1850.

The Aborigines Protection Society watched each phase of the Company's fortunes with interest. Amid all the verbal dissidence between the Company and the Church Missionary Society, it assumed a position on the matter of land policy that was not entirely in line with either side. Despite its close relations to the missionary movement, the Society was not reluctant to censure aspects of missionary land policy. Although it professed to complement missionary efforts, it was not merely a seconder of missionary interests. The Society criticized the missionary societies for not introducting English among the New Zealand natives, and for not educating them

in a way to put them on a level with the European.[1] Its strongest criticism was reserved for various land purchases, made by those "connected with Missionary Establishments," that had failed to give full consideration to native interests and were a source of continuing injustice.[2] One should not, however, make too much of the Society's criticisms of missionary policy, for when it did appear its tones were moderate and guarded.

Toward the New Zealand Company, the Aborigines Protection Society showed mixed feelings.[3] That Buxton's Society could have given its unqualified assent to the Wakefield program is very unlikely. Certainly the position taken by Buxton's committee of 1837 provided little room for accommocation between its views and those of the Wakefieldians. For instance, the committee opposed governmental assistance in respect to the establishment of land titles to any native lands in Britain's domains

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, British Colonization of New Zealand, 12, 13.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Eighth Annual Report, 1845, 20.

[3]Sinclair, Maori Wars, finds the Aborigines Protection Society totally out of step with the missionary movement in its position on the New Zealand Company. Sinclair's suggestion that the Society gave undivided support to the New Zealand Company seems extreme in the light of much of the Society's literature on the New Zealand question.

on behalf of white settlers, while a basic tenet of the Wakefield program was the government's supervision, or at least guarantee, of land titles in areas of settlement.[1] The position of the Aborigines Protection Society, however, was not simply that of the parent parliamentary committee. The Society expressed favor for the settling of native land questions through some equitable treaty arrangement, to which the government would be a party. Additionally it backed a system of reserves akin to the Wakefield proposal.[2] Indeed, according to one writer, a member of the Aborigines Protection Society persuaded Wakefield to include the reserve system in his program initially.[3] Whether by conviction or for expediency's sake, Wakefield did make an effort at first to cooperate with the Society,[4] which probably accounts for the early partiality of the Society to him, and their persistent confidence in his principles through the founding years of the New Zealand Company. Friction did arise frequently,

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[1] "Report of Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837, VII, 78.

[2] Motte, Outline, 15. The Motte pamphlet, setting forth these principles was sponsored by the Society.

[3] Sinclair, Maori Wars, 1, 2.

[4] "Report of the New Zealand Committee," H.C.S.P., 1840, VII, 691.

but it was often offset by some other piece of cooperation between the two factions.

In 1841, a notable cooperative effort was made between the scientific colonizers and the Aborigines Protection Society in the form of a pamphlet published under the auspices of the latter and written by a prominent member of the New Zealand Company, Ernest Dieffenbach. The preface commended the directors of the New Zealand Company "for the care which they /had/ taken to secure portions of land for the natives." Similarly, it noted the philanthropic inclinations of the author, a naturalist attached to the Company, which had stimulated his interest in the Aborigines Protection Society. For the information on the condition and character of the New Zealand native furnished by Dieffenbach, the Society expressed its thanks.[1]

Perhaps the best expression of the Aborigines Protection Society's attitude both to the missionary societies and to the Wakefield group is contained in the introduction to this book.

> The truly admirable Christian zeal by which the several Missionary Societies have been called into existence and liberally supported has been very much engrossed with the care of the religious condition of the people in

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[1] Ernest Dieffenbach, New Zealand and Its Native Population (London, 1841), vi, vii.

> whose behalf they were formed. But there are temporal interests not to be lost sight of, on the due regard of which it will depend whether there shall exist native Tribes to receive instruction or not. Already, some important indications of the existence of a better feeling have made their appearance.... Colonization is no longer announced without special reference to the interests of the Aborigines; but though there is reason to fear that in many instances, the impressions on this subject are a dead letter, the New Zealand Company, at least, has followed up the professions by practice....

And although the Society did not fully concur in all aspects of the Company's scheme, it generally approved its plans.[1]

But while giving its guarded blessing to the Wakefield scheme, the Society was also communicating with Lord John Russell with respect to the New Zealand Company. The Colonial Secretary's recent correspondence with this Company disturbed the Society because it appeared to imply that all unoccupied lands in those islands were now at the disposal of the newly-created Colonial Land Commission. The Aborigines Protection Society sought to remind Russell that it was "but a few months" since the united New Zealand chiefs had been considered the representatives of "a free and independent State." In short, the Society was upholding the missionary viewpoint regarding the New Zealand natives and the Hobson mission

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[1]Dieffenbach, New Zealand and Native Population, vii.

that had resulted in the Treaty of Waitangi.

While in one paragraph the Society expressed the gravest fears for the future of the natives, and their rights in land, in the next, it acknowledged "with satisfaction" the Government's resolution to sanction the system of reserves made by the New Zealand Company.[1] At one time reporting that practical difficulties had arisen hindering the operation of the Company's system of native reserves, at another stressing the fact that concern for the natives formed "a recognized and operative principle" in the Company's schemes, at still another reassuring its membership that the New Zealand Company had expressed concurrence in the aims of the aborigines' protectors, the Society displayed an earnest desire to make accommodations with the scientific colonizers.[2]

Always recognizing the basic concern for the native that the Company shared with the Society, the spokesmen for the latter recognized that the aboriginal cause was "intimately blended with that of other parties who have strong claims on the regard and sympathy of their fellow

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[1]Aborigines Protection Society, Extracts, II (1841), 57.

[2]Aborigines Protection Society, Sixth Annual Report, 1843, 19, 20.

subjects and countrymen." One could not act abstractly on behalf of the natives. The New Zealand Company and its settlers must be considered. So the Society wished to avoid placing itself in a "hostile or offensive position with respect to any of them." Furthermore, it did not want to "propagate" erroneous statements concerning the natives on the one hand, nor did it wish to avoid espousing their just claims on the other. The Aborigines Protection Society believed that the New Zealand Company had done far more than any of its colonizing predecessors in considering the welfare of the natives and acknowledging their rights in the soil, but it could not commend the activities of the Company's distant agents.[1] Nor could the Society approve the New Zealand Company's attempt to have the Treaty of Waitangi, with its prohibition of private land purchases from the Maori, set aside. For the Society, the Treaty of Waitangi, guaranteeing the natives possession of all their lands, could not be violated, and its validity could not be questioned.[2]

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, Seventh Annual Report, 1844, 23-25.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, Eighth Annual Report, 1845, 18, 19. A Society pamphlet, published in 1846, expressed the same ambivalence. Expressing "personal esteem" for many members, it acknowledged the difficulty of the Company's task of "reducing to practice a new and attractive, but imperfectly proved theory of colonization." But its complaints about the actual conduct of the New Zealand Company were again very numerous.

The Aborigines Protection Society continued its self-appointed role as watchdog of native land rights, and as the decade wore on, its opposition to the New Zealand Company seems to have increased. At the same time it moved closer to the position of the two missionary societies whose antagonism to scientific colonization had always been unwavering.

An event which drove a wedge between the aborigines' friends and the scientific colonizers was the widely publicized Wairau massacre. In response to the vandalizing activities of certain Maoris in the spring of 1843, an expedition under William Wakefield, brother of Edward Jerningham, sought to apprehend the guilty parties. A scuffle ensued, in the course of which a colonist fired his gun, killing a native woman. Goaded to vengence, the chieftain and his followers fell upon the Englishmen--seven in number--and massacred them. The event naturally shocked the settler population, and, quite as naturally, aroused the vindictive anger of Edward Jerningham, the chief agent of the Company in New Zealand. The repercussions of the event were felt in England where parliamentary inquires were launched into

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Aborigines Protection Society, The British Colonization of New Zealand, vi, 3-10.

the affair.[1] Resurrecting the subject of the Wairau massacre in 1847, the Aborigines Protection Society left no doubt as to its sympathies. Wairau was not the result of an "unwarrented and cold-blooded" onslaught upon the colonists, as many claimed. The Society asked its readers to remember that the purchases made by the Company were from a few "warlike Chiefs," and "intelligible boundries" had not been established. As for the massacre itself, the New Zealand Company had employed "a party of their discontended, because deluded, emigrants, to carry muskets and bayonets" to effect the arrest of the offending natives. "Not until the leader of that unprovoked and wicked aggression had repeatedly threatened their destruction, nay, had actually fired, did the New Zealanders desist from [their] patient forebearance. . . ."[2] Thereafter the Aborigines Protection Society usually took a critical tone in speaking of the New Zealand Company.

In the developing relationships between the Wakefield interests and the Aborigines Protection Society, it appears that the real turning point occurred with the

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[1] Cambridge History of the British Empire, VII, part 2, 123ff., offers a good brief account of the affair.

[2] Colonial Intelligencer, I (1847), 165, 166.

change of ministries in 1846. Earl Grey entered the Colonial Office in the Ministry of Lord John Russell. Whereas the previous government of Robert Peel had been non-commital to the New Zealand Company,[1] Russell and Grey were both well disposed toward it. Five years before, as Colonial Secretary, Russell had been instrumental in obtaining its charter.[2]

Shortly after coming to power, the Russell Government determined to give the Company a chance to reorganize its affairs in New Zealand, where, since 1840, the Company's position had deteriorated due to public antipathy, and the colonization scheme had been ineffective. Earl Grey and the New Zealand Company concluded an agreement in May, 1847, whereby the Government agreed to purchase the Company's previous titles, recouping its own expenditure with a first claim on colonial land revenue. In addition the Government was to make

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[1] Hansard, July 23, 1845, LXXXII, 1003.

[2] Millar, Early Victorian New Zealand, 58. The thanks extended by the New Zealand Company interests to Russell "in determining to give fair play" to its principles, does not mean that he was an uncritical proponent of the Wakefield experiment. In the parliamentary debates over the issue in 1840, Russell spoke strongly in favor of Waitangi and against the formation of a company duly chartered by the government; Hansard, July 7, 1840, LV, 531-538. But he was responsible for the agreement whereby the Company was to receive land as compensation for its outlay on behalf of colonization. This agreement subsequently became focus of grave misunderstanding between the Company and the government. "Report of the Committee on New Zealand," H.C.S.P., 1844, XIII, 303.

£136,000 per year available to the Company, and allow the Company to exercise the Crown's right of preemption over certain native lands. The agreement roused the adamant opposition of the Aborigines Protection Society. It denied that the Government had any right to preemption over the so-called waste lands which actually still belonged to the natives according to their interpretation of the Waitangi Treaty.[1]

Earl Grey had adopted the principle of "actual use and occupancy" in dealing with the tangled problem of New Zealand land titles. Only the soil used by the natives for cultivation and pasture was clearly theirs. Their right to such land, he was prepared to defend. But the vast unoccupied regions of the islands might be taken by the Government. To the Aborigines Protection Society such a policy amounted to confiscation. As far as it was concerned, Grey had bowed to expediency and had sacrificed native rights to the claims of the land-hungry land company.[2]

Why were the attacks of the Aborigines Protection Society so vigorous after 1848, when they had said so

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, II (1849), 163, 164.

[2] Colonial Intelligencer, I (1847), 40, 41: II (1849), 169.

little in opposition to the original chartering of the New Zealand Company in 1841? In 1841, the Society had not had the opportunity to fully evaluate the actual applications of the Company's program in the field. But by 1846 they had had this chance, and it confirmed their worst fears. Thus the sudden shift in the Company's fortunes with the change in ministry, may well have provoked the hostility which the Society came to display toward the Wakefield scheme in these last years of the decade. Incidentally, this attack was not confined to the periodical literature of the Society. Thomas Fowell Buxton's son, Edward North Buxton, carried the debate to the floor of the Commons, where the land question was rehashed with no little emotion.[1]

In October 1847, Sir James Stephen retired from the Colonial Office. This too represented a victory for the Wakefield group. The brunt of many vitriolic attacks--"Mr. Mothercountry" Buller had called him--he had never worked well with the scientific colonizers.[2] On the other

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[1] Hansard, February 9, 1848, XCVI, 353. H. A. Aglionby, an M.P. and member of the New Zealand Company board of directors, dismissed E. N. Buxton's position on native land rights, claiming they simply held land because "they had easten somebody who had possessed the land before."

[2] Besides Paul Knaplund, James Stephen and the British Colonial System: 1813-1847 (Madison, 1953), there are special articles bearing on this relationship. J. M. Ward, "Retirement of a Titan: James Stephen, 1847-1850,"

hand, he had been a valuable contact for the evangelical humanitarian interests. Perhaps this loss also added to the new militancy of the Aborigines Protection Society.

Despite the assistance of the Russell Ministry, the New Zealand Company failed to make any progress in the three-year trial period promised by Grey, and the Company surrendered its Charter. The indefatigable Wakefield shifted his efforts to the denominationally-associated settlement projects at Otago and Canterbury in New Zealand. These became the heirs of the New Zealand Company on its demise. In the collapse of the Company, the Aborigines Protection Society certainly had no major role. The Company officials themselves contributed to its downfall by many unwise decisions. Herman Merivale, Stephen's successor in the Colonial Office, suggested this reason for its failure, and others besides. Political motives, personal jealousies, favoritism, according to him all played their part. The deepest cause, however, he found among the investors themselves who discovered that the sums laid out for the tracts of land were only the commencement of expenditure. Faith in the scheme, by those within, dwindled, and the ambitious

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Journal of Modern History, XXXI (1959), 189-205; Samual Clyde McCulloch, "James Stephen and the Problems of New South Wales, 1838-1846," Pacific Historical Review, XXVI (1957), 353, 362.

project failed.[1] In New Zealand the settler class became increasingly disenchanted with the Company, and the struggling Company proved unequal to the task of pacifying this unrest. So it was in the colony itself that the scheme met defeat.

The evangelical humanitarians had seen in scientific colonization the hope that Christian colonization might be advanced a pace. But as practice diverged increasingly from theory in the activities of the New Zealand Company, disenchantment set in. When the natives' welfare was threatened the Aborigines Protection Society abandoned the Wakefield program.

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[1] Merivale, Lectures, p. 475 /Appendix to Lecture XVI (written 1861)/ B. Hawes, an M.P. and member of the original board of the New Zealand Association, on behalf of Earl Grey explained to the "Proprietors of the New Zealand Company," July 22, 1850, that the depression which had followed upon the agreement of Grey with the Company in 1847 had been largely responsible for the failure of the last effort to establish the Company on a sound basis. "Papers Relative to the Surrender of the New Zealand Company Charter," H.C.S.P., 1851, XXXV, 405.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EVANGELICAL HUMANITARIANS AND COLONIAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Yearly more English settlers arrived in the principal colonies; and as their numbers grew, discontent with the control of the distant imperial government over local affairs increased also. From the 'thirties to the 'fifties the issue of self-government became a popular rallying point for the white colonist. The evangelical humanitarian found the question vital because of the effects that colonial self-government might have upon the aboriginal populations of the colonies of white settlement. Self-government was an enigmatic problem for the defenders of native rights. Often those associated with the cause of the aborigines appeared the enemies of a liberal and enlightened policy on home rule for the colonies. Many evangelical humanitarians, recognizing the hostility that direct contact between European and native often engendered, were reluctant to see the immediate control of legislation and administration respecting their native charges in the hands of their potential enemies. For that reason, the continued dominance of the imperial government offered the only alternative.

Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton's select committee of 1837 reflected the concern of the evangelical humanitarians in this matter. Among the recommendations of that body was one to the effect that protection of the natives should always devolve on "the Executive." That is, executive government, as administered either in England or by the governors of the respective colonies, should be entrusted with the protection of the aborigines because it was not "a trust that could conveniently be confided to the local legislatures" which would naturally reflect the interests of the whites. "Whatever may be the legislative system of any Colony (whether elected by local settlers or appointed)," the committee asserted, "we therefore advise that, as far as possible, the Aborigines be withdrawn from its control." Enactments affecting the aborigines should be vested in "the officer administering the Government." No law should take effect concerning the native until it had been "expressly sanctioned by the Queen, except in cases of evident or extreme emergency." Copies of all such laws should be "communicated" to both Houses of Parliament as quickly as convenient. Furthermore, the committee concluded, the governor of each colony should be invested by Her Majesty, "as far as the Royal Prerogative should be adequate to the purpose," with sufficient authority with respect to all questions related

to "the interests of the native tribes." If the creation of such powers by the Crown did not appear "practicable," then Buxton's committee proposed, that they should be created "by Legislative authority."[1] Certainly, here was a strong plea for centralized authority within the empire. It is small wonder that many of the colonial reformers and champions of colonial self-government saw in evangelical humanitarian ranks an adamant foe.

Sir James Stephen bore the brunt of the attack of those who, like Edward Gibbon Wakefield, styled themselves the champions of colonial self-government. The most famous attack upon the colonial under-secretary--the labeling of him as "Mr. Mothercountry"--was but one of many empassioned and vitrolic assaults.[2] Charles Buller, prepared his Responsible Government for the Colonies, not only to elaborate Durhamite views, but to attack the colonial office and James Stephen in particular.[3] And no less famous in the ranks of Stephen's antagonists was

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[1] "Report of the Aborigines Committee," H.C.S.P., 1837, VII, 77.

[2] Edward Gibbon Wakefield, In View of the Art of Colonization, in Letters between a Statesman and a Colonist, with an introduction by James Collier (Oxford, 1914), 279-296.

[3] E. M. Wrong, Charles Buller and Responsible Government (Oxford, 1926), 65.

Sir William Molesworth.[1] Yet the attacks upon him as well as of Stephen himself.[2] However, Stephen, in common with Buxton, the Aborigines Protection Society, and the evangelical humanitarians of their cut, could not with clear conscience condone any colonial constitution which

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[1]Dame Millicent (Garrett) Fawcett, Life of the Right Honorable Sir William Molesworth, Bart., M.P., F.R.S. (London, 1901), 161.

[2]R. Garnett, Edward Gibbon Wakefield: The Colonization of South Australia and New Zealand (New York, 1898), 287, states that the application of the term "Mr. Mothercountry" to Stephen "was most unjust." A. J. Harrop, The Amazing Career of Edward Gibbon Wakefield (London, 1938), 126, 127. "Mr. Stephen, in his own particular way, was as much an enthusiast and lover of liberty as either Wakefield or Buller.... Stephen was no little Englander... for he fully realized the advantage to the Empire which would accrue from the undivided possession of Australia and New Zealand..." Harrop finds the personal aspects of the Reformers attacks untenable although he finds justification in their attack upon the type of rule he advocated "by means of irresponsible and far-distant officials." Stephen's biographer, Paul Knaplund, defends Stephen vigorously, Stephen and British Colonial System, 91 ff. See also P. Knaplund, "Sir James Stephen and British North American Problems, 1840-1847," Canadian Historical Review, V (1924), 41. "James Stephen preached, as he so often tried to put into practice, the true liberal doctrine of British colonial policy." Samuel Clyde McCulloch, "James Stephen and the Problems of New South Wales, 1838-1846," Pacific Historical Review, XXVI, 1957, 556-562, maintains that he favored self-government. Kenneth H. Bell and W. P. Morrell, eds., Select Documents on British Colonial Policy: 1830-1860 (Oxford, 1928), xxvi, add their weight to the contention that Stephen exhibited "a willingness to see the responsibly-governed colonies rise to the full status of national autonomy."

would leave native affairs to the whim and arbitrary will of the settler. Fortunately, from the viewpoint of the aborigines' friends, Stephen's retirement in 1847 did not mean that the cause of the native was forgotten. His successor, Herman Merivale, displayed a similar disposition on native affairs, although as circumstances changed the new under-secretary saw no alternative to increased responsibility by the colony for native policy.[1]

The event that illicited the strongest reaction from the ranks of the Aborigines Protection Society, and which commanded the full attention of its official organ month after month was Lord Grey's bill of 1846, providing for the establishment under royal prerogative of a complex system of municipal courts and provincial legislatures, controlled by a General Assembly of New Zealand. This "New Zealand Charter" was to apply only in those portions of the islands occupied by Europeans. Within these provincial districts literate natives were enfranchised. The Colonial Governor, George Grey, closer to the scene and more fully aware of the temper of the Maori inhabitants, protested the new constitution strongly. Convinced that its effect would be to place a large native majority in the power of a small European minority,

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[1]Merivale, Lectures, 519.

the New Zealand Governor refrained from instituting various parts of his instructions and forwarded confidential despatches to the Colonial Secretary, urging its suspension. Earl Grey, acting on this advice, suspended the major terms of his Charter for a five year period.

The Aborigines Protection Society expressed grave concern over Grey's Charter from the time of its publication. It contended that the terms of the New Zealand Charter were plainly out of harmony with the Treaty of Waitangi, and would destroy native rights, despite the warmly expressed benevolence of the Government toward the New Zealand tribes. Therefore, the Society addressed a memorial to Earl Grey, forecasting further reduction of the native population and of the colony's prosperity and security as a result of Grey's actions. The memorialists reminded Grey that he had often warned that one serious danger of self-government was that the power vested in the people's representatives might be "perverted into an instrument of oppression of the less civilized and less powerful races of men inhabiting the same colony." They pointed out that, while the Colonial Secretary had recommended that popular assemblies when established in the colonies should take the protection of the native as a sacred duty, they could find nothing in the Charter distinctly insuring the carrying out of

such benevolent aspirations. Quite the reverse was true. All the power of local government was placed in the hands of those from whom, by the Colonial Secretary's own admission, the natives had the most to fear.

The Charter divided New Zealand into aboriginal and provincial districts. In the former, the native chiefs shared some authority over local affairs, but the natives were excluded from any participation in the governing of the colony in general. In the provincial districts, which alone enjoyed the privilege of participating in the central government of the colony, the natives were prevented from gaining a voice by franchise restrictions which limited voters to those who could read and write English. The Society did not quarrel with the merits of inducing the natives to use the English tongue, but it expressed doubt as to the validity of using the language qualification provision to exclude them from "their civil rights in their own country."

In at least two respects the memorialists found the Charter in violation of the Treaty of Waitangi. First, the Charter granted land without regard to native right. Second, in those areas where native rights were beyond dispute, the native was limited in his right to dispose of lands at his own discretion by the Government's right of pre-emption. This disregard of native

interests, coupled with the prodigious advance in the resale value of the land which the Government would realize, would make it difficult to convince intelligent natives of England's good intentions toward them. Since the New Zealand tribes would feel little benefit from the terms of the Charter, they would not come immediately and willingly under British sway.[1]

The Aborigines Protection Society was careful to point out that its objections to the New Zealand Charter were not based on any opposition to the principle of colonial self-government as such. Its objection was the exclusion of the natives from an adequate share in whatever degree of self-government was granted. Leading natives should sit in colonial legislatures; others should share the office of magistrate with Europeans. Still others might be made superintendents of police, custom officers, and appointed to similar minor posts.[2]

When Earl Grey suspended the Charter, the Society gave its approval to his action, but it was not fully satisfied. Suspension seemed to indicate that the offensive provisions might be reinstated to the detriment

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, I (1847), 5-9.

[2] Colonial Intelligencer, I (1847), 100, 101.

of the native. The lot of the New Zealand native should not rest upon one man. Should a less discreet Governor than George Grey be placed in office in the future, the aborigines might again become the victims of the injustices contained in the suspended clauses. Self-imposed restraint on the part of the white colonists and their local legislatures was not sufficient to assure the well-being of the native.[1]

At Westminster the Charter received a thorough airing. William E. Gladstone was a leading critic of the constitution. The Charter "fettered" the House, and should be repealed so that at some future date a constitution "which would allow full scope to popular principles" might be initiated. The issue of native rights placed the Charter question beyond party, he concluded. Sir Edward North Buxton, son of Thomas Fowell and a prominent member of the Aborigines Protection Society, also denounced the Charter before the Commons. The attacks upon Grey's constitution ranged from the rather mild appeal of Gladstone that it be revoked because it was premature and dangerous in excluding the natives from the franchise, to Disraeli's impassioned attack upon

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, I (1848), 189; II (1849), 227, 228; Aborigines Protection Society, Eleventh Annual Report, 1848, reprinted in Colonial Intelligencer, I (1848), 10, 15.

the Russell Government, which he accused of suspending rather than revoking the Charter to save the Colonial Secretary's reputation.[1]

The issue of the Charter was not resolved for several years by Parliament, and the Aborigines Protection Society continued to berate the vagueness and equivocation of the Government's position. The peril to native rights that the document presented always remained their chief objection.[2] Throughout this period the Aborigines Protection Society was a self-appointed watch-dog upon New Zealand affairs. Any move that appeared to endanger native property or to subject the Maori to the arbitrary acts of the European elements in the colony was carefully noted.[3] Finally, in 1852 an alternative to the Grey Charter of 1846 was offered. Carefully gauging New Zealand conditions, and the type of constitutional

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[1] Hansard, Feb. 9, 1848, XCVI, 331-333, 350; February 14, 1848, XCVI, 602, 607.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, Twelfth Annual Report, 1849, 3.

[3] Colonial Intelligencer, II (1850), 412, 413; III (1851), 282; Aborigines Protection Society, Thirteenth Annual Report, 1850, 13. The Derby ministry which came to power in 1852 was visited by a delegation from the Aborigines Protection Society, expressing its hope that the new constitution would make adequate provision for the native. Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1852), 55.

structure that would best satisfy the colony's needs, Governor Grey submitted a plan to the imperial Government in 1851. The Colonial Office set about drafting a constitutional bill which, despite the change of ministry in February 1852, was submitted to Parliament in that year.

When the terms of the new constitutional bill were made public, the Aborigines Protection Society opposed it immediately. At no time since its founding did the Society seek more earnestly to exert pressure in official circles than in the matter of the New Zealand Government Bill of 1852. The committee, on June 5, 1852, submitted an address on the topic to the new Secretary for Colonies, Pakington. Waitangi was infringed by the new constitution as it had been by the 1846 Charter. Native lands were again endangered through a measure to reimburse certain colonizing interests for their monetary outlay in promoting colonization. Other protests were lodged with the House of Lords, and in the Commons before the Bill's second and third readings. But the New Zealand Government Act became law almost unopposed.[1]

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1852), 67-69; Aborigines Protection Society, Sixteenth Annual Report, 1853, 2. In the Lords, the Earl of Chichester, president of the Church Missionary Society, was recruited on behalf

The gist of these protests was that the New Zealand Government Bill was an act of bad faith with the natives. The influx of white settlers was permitted, "unrestrained by sufficient law." The system of reserves was no "boon" to the aborigines, but only provided an object for future European expansion. From the viewpoint of the white colonist, the franchise was liberal, but it largely excluded the native through its language qualifications. The General Assembly, consisting of the Governor, a nominated Legislative Council, and an elected House of Representatives, was to control waste lands. The principle of actual use and occupancy was recognized. Thus the new constitution disregarded the interests of the aborigines in the Society's view. In many respects, the Society found the 1852 bill worse than the one that had been turned down by Governor Grey in 1846.[1] In addition, the failure of "their friends" in the Commons to oppose its passage was extremely disappointing. Those from whom

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of the opposition, but the Lords because of the lateness of the session, let it become law "with all its objectionable features."

[2] Colonial Intelligencer, IV (1853), 175, 176.

assistance might have been expected were "marvellously supine."[1]

Of course, New Zealand was not alone in its quest for colonial self-government in these years. From Lord Durham's famous enunciation of the principle of responsible government[2] until its establishment in the colonies of settlement, the drafting of constitutions and proposals for constitutions engaged much of the attention of those interested in Britain's empire. Grey's New Zealand Charter may have evoked the strongest protest from the Aborigines Protection Society, but the movement for a Cape constitution, and similar agitation respecting Australia also received the Society's careful attention.

The question of a new constitution for the Cape gained importance from about 1845. In that year, the outbreak of the Kaffir war ended the Stockenstrom treaty system and left frontier relationships in an extremely uncertain condition. The whole issue of self-government

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, Sixteenth Annual Report, 1853, 1, 2.

[2] The term responsible government is often vague inasmuch as it was not a matter of concrete principle but of procedure. The colonists largely meant autonomy in affairs of purely local interest, for, by and large, they did not quarrel with imperial control of matters that affected the empire as a whole. An excellent discussion of this point is found in Cambridge History of the British Empire, VII, 277ff.

for South Africa was eclipsed by the frontier problem. The protection of the natives about the Cape borders resulted in a good deal of piecemeal annexation. Earl Grey was not a wholehearted supporter of the humanitarian interests, but he was not prepared to leave the natives to the ravages of the Boers. Despite the prominence of the frontier question, however, the movement for representative government in the Cape proceeded steadily. Initially, the Aborigines Protection Society favored the cause, believing that an enlightened constitution might be drafted protecting the rights of the African native.[1] When in 1849, Grey announced the Government's decision to grant representative institutions to the Cape, the Aborigines Protection Society watched developments with interest. In Governor Smith's[2] "laudible efforts" to pacify the natives, the Society found hope.[3] But again its membership were disappointed. Despite the signs of advancement and refinement that they professed to find among the South African tribes,

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[1]The fourteenth annual meeting gave a warm welcome to the Cape spokesman to Westminster, John Fairbairn, who spoke on behalf of "an open, free, representative Government" in the Cape Colony. Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851), 236.

[2]Sir Harry Smith, Governor of the Cape from 1847 to 1852.

[3]Colonial Intelligencer, III (1850), 119, 120.

the new constitution made no adequate provision for native participation in colonial government. The Society's concern increased as the terms of the measure became known. The native was virtually excluded from the franchise by a £50 property qualification, allegedly supported by those who wished to thwart aboriginal participation in representative government. When an alternative £25 qualification was proposed the Society endorsed it, although it too did not enfranchise a significant number of natives.[1]

Humanitarian influence remained strong enough in 1853 to leave its mark. When, in that year, the new Colonial Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, gave his approval to the constitution of the Cape Colony, he modified the electoral provisions to provide for the interests of the colored subject. "It is extremely undesirable," he wrote, "that the franchise should be so restricted as to leave those of the coloured classes who in point of intelligence are qualified for the exercise of political power practically unrepresented."[2]

By mid-century the movement for governmental reform in the Australian colonies had also reached a climax.

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851), 162, 163.

[2] Quoted in Cambridge History of British Empire, II, 686.

Introduced in June 1849, and reintroduced in February 1850, the Australia Colonies Government Bill aroused widespread debate. As ever, the Aborigines Protection Society directed its attention to the proposed legislation in order to ascertain the probable results for the natives of that land. In March 1850, a delegation from the Society called upon Lord John Russell at Downing Street to advise the Prime Minister of its views on this matter. With President Gurney as their spokesman, the group expressed concern that apparently no provision for extending to the natives the "benefits of Constitutional Institutions in Australia" had been made in Russell's draft of the proposed measure. Sharing the general interest that had been raised by this "important step" taken by the Government with respect to Australia, the Aborigines Protection Society desired to see that "ample credit and well-merited approbation" was extended to those whose "honest design" was "to promote the increasing and lasting happiness of those off-shoots of the British Empire. . . ." The bill must have the respect and support of the people through its justness and honorableness, but this would not be forthcoming until due consideration was shown the native peoples involved. Such an omission was undoubtedly due to an oversight on Russell's

part,[1] and for that reason the Society requested that "some provision" be made to secure a recognition of their rights as men and citizens to "full participation in all the privileges" of British subjects.[2]

Despite assurances from the Colonial Under-secretary that the aboriginal inhabitants of the colonies "were all British subjects" qualifying for the franchise equally with others,[3] the Society noted emphatically that the actual situation in Australia was far different. So insecure was the native's position, that the Society was anxious to see "those sentiments, favourable to the Australian native" secured in law before the power to do so had been transferred into the hands of the colonists.[4] Again the latent distrust of colonial self-government and the motivation behind it can be seen clearly.

Of course, the question of colonial self-government was complex, reaching far beyond the considerations

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[1]The assertion that Russell's omission was only an oversight and that they believed him well disposed to the natives could hardly have been sincere since at this time they were deeply opposed to almost every aspect of Russell's land policy in the colonies.

[2]Colonial Intelligencer, II (1850), 403.

[3]Parliamentary under-secretary Hawes gave unequivocal assurances of this in the Commons debate on the Australia Government Bill. Hansard, Feb. 8, 1850, CVIII, 611.

[4]Colonial Intelligencer, II (1850), 405.

that were important to the evangelical humanitarians. At the core of the issue was the problem of reconciling two diverse notions of "responsible government" which developed in this period. Initially, responsible government meant local self-government: control by the colonies of affairs of only local interest, leaving matters of broad concern to the imperial government. But the term also came to convey the notion of total autonomy in all matters. Many colonial leaders favored the abolishing of independent revenues for those officials, such as the colonial governor, who were appointed from London. Depending for their income from the colonial legislature, these administrative officials would be made "responsible" to the will of the colony's elected representatives. In the eyes of many imperial statesmen, such a development would doom the empire by reducing central authority to nothing.

To the Aborigines Protection Society, control of colonial affairs by colonial legislatures, even in purely local matter, was undesirable. Overruling other considerations was always their central concern for the natives. How would self-government affect them? The Society acknowledged the widespread support that self-government movements enjoyed in the colonies. It professed to recognize the many liberal principles invoked by these settlers--

popular control of legislatures, universal suffrage, and the like. But these men "of liberal views in regard to themselves" were prepared to impose on the aboriginal populations "the very disabilities" which they themselves rejected. Here was the crux of the Society's position: many defenders of individual rights were guilty of a shameful lack of consistency. The desire for self-government, evident in most of Britain's colonies, and the various efforts to delineate future constitutions was naturally a subject of interest to "every intelligent and patriotic mind" in England, the Society's official organ acknowledged. To the members and friends of the Aborigines Protection Society it was of particular interest. The course that the colonists were then following disregarded native welfare and was bound to produce dangerous situations in the future in the Society's view. As confident as the colonists might be that they could look after their own welfare, they would quickly seek official assistance if the hostility of the natives seemed to endanger them. And their pleas would be answered. The Imperial Government would intervene at great cost in men and material. Therefore, wisdom as well as justice suggested that the feelings of the most influential and intelligent of the aborigines tribes should be carefully determined and respectfully considered before any

extensive degree of self-government was granted anywhere. Even the Kaffir, less conscious than the Maori of such things, should be canvassed to insure a minimum of dissatisfaction.[1]

In the Society's estimation, many of the native disturbances within the Empire could have been averted had a significant portion of these aboriginal peoples been admitted to the franchise.[2] And had natives been placed in positions of trust, the native wars which had plagued the Empire would likely have been averted. There was no reason that the Society could see why at least the more enlightened natives could not be incorporated into the administration of the affairs of the respective colonies as they had been in India. The committee's report

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[1] Colonial Intelligencer, III (1851), 243-245. The Society always insisted that the establishment of military garrisons in the colonies and the subsidizing of the white colonies in wars against the natives only increased the belligerence of the European elements. "When our Colonial Government shall lay it down as a principle, that the colonies, which provoke war or are involved in it, shall themselves defray the expense of it, we shall have less of these disgraceful aggressions and conflicts, and none of these unjust and preposterous demands," the Society contended, respecting certain claims for war damages by Cape Colonists. Colonial Intelligencer, II (1848), 74, 75. In objecting in this fashion to colonial expenditures, the Aborigines Protection Society was virtually echoing the arguments of Wakefield and the Colonial Reformers. See also, Colonial Intelligencer, II (1848), 74, 75; 103-106; 229; III (1850), 40; Aborigines Protection Society, Fourteenth Annual Report, 1851, 1.

[2] Aborigines Protection Society, Sixteenth Annual Report, 1853, 3.

to the fifteenth annual meeting summarizes the Society's position.

> It is . . . the conviction of your Committee, that no modification of our Colonial system, however liberal the form of local self-government that may be introduced into it, can be of permanent advantage to either the Colonists or the Natives, that does not embrace and secure the natural rights of the aboriginal tribes in whose proximity our people are settled. . . .[1]

The coolness that the evangelical humanitarians showed toward self-government must not be interpreted as shortsightedness respecting the future of the Empire. They could not, with the Benthamites and Cobdenite free traders, advocate separation of the colonies from the mother country. They did not, with the Colonial Reformers, seek self-government as the one solution to separatism. Nevertheless, the course of constitutional development proceeded, leaving the evangelical humanitarians at variance with it. Colonial self-government was a victory for the liberalizing forces within the empire. But for those within the Aborigines Protection Society, any policy that did not give adequate consideration to the colored peoples of the empire was less than enlightened, and they could not give it their wholehearted support.

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[1] Aborigines Protection Society, Fifteenth Annual Report, 1852, 10.

CONCLUSION

Buxton and his followers were not profound or original thinkers. Their concept of the Empire was not the result of any closely-reasoned analysis. Rather, it was the product of a religious zeal and an emotional attachment to the cause of native peoples within Britain's domains. To the Aborigines Protection Society, the British Empire was a vast system of territories in which non-Europeans should dwell in safety and equality with their European neighbors. Even beyond the formal boundaries of her colonies, England had a duty to the primitive races. Therefore, the evangelical humanitarians were not opposed to the formal or informal extension of Britain's influence because they believed that no other European power showed the disposition to adopt a policy of empire that would place native welfare ahead of national profit.

Few of the recommendations of the evangelical humanitarians were new. Many Englishmen had previously favored the development of legitimate trade as a panacea for the injustices and evils perpetrated upon the primitive peoples of the globe. Others besides Buxton's followers had suggested the notion of the Empire as a trust placed in England's hands by providence. The

Aborigines Protection Society merely grasped ideas already in circulation and espoused them with new vigor before the British public and in official circles.

The evangelical humanitarians advocated a system of Christian colonization which aimed at protecting and educating the native. The education of the aborigines would prepare them for a useful role in the economy of the colonies so that relationships between them and the white settlers would be mutually beneficial and would form a permanent basis of association. Accepting the economic doctrines of their day, they placed much faith in enlightened self-interest as an adjunct of moral principle.

Until all parties were aware of the benefits arising from equitable treatment of European and non-European alike, however, the protection of British law and order must be afforded the native races so that they would not be exploited as they had been in the past. If the individual colonists could not immediately be made to act in accord with Christian altruism, the British Government must legislate for and administer colonial affairs in accord with Christian principles.

Founded at the high tide of evangelical prestige, the Aborigines Protection Society exerted a degree of influence in colonial affairs in its early years although

its membership was small. As this influence ebbed, however, the membership of the Society found it increasingly difficult to gain public attention or to receive a respectful hearing. The empire they advocated, ruled simply by Christian principles for the exclusive benefit of the natives but perhaps bringing Englishmen some return as well, did not materialize. Some segments of English opinion at mid-century favored the dissolution of Britain's Empire. Others favored its reform. Rejecting the first alternative as an abandonment of sacred duty, the evangelical humanitarians of the Aborigines Protection Society found some hope for their program of Christian colonization in the proposals of the scientific colonizers. But scientific colonization proved disappointing to them because it placed the interest of the native below that of the colonist.

About 1850, the movement for colonial self-government gained wider popularity and engaged the attention of many of the professional colonizers. Self-government for the colonies of settlement became the dominant issue in official and unofficial speculation about the Empire. In the face of these new interests, the evangelical humanitarian appeal on behalf of the native was largely eclipsed. The concept of an empire in which a paternal government at Westminster sought first

to protect, educate, and promote the welfare of native subjects gave way to the reality of an empire in which an increasing number of Englishmen in Britain's principal colonies enjoyed an expanding degree of autonomy in their affairs. To oppose such developments on behalf of the native was to oppose an irresistible trend. The Aborigines Protection Society was out of step with the most important development in the history of the Empire at mid-century.

However, the cause of the natives of the Empire did benefit from the principles championed by the Society, and it continued to benefit in the future. During the Society's formative years, the Government at Westminster had moved various times in the interest of the natives. New Zealand had been annexed, at least in part, to protect the Maori. Natal was taken under the Union Jack to protect the Bantu. The idea of trusteeship continued to exert influence in the Empire through the remainder of the century. The protection of native tribes became an accepted and integral part of British colonial policy, and although few settlers went from England to the far-flung colonies as convinced humanitarians, British policy aimed at assuring the most equitable treatment of primitive peoples by throwing the protective cordon of British law about them. To the degree that the

Aborigines Protection Society and its adherents helped promote this principle of enlightened treatment, the Society's work was a success. The Aborigines Protection Society was an expression of the benevolent feelings of a unique age of humanitarian ardor. The spokesmen of other decades were less outspoken in their philanthropy than those of the 'thirties and 'forties, but the aspirations of the evangelical humanitarians left their indelible mark.

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Typed by: Carolyn A. Bruemmer