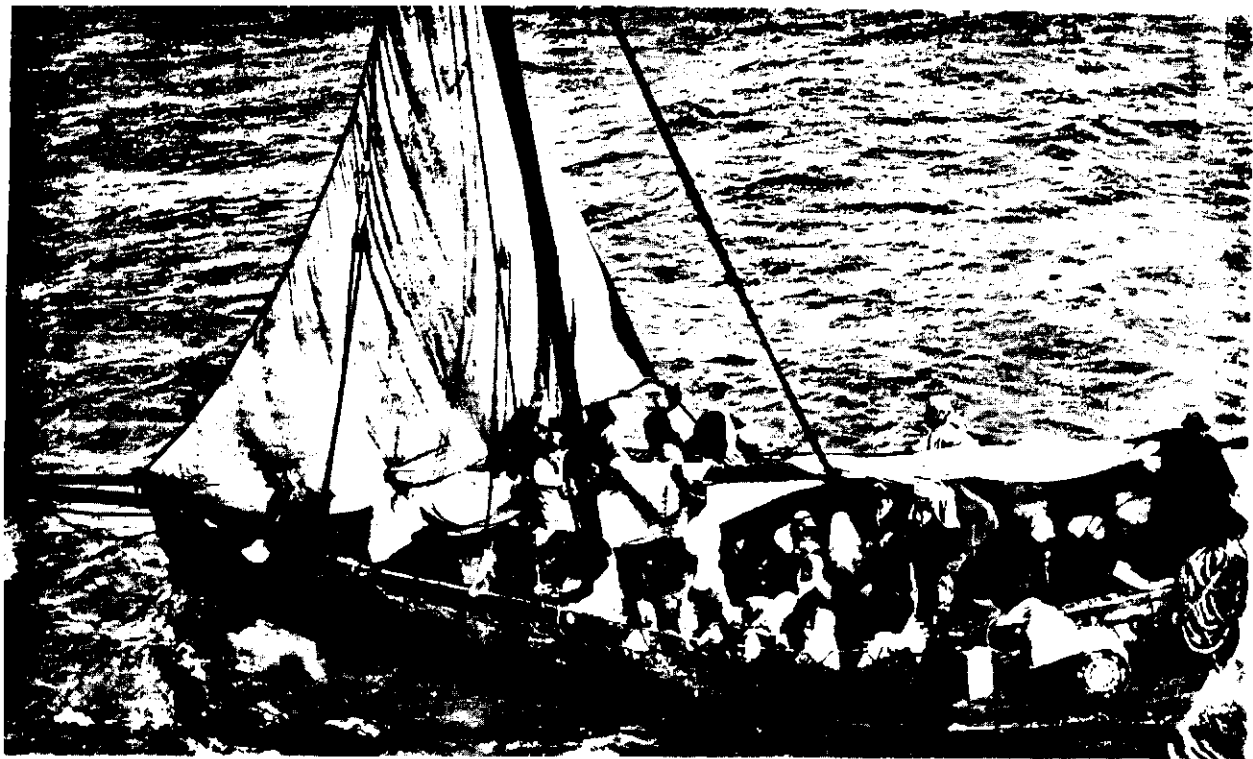


SLAVERY THROUGH
THE AGES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

ARMIES OF INDIA
AFGHANISTAN FROM DARIUS TO AMANULLA
THE INDIAN MUTINY IN PERSPECTIVE
THE LIVING INDIA
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THE RELIGIONS AND HIDDEN CULTS OF INDIA
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LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE AGES
RUDYARD KIPLING, CRAFTSMAN



AN ARAB SLAVE DHOW

Slavers on a "bagaleh" photographed in the Gulf of Oman.

SLAVERY THROUGH THE AGES

By

LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR GEORGE MACMUNN,
K.C.B., K.C.S.I., D.S.O.

1938

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FOREWORD

I AM very willing to comply with Sir George MacMunn's request that I should write a few words by way of introduction to his book. It deals with a subject to the study of which I have devoted myself for many years, and to which the attention of the thoughtful public should be constantly directed.

So authoritative and detailed a survey of Slavery in the Past and in the Present should have many readers, some of whom may be surprised to discover that they are not merely gaining information about old, unhappy things of long ago, but that there is still an urgent problem which survives and calls for the best of our thought and effort before this hideous system, in one or other of its insidious forms, can be said to be banished from the earth. Kind-hearted people sometimes show themselves unwilling to be roused from their indifference by the specious plea that some of the examples of contemporary slavery do not necessarily imply that the slave is dissatisfied with his lot, and that the condition of a slave may actually provide some assurance against the hunger and destitution which might accompany freedom. Let anyone who is beguiled into complacency by such a contention study the details of the systems exposed in this book and he will see reason to change his view.

The child of a slave woman born into slavery is a creature to be bought and sold, often to be separated from its mother for ever, and to be under the uncontrolled domination of

FOREWORD

a purchaser who claims "to do what he likes with his own." Cruelties against which the slave has no redress are inseparable from such a relation. The temptations of such uncontrolled power are irresistible. No one is fit to have undisputed domination over another human creature, to treat man or woman or even little children as beasts of burden, or as ministers to the owner's pleasure, without any right in the victim to end the relationship or to claim the protection which the law ought to give to the poorest and weakest of human creatures.

There is something in the conception of individual liberty as the only basis upon which the dignity of man can be established, and the worth of human life can be measured, which issues a flat and final challenge against the infamy of treating as a mere chattel any human being, whatever his race or birth or colour. If it be the fact that some slaves to-day are content with their lot, that only proves the more clearly the degradation to which such a system inevitably leads. More horrible still would be the outcome if those of us who are free should refuse to bestir ourselves where others are in bondage.

*" . . . wherever wrong is done,
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-
beholding sun,
That wrong is also done to us; and they are slaves
most base,
Whose love of right is for themselves, and not for all
their race."*

LOWELL.

This volume will contribute to the study of a wicked institution which in past ages spread its malign influence

FOREWORD

over vast areas of the earth, and inflicted suffering and wrong on millions who "have no remembrance; they are perished as though they had never been." But there is another purpose, more immediate and practical, which Sir George MacMunn's book will serve. It will, I trust, help to rouse the public conscience to the work of abolition still to be accomplished, so that we shall not rest content until present-day slavery is finally and completely abolished.

KATHLEEN SIMON.

71 ADDISON ROAD,
LONDON, W.14,
November 1937.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE Western Conquest of Abyssinia, promising to abolish the last stronghold of slave-making, if not of slave-holding, seems an opportunity to review once more the whole absorbing if horrifying story of slavery from the mists of pre-history till to-day. The formation of the "Committee of Experts" within the League of Nations, will ere long add the coping-stone to the work of the British "Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society" and its children abroad, started so many years ago. Because this story of slavery from earliest days has always interested me, I have turned to such side facets, also, as the Slave Dynasties of India and Central Asia, the story of the Janissaries and the Mamelukes, and of that strange horror the emasculation of males born of slave origin. As I was writing the concluding chapters I have had put into my hands a fascinating work, *The Slave in History*, written over a generation ago by William Stevens, the well-known journalist and editor. I find that the same sequence of events and side stories interested him as much as they have me, and that we follow much the same train of thought.

GEORGE MACMUNN.

SACKVILLE COLLEGE.

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