

**ENGLAND AND HER  
SUBJECT-RACES:  
WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO JAMAICA**

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England and Her Subject-races: With Special Reference to Jamaica by Charles Savile Roundell

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ENGLAND  
AND HER SUBJECT-RACES

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

“JAMAICA”

BY

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[THIS Essay, with some variations and additions, formed the subject of a paper which was read before the recent Social Science Congress at Manchester, and is now, by permission of the Council of the Association, published.

The subject proposed for consideration was :—

*What is the duty of the Mother Country as regards the protection of Inferior Races in her Colonies and Dependencies ?*

In the course of the revision of the paper for publication, one or two paragraphs have been omitted, not from any change of opinion, but because they referred to passing events, not relevant to the objects with which the paper is now published.]

## ENGLAND AND HER SUBJECT-RACES

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

### JAMAICA.

For the purposes of this paper the native races with which we have to do in our colonies and dependencies may conveniently be considered under four heads : namely, perishing races, such as the Aborigines of Australia, or the Indians of North America ; stationary or slowly progressive races, such as the Hottentots, or

- Negroes of the West Indies ; progressive but uncivilized races, such as the Maoris and Kafirs ; and lastly, the ancient but backward civilizations of China and Hindostan. With these last, however, it will be unnecessary to deal, partly because the principles, which ought to govern our relations with the less civilized communities, will be found to be applicable, in a higher development, to the case of the ancient civilizations of the East ; but chiefly because India, China, and Japan, each raise special questions belonging rather to the sphere of international morality and imperial politics.

It is a dark page in history which records the contacts of Europeans with Aborigines. We call to mind the deeds of Cortes and Pizarro. We are told by the historian of the West Indies, that 'on a moderate computation, the conquest of the islands of the Spanish Main was effected by a slaughter, within a century, of ten millions of the species.' The aboriginal inhabitants of Australia can now be scarcely said to survive ; the Maoris, who were estimated by Captain Cook, about a century ago, at about 100,000, do not now exceed 56,000 ; the Caribs of the British Antilles are now extinct, save in one island ;\* while the native races of Newfoundland and Tasmania have long ago wholly disappeared.

But then it is said that the history of colonization is

\* Trinidad.



the history of the annihilation of the native races : that, in the order of Providence, savage man is destined to disappear before civilized man : that in the 'struggle for existence,' the inferior races must give way to the superior: that brown and red men have no right to obstruct their superiors in fulfilling the divine command to be 'fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.'

This is a short and simple way of salving over our consciences. Perhaps, if it had been less simple, it would have less suggested the ugly misgiving that 'the wish was father to the thought.' What may be in the designs of Providence we know not. This at least we do know, that it is not for us to usurp the functions of Providence, and arrogate for our own rash assumptions the sanction of an inscrutable decree.

I pause to consider whether indeed the progress of the human race involves the extinction of its least favoured members, or whether another and a better solution of the problem can be suggested by the teaching of modern philosophy and religion.

Several practical considerations here present themselves. In the first place, we may look at home, at the presence amongst ourselves, in the heart of our great cities, of our own civilized savages, the pariahs of our own civilization.

In our own degraded and debased classes we may witness the converse process of de-civilization, the relapse

towards barbarism, with a coincident deterioration even of the physical type. 'For it cannot be denied that there is amongst us unmistakeable evidence of degradation of type, as the consequence of long-continued want, ignorance, squalor, and moral degradation. . . . An intelligent writer, in No. 48 of the "Dublin University Magazine," says, "There are certain districts in Leitrim, Sligo, and Mayo, chiefly inhabited by the descendants of the native Irish driven by the British from Armagh and the south of Down about two centuries ago. These people, whose ancestors were well-grown, able-bodied, and comely, are now reduced to an average stature of five feet two inches, are pot-bellied, bow-legged, and abortively featured; and they are especially remarkable for open projecting mouths, and prominent teeth and exposed gums, their advancing cheek-bones and depressed noses bearing barbarism in their very front. In other words, within so short a period, they seem to have acquired a prognathous type of skull, like the Australian savages." ' Again, with respect to the nomadic vagabond tribes which infest our streets, there may be noticed a certain degree of regression towards the pyramidal type. 'By that acute observer, Mr. Henry Mayhew, in his "London Labour and London Poor," it has been well remarked, "that among them, according as they partake more or less of this pure vagabond nature, doing nothing whatever for their living, *but moving from place to place, preying on the earnings*

of the more industrious portions of the community, so will the attributes of the nomadic races be found more or less marked in them; and they are all more or less distinguished by their high cheek bones and protruding jaws; thus showing that kind of mixture of the pyramidal with the prognathous type which is to be seen among the most degraded of the Malayo-Polynesian races."\*

Then it should be remembered that (as has been well

\* *Civilization and Cerebral Development.* By Robert Dunn, F.R.C.S. *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, 1866. New Series, Vol. 4, p. 31. In contrast with the retrogressive process above referred to, it is important to remark the gradual approximation which, as we are assured, is taking place in the physical configuration of the Negroes to the European model. 'According to the concurrent testimony of disinterested observers (says Dr. Carpenter), not only in the United States of America, but also in the West Indies, an approximation in the Negro physiognomy to the European model is progressively taking place in instances in which, although there has been no intermixture of European blood, the influence of a higher civilization has been powerfully exercised for a lengthened period of time. This is particularly the case with Negroes employed as domestic servants. . . . This alteration, too, is not confined solely to the change in the form of the skull, or to a diminution in the projection of the jaws, striking as these changes are, but is also seen in the general figure, and in the form of the soft parts, as the lips and nose. . . . Sir Charles Lyell, from personal observations, bears his testimony to the same conclusions.'—*Ibid.* p. 26. The Maroons who fell under my own observation in Jamaica exhibited a marked superiority in respect of comportment, mental capacity, and physical type—a superiority to be referred to the saving effects of long-enjoyed freedom. The Maroons are the descendants of runaway Spanish slaves, who at the time of the British Conquest established themselves in the mountain fastnesses.