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is revealed to us in the Bible ; we are not free to pick and choose ; we must take it as we find it. Yet we see so-called religious men playing fast and loose with the inspired record of God's revelation, picking and choosing texts according as they make for indulgence and ease, and refusing to be bound—and " religion " means that whereby we are bound—by Christ's revelation as a whole and consequently feeling compelled to explain doubtful passages by those which are clear.

HUGH POPE, O.P.



CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS

THE CHARTERED COMPANY AND THE NATIVES IN RHODESIA

SIR,

In a note to that part of his article " Slave, Serf, Citizen—And the Way Back," which appears in the December issue of *BLACKFRIARS*, dealing with Rhodesia and the British South Africa Company, Mr. Keable mentions that his " facts can be verified by reference to Charters, Histories and Colonial Office Memoranda," and to certain publications by the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society. The allegations made against the Company by this Society have, however, been proved to be inaccurate so often that it has become impossible to accept either the Society or its Secretary, Mr. John H. Harris, as reliable or responsible historians of any of the Company's actions. In this connection, it should be noted that Mr. Harris has placed at the head of the list of Rhodesians whom he thanks for the assistance afforded him in the preparation of his book *The Chartered Millions*, the name of Sir Charles

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Coghlan, the most prominent Catholic layman in Southern Rhodesia. Sir Charles has, however, publicly disassociated himself from Mr. Harris's attacks on the Company, which he considers altogether unjustified and without foundation in fact. He states that the use of his name in this connection "amounts at least to a *suggestio falsi* if it does not include a *suppressio veri*."

With regard to other evidence, I offer the following remarks:—

I. The Matabele War of 1893.

That the late Sir Starr Jameson did not force deliberate war on the Matabele can be proved abundantly by reference to the Blue Books (with special reference to Cd. 7171, Cd. 7196, and Cd. 7555) containing the reports, despatches, and the whole of the correspondence and messages which passed prior to the outbreak of the war.

A number of Mashonas sought the protection of the Company as the result of numerous raids on them by the Matabele during 1892 and 1893, culminating in the ravaging of the Victoria district by Lobengula's *impi* in June and July of the latter year, and the entry of the Matabele into Victoria itself. Lobengula never abandoned his claim, as a condition of the restoration of friendly relations with the Company, to have handed over to him these Mashonas, who, if given up, would either have been put to death or reduced to slavery. (*Vide* Cd. 7196, No. 86, p. 87.)

During the months which elapsed between the raid on Victoria and the advance of the Company's Forces in November, the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch, endeavoured to avert the outbreak of war by every means in his power. That Lobengula received ample warning is proved by the message sent to him by the High Commissioner on the 6th October, the day after the Matabele had, without any provocation, fired upon the Bechuanaland Border Police near Macloutsie (*ibid*, p. 91). "The patience and forbearance of the Imperial authorities, as disclosed in the correspondence, were remarkable, and, considering the provocation received, their attitude, if anything, erred in being too conciliatory." (Col. Marshall Hole, *Ways and Means*, July, 1920.)

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“ 6000 acres of native land conditionally redeemable at £9,000.” (Mr. Keable.)

As to the redemption value of the farms promised, it will be sufficient to observe that many of the rights changed hands immediately after the occupation of Matabeleland at less than £100 each.

2. *The Matabele Rebellion of 1896.*

“ In 1896 the Mashonas, oppressed and subject to Forced Labour. . . .” (*Ibid.*, line 26.)

The Mashona rebellion in June, 1896, is here confused with the Matabele rebellion in March of the same year.

The causes of the Matabele rebellion were :—

- (1) The fact that the Matabele had never been thoroughly subdued.
- (2) The labour regulations.
- (3) The cattle regulations.
- (4) The outbreak of rinderpest, and the resultant slaughter of cattle. (Sir Richard Martin's report, Cd. 8547, p. 11.)

Earl Grey's despatch of the 9th June, 1897 (Cd. 8547, p. 39), is a complete answer to suggestions that physical force was used to compel the natives to work.

Labour was needed by the Government, the mines, and by private persons in Matabeleland, and the Native Commissioners received instructions to comply as far as possible with these requirements. The Indunas were told that they would be expected to supply men, who would be fed and paid a fair wage. When they had been collected together, the “ boys ” were sent under the escort of native police to the Native Commissioner for the district to be registered, and were then drafted to the masters whose employ they wished to enter or to those who were seeking labour. In some instances the native police overstepped the bounds of their authority in procuring labour—in other words, used compulsion—but in every case where this was discovered the offenders were severely punished.

3. *Payment of Rent by and Taxation of Natives.*

Within the Reserves the natives pay no rent. If they prefer to live outside, they pay rent to the individual owners

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or, in the case of unalienated lands, to the Company as agent for the Crown. This policy was recommended by the South African Native Affairs Commission of 1903-5, and has been adopted by every other State in South Africa. In addition, all natives, whether living on the Reserves or not, pay £1 tax to the Administration.

I think no one will deny that it is only just that in return for the services of the Native Commissioners and Superintendents of Natives, opportunities for earning money and improving themselves such as they could never have had without the Company's administration, native hospitals and dispensaries, 670 native schools, veterinary attendance, and the protection of a highly efficient Police Force, the natives should pay an administrative tax.

4. The Land Case.

"In 1914 the expropriation of the whole of this unalienated land was effected by means of a deliberate plot combined with misrepresentations made to the High Commissioner of South Africa, now known and admitted to have been such." (Mr. Keable.)

On the 17th April, 1914, the Legislative Council of Southern Rhodesia passed a resolution disputing the ownership by the Company of the unalienated land in that territory. Special reference was made to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and on the 29th July, 1918, judgment was delivered by Lord Sumner, who ruled that the unalienated land is the property of the Crown and not of the Company.

If Mr. Keable has read this judgment, no excuse can be offered for the statement quoted above. If he has not read it but has relied for his "facts" on the A.P.S., then he lays himself open to the charge of culpable ignorance.

On pages 16, 17, and 18 of the *Report of the Judicial Committee* will be found a careful analysis of the position of the native with regard to the land in Southern Rhodesia. Its conclusion—"Whoever now owns the unalienated land, the natives do not"—must be taken, coming as it does from the final Court of Appeal, as definitive.

As to the question of the costs which the "disinterested

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liberality" (Lord Sumner) of the A.P.S. caused them to incur in presenting the case for the natives before the Judicial Committee, I think the explanation given in the House by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lieut.-Colonel Amery, is sufficiently explicit. "It is not a question of costs to the natives. A philanthropic society, being of opinion, for its own reasons, that the interests of the natives were not sufficiently safeguarded, not even by the Crown, introduced their own case in court—which is their own affair—and they have paid for it. Even so, I think the interests of the natives are, and will be, fully safeguarded by the Crown." There is, therefore, no reason why the Crown or the Company should be expected to pay the A.P.S. costs.

Exigencies of war, as Lord Sumner mentioned, and the unrest amongst the natives in the Union, curtailed Mr. Harris's investigations in Rhodesia in 1914. That the A.P.S. case was not in any way injured is evident from the reports of the proceedings and from Lord Sumner's summing up.

Mr. Keable states that the Legislative Council "voted a sum to defray the costs of the impending action as 'The cost of presenting the case of the inhabitants and people of Rhodesia,' so that they do not regard the 800,000 natives as either inhabitants or people of Rhodesia."

The expression "inhabitants and people of Rhodesia" makes no distinction of race or colour. Natives in Rhodesia are entitled to the franchise on the same conditions as Europeans. The fact that the vast majority have not so far qualified themselves to exercise it is beside the point. The members of the Legislative Council represent Europeans and natives alike, and no suggestion was made by them that natives were to be deprived of their rights. The racial factor has been obtruded solely by the A.P.S., who maintained the case for the natives *as against the Europeans*, described by Mr. Keable as "invading foreigners."

"These costs were levied upon taxation of which nearly half is actually drawn from these natives." (Mr. Keable.)

This is not so dreadful as it looks, even if it were correct, when the enormous disproportion in the numbers in

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Rhodesia is remembered. The white population is approximately 37,000, the native 770,000. During the year ended 31st March, 1919, the white community contributed £642,339 2s. 6d. to a total revenue of £887,446 5s., that is to say, £17 7s. 3d. per head of population or more than two-thirds of the whole. The total amount received during the same year from Native Tax and Native Pass Fees was £245,107 2s. 6d., being 6s. 4d. per head of population. That is to say, though there are twenty times more natives than white men, the latter paid in taxes over fifty-four times more per head of population.

5. Southern Rhodesia Native Reserves Commission.

The Company did *not* appoint the Commission. "In 1913 His Majesty's Government suggested, in view partly of the rapid increase of white settlement in Southern Rhodesia, that it would be desirable to appoint a Commission to examine the Reserves and inquire into their sufficiency for the present and future requirements of the natives. The British South Africa Company agreed to the appointment of this Commission." (Colonial Office Memorandum, African (South), No. 1069.)

Two out of the three members of the Commission were nominated by His Majesty's Government, one by the Company. Had the appointment left in the hands of the Company been made from the Native Department, the Chief Native Commissioner would naturally have been selected. It was considered advisable, however, that he should be left free to give evidence, and Sir Francis Newton, the Treasurer of Southern Rhodesia, was therefore nominated. The Native Commissioners rendered the Commission all possible assistance, each in his own district, and their evidence supplied the backbone of its recommendations.

Why should unofficial persons sit on the Commission? They could not possibly know more, and would probably know considerably less of the needs of the natives than the members of the Commission, each of whom had had considerable experience for many years of native administration, and was an official of the highest standing and ability.

"Every opportunity was afforded to officials, members of the public, and native chiefs and headmen to give

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evidence." (*Final Report of the S.R. Native Reserves Commission*, Parliamentary White Paper, Cd. 8674, p. 16.)

The Commission did not cut down the Reserves by 6,000,000 acres, but by 1,062,460. That it did not, as Mr. Keable states, give "the natives in exchange 5,000,000 other acres" can be seen at a glance from the summary of the extent to which the area of the Reserves is affected by the adoption of the Commission's recommendations. The figures, which will be found on page 67 of Cd. 8674, are as follows :—

	Acres.	
Area of existing Reserves	20,491,151	
Area remaining when recommenda- tions are adopted	19,428,691	
Difference	1,062,460	
Reduction of Matibi Reserve	2,661,345	
Reduction of Gwaai Reserve	887,867	
Reduction of Shangani Reserve	545,290	
	4,094,502	
Other reductions	2,588,553	6,673,055
Area of new Reserves recommended	3,082,075	
Increases to existing Reserves	812,120	
New "reserve" Reserves	1,716,400	5,610,595
Difference	1,062,460	

The inalienable possession of these Reserves was secured for ever to the natives by the Southern Rhodesia Order in Council of the 9th November, 1920, published in the *London Gazette* of the 16th *idem*.

The Native Reserves have not, as Mr. Keable would seem to suggest, the monopoly of the granite soil in Rhodesia.

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The greater part of the territory is granite. How "uninhabitable" is the land occupied by the natives may be gathered from the fact that they harvest nine million bushels of grain yearly, and that in 1919 the estimated total number of cattle owned by natives in Southern Rhodesia was 652,776. They owned besides 1,071,544 sheep and goats, 40,997 pigs, and 7129 horses, mules, and donkeys. Many natives, both men and women, are depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank; and at the funeral of the late Sir Starr Jameson in the Matopos, a Matabele chief arrived in his own motor-car.

AILEEN E. MILLAR.



REVIEWS

A HISTORY OF PENANCE. By Oscar D. Watkins, M.A. (Longmans, Green & Co. 2 vols., pp. 775.)

The writer of this book has given his greatly indebted readers a study of the Authorities (A) for the whole Church to A.D. 450 and (B) for the Western Church from A.D. 450 to A.D. 1235.

Those of us who look upon the Ballot Box as a democratic machine of less efficacy than the Confessional Box will hail *A History of Penance* as a sound piece of Social Reconstruction.

Even if it were not thus recommended to us it would still claim our interest as a sound piece of theological reconstruction. Its method is of the best. The Rev. O. D. Watkins has wisely given us, as far as we can judge, an unaltered and complete, or at least a representative series of texts dealing with the gradual development of the rite and custom of sacramental Penance. He inspires trust by setting down these texts in the first place with no other note or comment save the short titles. These titles are nowhere, that we can see, a false guide to the texts. The subsequent commentary on these texts form the bulk of the book. We have found this commentary full in its