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What Would Lincoln Do?

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their children or kidnap the drunken persons themselves and drag them away. It is easier and safer to kidnap children when the opportunity presents itself, and very young children sell best, as they are not likely to try to escape. Negritos are today held in bondage, in considerable numbers, in provinces like Zambales, Pampanga, Tarlac, Pangasinan, and Cagayan. While they are not displayed for sale in any market in Pampanga, they can be readily negotiated for in several different public markets of that province, and if none happens to be available at the moment the would-be purchaser is assured that the supply in the mountains is inexhaustible and that his needs can soon be met.

The publication of my recent report on slavery and peonage in the Philippine Islands has caused consternation in many provinces. Some slaves have escaped and little effort has been made to recapture them, while others have been voluntarily set free by their masters, but in Pampanga the trade still goes merrily on. Negritos have been peddled around the country adjacent to Manila like carabaos or horses, and it is but a short time since their purchasers have in some instances refused to give them up, stoutly asseverating that they were their property. Now, however, warned by experience, owners make no such claim, but advance various more or less ingenious explanations of the fact that they have Negritos in their possession and deny that they are slaves. Some of them insist that it is a Negrito custom to kill orphan children, and that they have taken orphans out of kindness in order to save their lives.

PERHAPS the commonest procedure of all is to claim that Negrito slaves are "adopted children" or "members of the family." In such cases investigation almost invariably shows that there has been no legal adoption; the owner has merely gone before a priest and stated that he or she will be a "foster" father or mother to the child. The child may or may not be baptized with the name of the owner. This is a cheap and easy method of securing a slave and the child thus "adopted" will be compelled to labor for a lifetime without compensation, or turned over for a consideration to be similarly "adopted" by someone else.

Other Filipinos who do not claim that their Negrito slaves are members of their families, find complete justification for purchasing them in the claim that they have taken them to Christianize and thus prevent their going to Hell.

I wish this were the worst, but the worst is yet to come. Not only do the Filipinos buy, sell and hold the wild people as slaves, but Filipino children have been kidnapped, or enticed from their homes by other Filipinos, and sold as slaves to their own kind. Young girls by wholesale have been sold outright to Chinese who purchased and kept them for immoral purposes. They have been sold to pimps, panderers, and keepers of houses of prostitution and compelled to enter upon lives of shame. Filipino children and young women have been sold to Chinese who have taken them to China. God only knows what fate may have befallen them there. In such cases the victims disappear from these Islands, never to return.

By the word slavery I mean the condition of a human being held as a chattel and compelled to render service for which he is not paid.

Peonage is the condition of a person held in a state of modified servitude for debt. It is vastly more common in the Philippines than is actual slavery, but the two things run into each other by insensible gradations and large numbers of persons who

are here called peons would, in the United States, be called slaves.

Peonage lies at the root of the industrial system of the Philippines. A very large proportion of the house servants and field laborers are encouraged to run into debt to their employers and are then retained in service under such conditions as to make it wholly impossible for them ever to pay up. In fact the extortionate interest charged on their debts is in itself often greatly in excess of their earnings, for the "salaries" paid them may not be more than three or four pesos (\$1.50 to \$2.00 gold) per year, and are often not more than one peso (\$.50 gold) per month. Against this wretched sum are charged their food, their clothing, and the value of any articles which they may lose or break, and that of any domestic animals which may die while in their possession. A usual rate of interest on the original debt is 10 per cent. a month and under such conditions it constantly grows.

AS an instance of the ingenuity and perversity of a certain class of Filipinos I may cite the fact that after the Legislature had passed an act designed to make it possible to punish people who accepted large sums of money in advance at the time of their employment with the deliberate intention of promptly running away and thus in effect robbing their employers, advantage was taken of its provisions to invoke the aid of the courts in compelling inmates of houses of ill-fame, who were in debt to the keepers of such resorts, to return to lives of shame after they had made their escape.

Why, it may well be asked, have such conditions continued under American rule? The story can be briefly told. It was a long time before they were known. Slavery proved comparatively easy to check in the territory inhabited by non-Christians for the simple reason that they were too ignorant to appeal to the law, or rather to take advantage of the absence of any adequate law, and defy the authorities; or because they were so brutal and open in the taking, keeping and selling of slaves that it was feasible to deal with them effectively under the provisions of theCodigo Penal relative to illegal detention. With the Christian Filipino slaveholders, however, the case was very different. Most of them knew what they were about uncommonly well. Practically without exception they employed shrewd lawyers to defend them when prosecuted. It was believed at the outset that they, too, could be successfully dealt with under the Penal Code and some two years were wasted on test cases, with the result that the government finally lost out in the Supreme Court of the Philippine Islands, the Court holding that "there is no law applicable here, either of the United States or of the Archipelago, punishing slavery as a crime."

The necessity for legislation was thus made apparent and was called to the attention of the Philippine Commission both by me and by the trial judge in the lower court. The task of drafting the necessary act was turned over to a Filipino member of the Commission. It was a difficult and delicate task; how difficult and how delicate, no one will appreciate who has not attempted to steer clear of both the Scylla of undue interference with parental authority in the matter of apprenticing children, and the Charybdis of actual slavery.

I finally became impatient at the long-continued delay and drafted an act myself. It was subsequently contemptuously characterized as "an ill-disguised effort to introduce new legislation into one of the best codes in existence." I daresay it left something to be desired, theoretically, but

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