

Near first cut  
of letter now  
than necessary

Human Slavery in Natal.

C123/57

Very yours  
Wm D

Adamshurst  
at Pietermaritzburg  
Natal  
S. Africa

To the Secretary of the Aborigines  
Protection Society.

Sir

We wish to lay before  
you a few facts, most of which have come  
under our personal observation during the  
last three years, and which illustrate the action  
of Native Law in Natal as relating to Native  
Christians and especially Native Christian  
women. We cannot believe that the noble  
British nation in general and your Society in par-  
ticular would allow the present state of things  
to continue did they but once fairly understand  
that all the native female population of Natal  
live in a state of unquestionable Slavery, being  
bought, sold, inherited and their price recovered  
by law, like any other property; and from  
this doom not even Christian women, born of  
Christian Parents who were married by Christian  
rites <sup>being</sup> exempt; and further that no marriage

See Over

2/  
By Christian rites is legal marriage unless the  
Bride is also purchased with cattle according to  
the customs of the heathen.

As we write solely in the interest of the natives  
we do not enter upon any question as between them  
and the White Population. The Colonists and  
the natives continually mingle in the relations  
of master and servant, in which the former meet  
with many advantages, and also corresponding  
annoyances, but even the most transient visitors  
bear witness to the usually fair treatment which  
the natives receive, and the mutual goodwill  
existing between the races. But the Colonists  
generally know little of the social life and savage customs  
of the natives and still less of their Government by  
the native Department. So much is this the  
case that those whose signatures are attached to  
this letter and who have resided fifteen years  
in the Colony (and one of whom has a fair know-  
ledge of the Zulu language and as a country  
Schoolmaster often amused his leisure by visiting  
the native Kwaals) ~~was~~ till quite lately un-  
derstood scarcely anything of the iniquities of  
native Law and although aware that the native  
Department was compelled to tolerate some <sup>malous</sup> ~~malous~~  
practices and many savage practices, could not

imagine that British Officials would persistently conserve the most barbarous customs, or deliberately set themselves to thwart the endeavours of civilized natives to be freed from native Law by means provided for that purpose through the exertions of the Colonists.

The Native Department forms a secret despotic power over which neither the public opinion of the Colony, nor the Press nor the Legislative Council itself can exercise any control, so that it is practically not only despotic but ~~entirely~~ irresponsible. In its relations with independent tribes beyond the borders or its dealing with chieftains, its own subjects within the Colony, it will scarcely yield any information even to questionings in the Council; while to every call from among the Colonists for change tending to the elevation and improvement of the natives, it constantly opposes the cry of an imagined danger, which if it exist at all, has been created by the fear the Government continually displays of a people easily governed and amenable to law, and by its own base truckling to their barbarisms.

While the action of the Native Department

plainly shews that they are determined no native  
 girl shall be exempted from native Law (See the  
 case of Annimbye No 3. Page 19 in accompanying  
 documents) we are satisfied that if it were  
 possible to take a plebiscite of the White  
 Population on the question "Whether the Makolwa<sup>+</sup>  
 or at least any of them who desired it should be  
 brought under English Law"; they would decide  
 almost unanimously in the affirmative.  
 No one would recommend that the whole heathen  
 population should be violently compelled to forsake  
 its most cherished customs and come under English  
 Law. Such a course would be attended with real  
 danger, for although the Kafirs are accustomed  
 to yield to authority, it can scarcely be expected  
 they would submit without a struggle to the  
 forcible overthrow of customs appealing so  
 strongly to the animal passions as polygamy  
 and woman-slavery. The passing of an act  
 or issuing a proclamation declaring all who had been  
 married by Christian Rites and the offspring of  
 such marriages to be under English Law, and

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+ Makolwa<sup>+</sup> Literally <sup>means</sup> Believers, <sup>the practice is applied to</sup> Professedly  
 Christian natives always accustomed to  
 wear clothes and partially civilized.

making all future marriages by Christian Rites legal marriages without "Lobola" (purchase of the Bride with cattle) and bringing the parties so married under English Law by that act, - would be a very different thing. So far from being a dangerous measure this would be a great security against revolt, for it would tend to a constant weakening of the ranks of heathendom by the marriage under English Law of the most intelligent and romantic of the young people and would so thoroughly divide ~~between~~ the Inakolwa and the Polygamists as effectually to prevent their ever making common cause against the Government.

The <sup>injurious</sup> debasing effect on the minds of the officials themselves caused by the irresponsible administration of a savage law, is well shewn in a proposal made by Mr John Shepstone (at present Acting Secretary for Native Affairs) to employ in certain cases detectives who should not be produced in Court. This will be found in his report on the Liquor Traffic published in the Natal Gov<sup>t</sup> Gazette of July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1877.

As an example of the petty tyranny to which the Department has become capable of descending

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we may refer to the case of John Lulu who shortly after the transportation of ~~Mlunga~~<sup>Langa</sup> libalele proposed to proceed to the Cape Colony and pay a visit to the late chief to whom he is related. The Government on becoming aware of his intention issued a proclamation forbidding any irature to leave the Colony without the permission of the Irature Office, and then forbade him to embark.

John Lulu is himself a Government Officer being one of the "Indunas" at Edendale; it therefore might or might not be advisable to prevent his seeing Mlungalibalele, but such a proclamation as this is not only utterly opposed to all ~~the~~ ideas and traditions of British liberty but is absurd in itself, since every waggon which takes a load of goods to the Free State or Transvaal takes for a time two Haffirs out of the Colony and who dreams of first asking permission? —

Does not the proclamation exhibit a paltry spite against the late rebellious chief as despicable as it is impolitic? —

In the year 1869 a law was made imposing a License fee of £5.0.0 on every Haffir marriage and at the same time providing that the price paid for the Bride should not exceed

10 Head of Cattle and that before the final ~~same~~ ceremony the Bride should declare in the presence of an Official witness, that she was married with her own free consent.

The restriction on the price of the Bride bore rather hardly upon the young men in some places, as the current rates varied and in many of the upper districts had been previously less than 10 Head.

This law was passed in deference to the demands of the Colonists for improvement and among them a very general impression prevailed that the marriage of the first wife was exempted from the fee of £5 and therefore that the measure discouraged polygamy which they desired to do.

This however was not the case. The same fee of £5. was charged for the first wife of a young man married perhaps from true mutual affection, as for the tenth or fifteenth woman taken for the convenience or lust of an old polygamist.

The measure thus directly fostered polygamy, for it was much easier for the polygamist than for the young man to get the £5 in Cash for the Govt in addition to the cattle for 'Lobola'.

The polygamist could easily obtain the fee for his tenth wife by selling one of the cattle received from the sale of an elder daughter,

but the youth had to earn it by his own honest labour, and in the mean time his sweetheart might be sold away from him to some old polygamist. It is true the girl seemed to be protected by the provision requiring her own consent to her marriage and no doubt this was of service in the immediate neighbourhood of White Settlement, but it could have been little security in other circumstances since it was not necessary that the girl's consent should be given before a Magistrate, Justice of the Peace, Field Court, or any Official of European descent, but the Official Witnesses appointed were simply inactive Policemen from whose position among their people, their intimate knowledge of their own customs and the profit they derive from them, we may fairly believe their sympathies would in all cases go rather with tyrannical fathers than with oppressed maidens. Take notice of the attempt to force Martha Kwompapu to marry a polygamist against her will only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Years ago and at a place within 20 Miles of the Capital and not three miles from the habitations of White Colonists. (See No 1)

The marriage fee of Five Pounds has since been abolished to the satisfaction of all parties,



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Whether the regulations as to the price of the Bride remain we cannot say, but we know that Martha Unompapu has been "lobolae" (with her own consent) for 17 head of cattle, and Unomatitongo for 15 head on the grounds that Inapisa is an Induna, and Gencaue belongs to the family of some petty chief.

In the early days of Missionary effort, the natives were naturally taught that "Lobola" was evil and in consequence the daughters of the first converts were married upon a payment little more than nominal and made simply to legalize the transaction, such for instance as the single beast called the "Incutu" delivered at the time of the final dance (called "Cwanguza") but as they were still held entirely subject to native Law, natural cupidity at last prevailed and higher prices were demanded for daughters of the Inakolwa than for the heathen, so that shortly before the passing of the Law of 1869 no less than 30 head of cattle were paid in some cases for girls at Edendale.

We may refer you to a distinct admission on the part of the Acting Secy for Native Affairs that marriage by Christian rites alone is not legal marriage (See Page 33) and so well is this understood by the Inakolwa that we are

informed that among the converts on some of the Mission Stations, after marriage by Christian rites in the church, the heathen dance "Cwangaja" is performed at the residence of the Bridegroom in order certainly to secure the rights of inheritance to the children. No legal provision has been made to secure a Christian woman against the relapse of her husband into heathen habits which occasionally happens as in the case of Benjamin and others (See No 1 note above) If a drative although married by Christian rites take one or more other wives, the law still does not look upon it as adultery but only polygamy which native customs allow, and the woman has no redress except by means of other native customs of an equally objectionable character (See P. 30)

In the year 1864, at the urgent demands of the Colonists, a Law was passed for relieving some of the dratives from the operation of drative Law: this was repealed in the following year and the law at present in force (No 28 of 1865) substituted.

During the passage of these Acts through the Council, it was matter of notoriety that the drative Department placed every possible

obstacle in the way, and obtained the insertion of conditions and requirements calculated to make the law practically ineffective and which have but too well answered their apparent purpose. We shall forward a copy of this Law to your Honourable Society, but must beg you will excuse its dilapidated condition as not being able to obtain a second copy of it we are compelled to send the one we have had in use.

Whether this Law was ever promulgated among the natives we cannot tell, but it remained practically a dead letter, and except for occasional enquiries in the Council as to its working had almost passed from men's minds until about 2 Years ago when Isaac Inguote 'Inkwanzu a very intelligent Christian Kafir complaining continually of much annoyance from the action of native Law was told he should petition to be exempted from it. After due consideration he determined to do so. As the Gov<sup>ment</sup> has not published any form of petition, a petition was drawn out which we now know not to have complied with the requirements. However it was received and after some delay his letter of exemption

issued. His example was followed by several others. In these cases greater formality was demanded and more obstacles interposed; nevertheless after a delay of about seven months their letters of exemption were issued.

His Excellency the Lieut Governor exhibited considerable interest in the commencing movement and granted the earliest petitioners a personal interview.

The next petition was that of Unumbye Kuswayo, and this case (in which property so valuable as a marriageable girl was at stake) at once elicited unmistakable evidence of the animus of the Executive Department.

The particulars of this case will be found (Case No 3, p 19) but we may here add a few remarks upon it

The frivolity of the quibbles about the spelling of her name will be at once evident when it is remembered that the language possesses no literature except a few translations by missionaries or books written by them. As they have invented the orthography every individual writing in the Lulu tongue adopts more or fewer peculiarities of his own. This will be seen on comparison of three grammars published respect-

ively by Mr Grout, the Bishop of Natal and Mr Roberts, and the Jersey notes published by <sup>Mr</sup> Callaway. We have in our possession a copy of the Psalms printed in 1850 and the New Testament published in 1865 both printed in Natal by the American missionaries but which differ very materially in their orthography.

Months

We direct attention to the delay of seven months in the obtaining the report of the Attorney General on Unwinby's petition although His Excellency had expressed an opinion that there need be no delay. We feel some surprise that it should take seven months to discover that the petition was drawn up in accordance with Sec 3 instead of Sec 30 of Law 28 of 1865 when three days sufficed for them to learn that the word "owns" (which was unnecessary) was omitted in the petition of Absalom Duba and in the case of Inasijana Inoane to discover that a man who has been divorced is not un-married! - (See P 51)

The letter accompanying her returned petition speaks of her "natural guardians" not being willing to consent to her exemption, but Law 28 of 1865 makes no reference whatever to such consent and it is unreasonable to suppose

that the "natural guardians" of an "unmarried female native" would ever consent to a measure which deprives them of at least 10 Head of Cattle.

Your Society will also observe the expression of Mr. J. Shephard (P. 32) that Unwinbye "must not expect the law to be upset for her convenience" - she has no such wish, she only desires to take advantage of a law which has been provided for her relief.

When her petition was returned she was told she might have to wait very long before receiving her letter of exemption, and asked if she were determined to persevere. She said "she was determined", but it was considered right that she should first consult her mother who is living on land belonging to Masuyana's house. On her return she reported that her mother's relations were troubling her very much on account of her wish to get her daughter free from Drutivi Law and that the father's brother (Unwinbye's proprietor) threatened to prosecute her, but she did not care what she suffered if she could only get her daughter brought under English Law and she begged us to do all we could for her.

A few days after and before we could take measures to procure the necessary signatures to a new petition a Haffin came to fetch Umuwabe into town. He stated that a policeman had been sent for her to her mother's residence where he was informed that she was here, from Edendale this man had come on ~~in his~~ <sup>in</sup> ~~stead~~ the policeman himself being tired. He said that she was not wanted on a lawsuit but as her father's brother was at the office "Mr John" wanted them to discuss the matter in his presence. The man carried no symbol of authority. He was told that if he really came from "Mr John" Shepstone he should have brought a letter and she would not be allowed to go without it. If her father's brother wanted to speak to her he could come here.

Shortly after, that is on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> Inst. Inshlo (her father's brother) and his son came here accompanied by a policeman when a conversation took place, report of which will be found on Page 42

We may observe that we find it difficult to conceive why Mr J. Shepstone should send to her mother's residence in quest of her since he knew she was living at Adamsburg with Incah Inkwanazi having himself assented

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to that arrangement and recommended it on  
Aug 20<sup>th</sup> (See Page 34)

We now live in constant dread of a warrant  
commanding her to be given up to her "natural  
guardians"; As a precautionary measure she  
has signed a paper binding herself to Dr<sup>s</sup>  
Adams' service; We do not think this document  
would stand in law, but it will gain time  
and throw the onus of commencing legal pro-  
ceedings upon the other party. The kind  
treatment she would be likely to receive from  
her "natural guardians" may be judged  
by a reference to the cases of Unompapu and  
Malwasi (Cases 1 & 2) shewing the kind  
treatment they received from their parents  
and "natural guardians" under circumstances  
of far less provocation. Unumbye's  
"natural guardian" is not an Ipolwa but  
a thorough heathen.

Another very respectable and well behaved girl  
(Sophia Mubwasi Goba) whom we know well  
(as she is frequently employed "charing" and also  
attends the Young Women's Class at the School.)  
wishes to petition. A petition has been  
prepared for her but it would be very dif-  
ficult to obtain the necessary signatures



as she knows in Justice of the Peace. We therefore think it best to let it lie over till the crucial case of Unumbye is decided: the more as we are unwilling to embroil her unnecessarily with her relations and "natural guardians" as ~~there is~~ no protection against their resentment provided for a girl during the time her petition is under consideration, a time which as we see may extend to a year or more. Sophia is the only Ikolwa at the kraal of her brother's brother, where she lives, being held in pawn by her uncle for the price of her deceased mother, which he hopes to receive out of the cattle obtained by her marriage. She expresses an intention not to marry.

[ So well do the natives themselves apprehend the meaning of these delays that so lately as Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> Inst. one of the exempted natives expressed his opinion thus that the Govt does not intend to allow any more to come under English Law. In reference to Unumbye, Sophia has expressed her surprise that the authorities here should oppose the Queen's law to bring the Haffis out of native Law; it is a thing she cannot understand. Unumbye herself when told her petition was again returned said

while tears of bitter disappointment glistened  
in her eyes "I thought they would not keep  
me waiting so long as the men since  
English people always respect girls and  
care for them so much".

Expressions (touching in their simplicity) of  
loyalty and attachment to the person of the  
Sovereign and confidence in her willingness to  
help them are continually in the mouths not  
only of the girls but of the men also.

Inasiana has repeatedly asked if Her  
Majesty would not do him right if he ap-  
peared personally to her. For ourselves  
we trust their confidence is not misplaced.  
Her Majesty always exhibits the greatest sym-  
pathy with her suffering subjects and has  
never allowed the exaltation of her rank  
to stifle the feelings of her sex. We cannot  
but believe that if she once <sup>clearly</sup> ~~truly~~ understood  
the real situation of her loyal subjects  
the native Christian women of Oratal  
she would employ her authority in their  
behalf. In this case her authority is  
unlimited under Oratal Law.  
"Supreme Chief over the Oratal People,  
lacion" is one of the titles of her repre-

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sentative, and the will of a Lulu Chief knows no control. The same power which in the hands of his representative could arbitrarily forbid John Lulu to leave the Colony, might with the stroke of his own pen at once set free every Native Christian woman in the Colony.

The case of Absalom Duba (noticed in the particulars of Amumilye's case Page 34) though less flagrant than Amumilye's or Masigana's is yet sufficiently suggestive. Absalom is a man of excellent character, a Brick-layer by trade and a conscientious workman. Being a man of mature age (45) and the head of a family, it is not easy to understand why there should be any delay unless it be in the fact that he has four daughters the eldest of whom is marriageable and therefore of considerable value. It is true to a non-official mind this seems a reason for promptitude <sup>rather</sup> than for delay since it shews that he has determined to sacrifice to his sense of right the acquisition of at least 40 head of cattle, 10 of them in almost immediate prospect, a sufficient proof surely that he is worthy to receive the rights of a British citizen! It is now nearly 4 months since his petition was sent in and no tidings have been received of its progress. For aught we can tell it

may have been illegally given out of the Office like Inanyana's (See Case 4 P54). We have advised Absalom to call at the Office and enquire about it when he may be in town.

The reason given by Absalom for wishing to come under English Law (See Law 28 of 1865 Sec 3. Thirteenth) was:— "Because under native Law there is nothing to prevent myself or my children from falling back into wicked and savage customs"

We append the reasons given by some others—  
 Jabez Inulise (Letter of Exemption Granted)  
 I wish to become a Free British Subject, and do not want to sell my daughter like putting her up to auction when she is of marriageable age.—

James Louderzi - (Letter Granted)  
 I was born and brought up among Englishmen. I do not want the native Law any more it is not good.

Solomon Kaba (Letter Issued)  
 I was born under English Law (Missionary) + and when I came to this Colony I had to come under Native Law

+ He was born in Basutoland

which I do not like. I cannot stand comfortably with one foot on English law and one on native Law.

Solomon Tshabalala (Letter Issued) I do not like native law, I wish to be under the same law as white men. I do not want to be obliged to sell my daughters in order that their marriage may be legal.

Others also speak of not wishing to sell their daughters

Levi Siwela (Petition signed only about 10 days ago.)

Because under native law, people are bought and sold by Lobola like dogs, and I wish to marry a girl who has been exempted from native Law. (He is courting a daughter of Solomon Kaba who was included in his father's letter of exemption).

Particulars of the hard case of Masinyana Insane otherwise Manyatela Insane will be found Case No 4 Page 54 It is very significant as showing the lengths to which the native Department ventures to go in order to delay or prevent the exemption of petitioners.

We may mention that if his petition had really contained false statements he was

liable to a prosecution for perjury.

In connexion with this case we may refer again to Koffis names. Almost all Koffis are known by at least one in addition to their real proper name, but this implies no reproach or suspicion as it would among ourselves.

Thus Amumbi has been baptized Martha, was known as Matzi when in service to Mr. Coxa and is often called Umkeiza the surname of her step-father. Masiyana is quite as often called Maryatela: the woman he married, called in the Church books Lydia, is entered in the Register of the Magistrate's Court Udeya after the corrupted pronunciation of the natives. In the certificate of Masiyana's marriage to Udeya (or Lydia) it is said to have taken place in presence of "Jonas Intumbulu" whom however we have discovered to be no other than John Lulu himself! — Can such extreme accuracy in the spelling of a name then be really necessary in a petition?

The Government will in no case take the initiative in providing any native School, or consider any application for aid until such School is in actual operation. When the "Native Administration Bill" was

under discussion some three years ago, there was a very general impression that the Gov<sup>ernment</sup> intended to establish Native Schools. It is difficult to understand whence the impression arose except from the Colonists' own sense of what would be right; at any rate to our certain knowledge two applications were made, one for appointment to an Industrial School, to be formed on a plan furnished by the applicant; the other for the appointment of English Teacher in any School that might be formed. In the first case the application was courteously put aside; in the second case the applicant was told to apply in writing and having done so never received any answer.

The sole outcome of the Native Administration Bill was the establishment of the Native High Courts. These have been of some real use inasmuch as they have served to lift one corner of the previously impenetrable veil which concealed the loathsomeness of Native Law and its administration.

Cases in these Courts are reported in the public Press. We shall if possible forward with this a few Colonial papers containing reports of such cases, and also the opinions

of the Colonists as expressed in Editorial remarks. The expressions used in this Court even by the Judges themselves will show more forcibly than anything we could assert the reality of the slavery of Native women.

We are acquainted with a case which not only exhibits the action of Native Law in these Courts, but which shows how hopeless is the shalldom to their elders in which not girls alone, ~~or~~ but also married men are held, and particularly married women purchased with their father-in-law's cattle. As the man concerned is at present absent from this neighbourhood we cannot now send the particulars, but we will obtain and forward them so soon as he returns.

As proceedings under Native Law are not reported except in the High Court before mentioned its ordinary administration forms a secret as profound as the proceedings of the Venetian "Council of Ten". Native Law is entirely unwritten and consists solely of customs originating presumably in the will of the Chief and confirmed by long continuance.

Under such a system, it would



seem, there need be no limit to beneficial  
 change, and that a courageous and honest  
 Magistrate might act in such a way as  
 to repress licentious and savage customs, to  
 instil civilized ideas, and gradually  
 assimilate Native Customs to English Law  
 # For instance - It is well known that  
 a large proportion of the cases relate to  
 the sale of women, and young men have  
 often to pay for as far back as their  
 grandmothers. This is necessary under the  
 present administration of Native Law to secure  
 legitimacy, and the right of inheritance to their  
 own children. Why should not the Governor  
 as Supreme Chief issue a proclamation, that  
 their debts shall not be recoverable in any  
 Court, <sup>but</sup> they shall be placed on the same  
 footing that the English Law places debts of  
 honour. So far from the Native Department  
 being governed by civilized and progressive  
 ideas, those of a precisely opposite cast  
 appear to prevail, since the modifications  
 of Native Law introduced by that office  
 are by no means improvements. As  
 an example we refer once more to  
~~the~~ a conversation of Mr. John Shepstone

(page 30 of Accompanying Memoranda) Law in which he asserts that any woman who has borne a child to her husband (or purchaser) may then go and be married to another man. This statement seems so utterly monstrous that we took an early opportunity to enquire into its truth, of two very intelligent natives, they confirmed it with this important addition - that - the government had modified the ancient custom, for among the Lulus in such a case the child remained with the husband, and if the woman married again the cattle were paid to her father; but under this government, if the woman married again the child went to her father, and the cattle were taken by the former purchaser - Thus under the British regime even more than under that of the savage Lulu himself, a married woman becomes a mere article of merchandise - We contend that all the <sup>credit</sup> honours, the Native Department or its Chief has obtained, for the peacefulness of the Colony for the last 30 years, could have been acquired and maintained without

pondering to the Kaffir's most degrading passions.  
The bulk of the native population, is gathered in extensive locations, generally consisting of the most rugged and inaccessible portions of the country, rarely traversed by the colonists, and where no white men live except a few missionaries, and ~~at~~ <sup>in</sup> a few isolated cases a Magistrate, and were therefore the presence of civilization has no influence and affords no check to native barbarity. Unompaper and Maluasi were tortured within fifteen miles of Maritzburg yet the facts would probably never have come to the knowledge of the authorities but that a young man chanced to speak of ~~it~~ <sup>the occurrence</sup> in the presence of Micael Mkwanzu who reported to us. Since this is so how many similar cases may occur in remote places of which neither the Magistrate nor any one else hears, and as in the case of Jencane the punishment was so miserably inadequate, what security have we, that in cases where no white witnesses are present the culprits are not dismissed with a reprimand?

When a woman steadfastly resists

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a marriage contrary to her inclination  
the Zulus have a custom of tying, or  
holding her, hand and foot, while she  
is ravished by her purchaser. A case of  
this kind occurred about three years ago  
near Pmitown (11 mile from Durban) when  
the culprits escaped conviction on a charge  
of rape only because owing to the darkness  
the woman could not swear to their identity.  
If a deed like this could be done so near  
the port of Durban itself who can tell what  
unimagined horrors may be always  
going on in the depths of the location?

The dealings of the Native Department  
with Chiefs living beyond the border are  
as well concealed as their doings within  
the colony. A few years ago, we think  
about the time of Cetywayo's coronation,  
an agreement was made with him  
of the existence of which, comparatively  
few of the colonists are aware - By it  
in case of any of the Zulu girls taking  
refuge in Natal, whenever they marry  
they are paid for in the usual way  
but the cattle are taken by the Natal  
Government and handed over to Cetywayo!

It would appear that this arrangement is made an engine of the most abominable tyranny and wickedness. Every now and then we hear the most horrible charges brought against the native police in connection with refugee women. Such as that when the first husband of a refugee is dilatory in payment, the woman is forced away to another purchaser who pays promptly. In such cases the first husband is probably he for whose sake she left her native land. But owing to the mystery in which all native matters are involved it is impossible to discover if the charges are ever even investigated by the Government. We can therefore make no positive statements of or on these points, but they surely form proper subject of inquiry for your Honourable Society and the Imperial Parliament, our own Legislative Assembly being powerless.

For a considerable distance along the Lulu frontier there runs a large tract of country which is a Kafir location. It is by no means

certain that there, the security we fondly  
suppose to attach to all British soil is  
inviolable. We have heard a dreadful  
story of a refugee woman being delivered  
up to her pursuers and murderers, but  
we do not venture to give it from  
memory. We have written to the  
eyewitness who related it and whenever  
he gives us the particulars we will forward  
them with any further matter we  
may obtain.

We may now mention that  
Mr. S. John Brooks, who signed the  
letter to the Magistrate in Unompap's  
case and who has a considerable  
knowledge of the Lulu language is  
now at Dublin studying medicine in  
Trinity College, he may be addressed  
by letter. Mr. Henry Crouch, 34 Strand,  
London, the gentleman through whom  
we shall forward this letter. Not that  
we have reason to suspect the post office  
of tampering with letters, but we fear  
so large a packet addressed to your  
Society might form a temptation &  
great for them to resist.

If the Imperial Government be not prepared to recommend or sanction so much change as the early part of this letter suggests, a much smaller measure would yet afford great relief. If Law 28. 1865 itself were but honestly enforced that would be something, but if its provisions were a little relaxed much good might be done. At present they are practically almost prohibitive, for no Native could draw up his petition without assistance, and few Colonists have the leisure if they have the will, and the patience to take the trouble involved in procuring the necessary signatures, especially as it may all have to be repeated time after time owing to the frivolous objections of the Native Department. This is especially the case with girls, who are not at all likely to be so well acquainted with any Justice of the Peace as for him to be able conscientiously to answer for their character; if the signature of a jurymen were sufficient as in the case of a male, it would be possible though still very difficult to bring them out. Married Natives exempted

From the operation of Native Law should also be eligible for the Office of Guardian to such exempted girls, as well as persons of European descent. Indeed the exempted natives seem to be the most natural and proper guardians since being better acquainted, than Europeans, with the habits of Native girls they should be better able to shield them from temptation and danger.

Instead of there being three stages provided, at each of which a petition may be arbitrarily rejected (See 7. 9 & 13. Law 28. 1865) the granting of the petition should be made a matter of course, and the letter of exemption issued with no more delay than is necessary to verify the statements and signatures.

A protective clause should also be provided, securing young women from persecution by their relatives or natural guardians while the petition remained under investigation; We may hope this would scarcely be required among the Makolwa but it would be absolutely necessary in the case of girls whose natural guardians remained heathens. But better than all these amendments of a bad Law



would it be if the cumbersome machinery of Law 28. 1865 were abolished, and the Natives allowed to place themselves under English Law, in the same manner as other Aliens by paying a fee of five shillings and taking an oath of allegiance before a Magistrate or Justice of the Peace after due notice <sup>had been</sup> given to the Lieut. Governor. It would also be necessary to appoint an age at which girls might be naturalized independently of their natural guardians - As at present boys are allowed to act for themselves at the age of 16 we would suggest the age of fourteen as suitable for the girls. It would be advisable to allow them to apply for letters of naturalization at an early age, lest their natural guardians should sell them to prevent it. Your Society will perceive that such young girls would require a guardian - As regards the men as they have nothing to gain except power to live decently, the desire to become a British subject is a sufficient proof of their fitness for it.

We are taking measures to bring this subject before the Legislative Council in the approaching Session; but considered as the Council is we have very little hope of anything being done in the matter. In the mean time every day is of importance to Unnimbaye, who may at any moment be hurried away to the almost certainty of torture, as we have heard that proposals have been made for her sale, which we are sure she would resist to the uttermost, as she is determined never to marry under Native Law, and is besides attached to Masinjara, to whom she has been engaged for some time. We are therefore afraid to venture on any delay in making an appeal to your Society.

We appeal to the Great British Nation, the traditional foe of Slavery, to wipe from her Scutcheon the foul blot, to put away the sin and the shame that in one of the fairest of her Colonies, Christian women, our fellow subjects, are bought and sold. She who seeks to penetrate the

remotest depths of Africa to free the  
Slaves of other Nations, will she not  
liberate her own?

We appeal to your  
Honourable Society, the professed Champion  
of oppressed Natives, we appeal to  
every Christian man and Christian  
woman in the Realm of Britain  
in the name of our Master who gave  
his life to set the Captives free, to lend  
their aid in rescuing our Sisters in  
the Lord and His Free women from  
the foul chains of Heathen and  
savage laws

We have the honour to be  
Sir

Your obedient Servants

William Adams  
Ellen Martha Adams  
Ellen Brooks.  
Samuel Gibbs.

Manly in haste

Letter from M Adams

& Mrs

Dec 1877

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