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SLAVE TRADE. No. 5 (1876).

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INSTRUCTIONS

RESPECTING

RECEPTION OF FUGITIVE SLAVES

ON BOARD

HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS.

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.*  
1876.

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LONDON:

PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS.

[C.—1593.] Price 1d.



## Instructions respecting Reception of Fugitive Slaves on board Her Majesty's Ships.

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*Lord Tenterden to the Secretary to the Admiralty.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, August 10, 1876.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 23rd of December last, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you, to be laid before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the accompanying Draft of Instructions to be issued to the Commanders of Her Majesty's ships and vessels with regard to the reception of fugitive slaves.

I am, &c.

(Signed) TENTERDEN.

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Inclosure.

*Reception of Fugitive Slaves.*

To all Commanders-in-chief, Captains, Commanders, and Commanding Officers of Her Majesty's ships and vessels.

THE following Instructions are to be considered as superseding all previous Instructions as to the receipt of fugitive slaves :—

1. In any case in which you have received a fugitive slave into your ship and taken him under the protection of the British flag, whether within or beyond the territorial waters of any State, you will not admit or entertain any demand made upon you for his surrender on the ground of slavery.

2. It is not intended, nor is it possible, to lay down any precise or general rule as to the cases in which you ought to receive a fugitive slave on board your ship. You are, as to this, to be guided by considerations of humanity, and these considerations must have full effect given to them whether your ship is on the high seas or within the territorial waters of a State in which slavery exists; but in the latter case you ought, at the same time, to avoid conduct which may appear to be in breach of international comity and good faith.

3. If any person, within territorial waters, claims your protection on the ground that he is kept in slavery contrary to Treaties with Great Britain, you should receive him until the truth of his statement is examined into. This examination should be made, if possible, after communication with the nearest British Consular authority, and you should be guided in your subsequent proceedings by the result.

4. A special Report is to be made of every case of a fugitive slave received on board your ship.

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