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SLAVE TRADE. No. 2 (1879).

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CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

SLAVERY IN CUBA.

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.*  
1879.

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## Correspondence respecting Slavery in Cuba.

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### No. 1.

*Messrs. Cooper and Sturge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 21.)*

*British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society,  
Office, 27, New Broad Street, E.C.,  
London, February 19, 1879.*

My Lord,

THE Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, together with some of their Parliamentary friends, are desirous of an interview with your Lordship on the subject of the claims of Great Britain in relation to the slave population of Cuba.

General Martinez Campos having at length effected the settlement of the island, and being now on his return to Spain, with the prospect of taking a ruling position in her councils, affords the hope that these claims may at length be urged with effect.

If it suit your Lordship's convenience to receive such deputation about the latter half of the ensuing week, the Committee would feel grateful for such an appointment.

On behalf of the Committee, we are, &c.

(Signed)

**JOSEPH COOPER,  
EDMD. STURGE,**  
*Honorary Secretaries.*

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### No. 2.

*Sir J. Pauncefote to Messrs. Cooper and Sturge.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, February 22, 1879.*

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, in which you express the wish of the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, together with some of their Parliamentary friends, to have an interview with his Lordship on the subject of the Slave population in Cuba, and I am to state to you, in reply, that his Lordship will be happy to see them at this Office on Friday, the 28th instant, at 3 o'clock.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

**JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.**

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### No. 3.

*The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. West.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, March 1, 1879.*

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a Memorial which was placed in my hands yesterday by a large and influential deputation on behalf of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, praying Her Majesty's Government to take steps with the Spanish Government to procure the emancipation of the Slave population in Cuba.\*

\* No. 4.

You are doubtless aware of the deep interest which is felt on this question by all parties in this country, whatever may be their creed or political opinions, and it is one, moreover, which, whatever Government may be in power here, will feel bound to press on the earnest consideration of the Spanish Government.

If Her Majesty's Government have hitherto forbore from making any pressing communication to the Spanish Government on this subject, it has been because they did not wish to increase the difficulties with which the Government of His Catholic Majesty has had to contend in the pacification of Cuba, but now that the insurrection in that island is at an end, Her Majesty's Government feel that they are justified in instructing you to take an early opportunity of reminding the Spanish Minister of the promises which have, on more than one occasion, been made by the Government at Madrid to your predecessor, to deal with the question of the emancipation of the slaves in Cuba so soon as that island had been pacified, and you will state that Her Majesty's Government cannot permit themselves to doubt that the pledges of the Spanish Government on this subject will be redeemed at an early date.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

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Inclosure in No. 3.

*Messrs. Cooper and Sturge to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 28.)*

27, New Broad Street, London, E.C.,  
February 28, 1879.

My Lord,

IN reply to a Memorial on the continuance of slavery in Cuba, presented by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in April last, your Lordship stated "that Her Majesty's Government would not fail to remind the Government at Madrid of their engagements in respect to slavery as soon as the affairs of Cuba will justify their so doing."

They now venture to submit to your Lordship that that time has at length arrived when it has become the duty of Her Majesty's Government to insist on the fulfilment of those Treaty rights which it has so long allowed to remain in abeyance in reference to the slave population of Cuba.

For now nearly ten years it has been urged on the part of Spain, in answer to the remonstrances, both of the English and of the United States' Governments, that she was unable to carry into effect a measure of emancipation such as she has effected in Porto Rico, while Cuba continued in a state of insurrection.

At length the pacification of Cuba is held to be complete. General Martinez Campos has, by means of large additions to the Spanish forces on the one hand, and on the other by the promise of large and liberal concessions to the claims of the Cuban insurgents, established, for the present at least, the settlement of the island. He is said to be now on his return to Spain, and he will naturally be arranging with the Government at Madrid those measures which shall determine not only the relations of Cuba with the mother-country, but its internal conditions and its relations with the rest of the world. It is in this settlement that the British nation have an undoubted right to exercise a voice, and are under an obligation to use those Treaty rights which it possesses, on behalf alike of the claims of humanity and of the interests of England and of other nations.

The validity of the claim of England to the enfranchisement of the slave population of Cuba has never been contested, but it is, nevertheless, too often forgotten, and therefore it may be useful to refer very briefly to the facts on which it is founded.

"In 1818, Great Britain paid to Spain the large sum of £100,000*l.* to compensate her for losses which she alleged she would sustain by the suppression of the Slave Trade, and which she pledged herself to abolish throughout all her possessions on the 30th May, 1820.

"Since 1820 the importations of negroes into Cuba have, at the lowest estimate, exceeded more than twofold the number of slaves now officially reported as existing in that island; and as the whole of these have been introduced in violation of the Treaties and Conventions with Great Britain, Her Majesty's Government has an undoubted right to demand their immediate liberation.

"Moreover, that continuance of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade to Cuba necessitated the establishment of a repressive system, which in various ways entailed upon Great Britain alone an annual expenditure, estimated by the late Lord Palmerston at 1,000,000*l.* sterling."

It may be that the Madrid Government will answer: "We have enacted the Moret Law, which provides for the future extinction of slavery in Cuba."

The Committee would be wasting the time of your Lordship by presenting any analysis of a measure so illusory. Its utmost provisions in the direction of liberty are the emancipation of the old at sixty years of age, and of children born subsequently to its enactment at the age of twenty-two.

How even these most meagre promises are likely to be fulfilled is strikingly shown in the last Report of Her Majesty's Consul at Havana. Writing in May last of what he terms the humane provision for the protection of the Chinese coolie, he says:—

"But the liberal and humane course has been infringed by a law of which it is impossible to speak without indignation, obliging every Chinaman, at the expiration of his first contract, to renew it for a second term, or immediately leave the country. Neither the exigencies of the war nor the want of labour can justify so gross a breach of faith; no one will more regret it than those who are the best friends of the Spanish Government, for it is probably the chief, if not the only, cause why Chinese are found in the rebel ranks, and why the Chinese Government has stopped the emigration."

The Committee, therefore, earnestly entreat Her Majesty's Government to seize the occasion which has at length arrived to complete the task which has been left unfinished by your predecessors in office; a task which engaged the able but fruitless efforts of the late Lord Clarendon through many of his early years when British Minister at Madrid, and which is shown by his later official correspondence to have claimed his earnest attention during the last days of his life.

On behalf of the Committee, we are, &c.

(Signed)

JOSEPH COOPER,

EDMD. STURGE,

*Honorary Secretaries.*

No. 4.

*Mr. West to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 31.)*

My Lord,

*Madrid, March 27, 1879.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch of the 6th instant on the subject of slavery in the Island of Cuba, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, at an interview which I had with the Marquis de Molins yesterday, his Excellency alluded to what your Lordship had said in the House of Peers on this subject, and expressed himself much satisfied with the conciliatory language used by your Lordship on this occasion.

I thereupon remarked to his Excellency that your Lordship had instructed me to remind him of the promises which have from time to time been held out to Her Majesty's Government, that the question of the emancipation of the slaves in Cuba should be dealt with, and that Her Majesty's Government could not permit themselves to doubt that the pledges of the Spanish Government on this subject would be redeemed at an early date.

His Excellency replied that this was one of the principal questions with which the present Cabinet had to deal, and that I might assure your Lordship that it must inevitably be dealt with as soon as the elections were over, and the Cortes had assembled.

Any measure for the emancipation of the slaves which might previously have been possible was rendered now impossible by the new political constitution of the island, and until the arrival of the Cuban Deputies, and the final settlement of the question of their future relations with the mother country, the matter could hardly be discussed with any practical utility.

His Excellency, however, went on to say that in his opinion the complete emancipation of the slaves was a foregone conclusion, because, when certain theories for the social and moral government of the human race once took firm root in men's minds, they must inevitably be carried out.

The question of indemnity was, said his Excellency, one of great difficulty for the Spanish Government; and he alluded to the course pursued by the British Government in emancipating the slaves in the West India Colonies as having temporarily ruined them, a course which, although taken in the interests of humanity, the Spanish Government wished, if possible, to avoid, for the sake of all concerned.

On the whole, his Excellency's language decidedly held out hope that some action

would be taken on the question of emancipation satisfactory to its advocates, but, as your Lordship is aware, this is language which has frequently been used without any result.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) L. S. SACKVILLE WEST.

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## No. 5.

*The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. West.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, April 14, 1879.*

I HAVE received your despatch of the 27th ultimo on the subject of the emancipation of slaves in Cuba, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government will be most anxious to learn the views of the Spanish Government, and the decision that may be come to on this question, with as little delay as possible.

You will make a communication to this effect to the Spanish Minister.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

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## No. 6.

*Mr. West to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 24.)*

My Lord,

*Madrid, June 21, 1879.*

THE debate in the Senate has closed, and the address on the Royal Speech been adopted by a majority of 149 against 21. I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship herewith translation of a paragraph in the speech of the President of the Council relating to the question of slavery in Cuba.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) L. S. SACKVILLE WEST.

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## Inclosure in No. 6.

*Extract from General Martinez Campos' Speech of June 19, 1879.*

(Translation.)

GOVERNMENT must see that the scales are equally weighted; must take into due account the social problem; and must declare at once that it never had the intention of immediately emancipating the slaves. The intention of Government is to hasten the freedom of every slave; but it has never stated that immediate emancipation was to be declared; that all Cuban slaves were to be at once considered free from all control, for this is neither just nor feasible in the interest of the slaves themselves, for, in order to grant them their liberty, some preparation, which does not exist, is necessary. To grant them their freedom is equal to casting them into the fields, into licentiousness. They are very numerous, and we would not go and loose the Island of Cuba by virtue of a Decree.

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## No. 7.

*Mr. West to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 8.)*

My Lord,

*Madrid, July 4, 1879.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that previous to the commencement of the debate on the Address in the Spanish Cortes, the Government was interpellated on their intentions with respect to a modification of the customs regulations as regards the Island of Cuba, and on the future course to be pursued in the matter of the abolition of slavery. The Minister of the Colonies replied that the export duties complained of could not at present be reduced, and in reply to the request made for the presentation of the Slave Census of Cuba, for the copy of the Convention of Zangon, for the documents relating to the effect of abolition of slavery at Puerto Rico, and for the speedy approval by Government of the rules formed for the Abolitionist Society, the Minister of the

Colonies and of the Interior replied that they would endeavour to comply with these demands. The President of the Council further stated that the Cuban question must be decided not by the criterion of emancipation, but by that of justice and of convenience to Spain, and after hearing the Representatives of Cuba, whose opinions must have great weight.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) L. S. SÁCKVILLE WEST.

## No. 8.

*The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. West.*

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 14, 1879.*  
I HAVE received your despatch of the 21st ultimo, inclosing the translation of a paragraph in the speech of the President of the Council relating to the question of slavery in Cuba, and with reference to the statement of General Martínez Campos, to the effect that the Spanish Government never had the intention of immediately emancipating the Cuban slaves, but only of hastening their emancipation, I have to instruct you to express to the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs the hope of Her Majesty's Government that this statement by the President is not meant to indicate any intention on the part of the Spanish Government to depart from the line of policy announced by previous Spanish Ministries, which pledged them to deal with the question of slavery in Cuba, with the view to the emancipation of the slaves so soon as the Civil War in that island has been brought to a close, an assurance which I need scarcely state was received with the most lively satisfaction in this country.

I am, &c.  
(Signed) SALISBURY.

## No. 9.

*Mr. Wyndham to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 17.)*

My Lord, *Madrid, July 14, 1879.*  
THE affairs of Cuba have lately been under discussion in the House of Deputies.

Señor Martos, one of the prominent members and most eloquent orators of one of the sections of the Opposition, has attacked the Government upon its policy in that island, calling for a more liberal form of Government and for the abolition of slavery. M. Labra, a Deputy for Cuba, also spoke in the same sense. The Minister of the Colonies replied, as did also Señor Martínez Campos, the President of the Council, in a speech in which he promised to submit a project of reforms for the Island of Cuba to the Cortes in the next Session.

I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship an abstract drawn up by Mr. M'Pherson of the most important parts of the speeches made within the last few days in the House of Deputies upon this question, together with a copy and translation of the capitulation of Zanjón, which is alluded to by Señor Martos and by Señor Labra in their speeches. The third Article of the capitulation, your Lordship will observe, accords freedom to slaves and Asiatics (coolies) in the ranks of the insurgents.

I have &c.  
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

## Inclosure 1 in No. 9.

*Abstract of a Discussion in the Cortes, on the 10th and 12th July, 1879, on Cuban Affairs.*

SEÑOR MARTOS of the Opposition said :—

“If it is true that Señor Martínez Campos agreed at Zanjón to the freedom of the blacks who had revolted, what can we say, and, more especially, what can Señor Martínez Campos say, to the blacks who have been the loyal subjects of Spain throughout? To reasons based on humanity and policy others founded on justice must now be added. Loyal blacks cannot remain in slavery when those who revolted have obtained their



freedom. The Moret Law establishes that these matters be discussed on the arrival of members from Cuba; and as they are now here, we should at once do so. We cannot, certainly, declare the immediate abolition of slavery at once, as questions of a political, public, and social character must be deeply considered, and we must look to the interests and to the security of the whites at the same time that we show our sympathy towards the blacks. These matters must, however, be discussed at once."

Señor Eldnayan, the Minister of the Colonies, said that in the Treaty of Zanjón there was nothing contrary to the honour of Spain, and that the concessions therein granted were in conformity to promises previously made to the insurgents by their Ministries.

Señor Labra, a Member for Cuba, said that the situation of Cuba is so delicate that it is best to discuss matters connected with it in such a way as to obtain practical results. That the Liberal party of Cuba required the maintenance of the 21st Article of the Law of 1870, and the 89th Article of the Constitution; they did not want equal rights but special laws, no export duties, free trade, and, above all, the fulfilment of the Treaty of Zanjón.

The President of the Council, Señor Martínez Campos, replied that he was anxious to bring these matters before the House immediately, but that they must be duly considered.

It would be well to name a special Commission, in order to obtain the necessary information required by the Minister of the Colonies and by himself; but anyhow these matters will be brought before the House next Session, when all the Members from Cuba will be in the Peninsula, and then both the political and the social question will be arranged with due regard to the interests of the Peninsula, and of her Colony.

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Inclosure 2 in No. 9.

*Extract from the "Imparcial" of July 14, 1879.*

(Translation.)

*Capitulation of Zanjón.—General Order of the Division of Sancti-Spiritus,  
February 10, 1878.*

HIS Excellency the General-in-chief wires me from Zanjón what follows:—

"7 P.M.—I have agreed with the central 'Junta' of Camaguey to grant peace under the following conditions:—

"Article 1. Cuba to enjoy the same political, organic, and administrative conditions as Puerto Rico.

"Art. 2. Oblivion of all political offences committed since 1868 till now, and liberty to all persons so accused or who may be fulfilling their sentences in or out of the island. General amnesty to the deserters from the Spanish army irrespective of their nationality, comprising all who may directly or indirectly have taken any part in the insurrection.

"Art. 3. Liberty to the slaves and Asiatic coolies at present serving in the ranks of the insurgents.

"Art. 4. No person who, by virtue of this capitulation, recognizes the Spanish Government and remains subject to it will be compelled to serve in the army till peace be established in all the island.

"Art. 5. Any person who may wish to leave the island can do so, and the Spanish Government will accord them the means of leaving without going into any town should they so wish it.

"Art 6. The capitulation of the different bodies of troops will be effected away from the towns, where the arms and other effects will be previously deposited.

"Art. 7. The General-in-chief of the Spanish army will arrange for the free communication of the different Departments by land and water, in order to facilitate the mutual understanding of same.

"Art. 8. The agreement with the Central Committee will be considered as general, and without particular restrictions, by all the Departments of the island that may accept these proposals."

The General in Command,  
(Signed) ALEJANDRO RODRIGUEZ ARIAS.

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## No. 10.

*Mr. Wyndham to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 21.)*

(Extract.)

*Madrid, July 16, 1879.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that at an interview which I had to-day with the Minister of State, his Excellency adverted to what had passed lately in the Chamber of Deputies with regard to Cuba. He said the Government were going to deal with the question of slavery in that island, and that whereas the Moret Law had provided for the gradual extinction of slavery in Puerto Rico, slavery in Cuba would be abolished more rapidly than there, by the measures which would be proposed now, that the insurrection was at an end, for, he said, that so long as the insurrection lasted it was impossible for Spain to make any concessions to the Cubans. He added that it was a matter which must be approached with great caution, due regard being had for the interests of all classes and colours.

I told his Excellency that I had duly reported to your Lordship what had lately taken place in the Cortes on this subject, and that I was sure your Lordship would learn it with the greatest satisfaction.

## No. 11.

*Mr. Wyndham to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 28.)*

My Lord,

*Madrid, July 24, 1879.*

IT has been necessary to present a special law to the Senate in order to admit to that Assembly Senators from the Island of Cuba, as it was found that no one in that island possessed the necessary qualifications which are requisite in Spain for the admittance of members to that body. The law in question has now been passed, and yesterday nine Senators entered the Senate, as representatives of Cuba.

Señor Güell y Rente, who represents the University of the Havana, after taking his seat, rose and expressed his thanks to the Government and the Minister of the Colonies for having passed the law in question, and, after praising General Martinez Campos as the pacificator of Cuba, he said:—

“I hope, most illustrious Senators, to have the honour of voting with you laws to draw closer the relations which unite Cuba to Spain. I hope to vote with you laws which shall immediately put an end to slavery, in a wise and prudent manner; to slavery, the maintenance of which in these times is a mark of infamy. I hope to vote with you political, economical, and administrative measures which shall dispel the dark clouds which threaten the future of Cuba.”

The Minister of Finance, who was the only Minister present, stated, in reply, that the law which had been passed by the Legislative Bodies to facilitate the admission to them of Senators for Cuba was a certain proof of the ardent wish of the Government and of the Cortes to receive Cuba as a sister, and to carry into effect the great reforms which are necessary with regard to slavery, and to economical and social questions. This statement (“demonstracion”) ought, he said, to make all the inhabitants of Cuba and her representatives confident that with prudence and with time, and without precipitating matters, we will endeavour, aided by that concord and sisterly feeling which should exist [between Cuba and Spain] to reform completely the Island of Cuba, one of the grandest provinces of Spain.”

In view of the social and political reforms which the Spanish Government have undertaken to present to the Cortes at their next session, and which I reported to your Lordship in my despatch of the 14th instant, I have thought it desirable not to speak to the Minister of State in the sense of your Lordship’s despatch of the 14th instant, and I trust that my not having done so will, under existing circumstances, meet with your Lordship’s approval.

I have, &c.  
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 12.

*The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Wyndham.*

Sir,

*Foreign Office, August 5, 1879.*

I HAVE received your despatch of the 24th ultimo, and I approve the course which, for the reasons stated therein, you adopted in not speaking to the Spanish Minister of State on the subject of slavery in Cuba, in the sense of my despatch of the 14th ultimo.

I am, &amp;c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.



CORRESPONDENCE respecting Slavery in Cuba

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*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Com-  
mand of Her Majesty. 1879*

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