

A
History of Slavery in Cuba
1511 to 1868

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PREFACE

THIS exposition is the first part of my work in the history of slavery in Cuba. I have endeavoured here to point out salient features of the Spanish policy governing the slave trade in Cuba. My aim has been to show the causes of the trade in Cuba, its effects on Cuba, Spain, and, so far as they are closely related to the island, on the world; I have then gone into considerable detail in order to show the nature of the trade and the times. In doing this I have chosen to make large use of extracts for the purpose of bringing the reader as close as possible to the work of the writers themselves. Furthermore, political, social, and economic situations bearing on or influenced by the trade have been explained as fully as space would allow. Many things will, I feel sure, remain obscure or imperfectly treated; especially so, because I have not been able to treat of the domestic slave régime, with which I hope to supplement the contents of this book.

So far as I am aware, this is the first detailed work, the result of extended research, which has yet been published on the Island of Cuba in this country, and I hope that it may aid in solving some of the problems connected with that island.

I have selected my authorities on their merits as accurate writers. A large part of my material is in the Spanish language, and the great mass of it is from the reports of men on the ground and of those who were closely identified with the affairs of the island. In cases of wide generalisation or of a purely subsidiary nature only have I relied upon secondary writers. I have been able to use many libraries in the United States, the Biblioteca Nacional at Habana, the British Museum at London, the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, the Biblioteca Nacional at Madrid, and the Archivos de Indias at Sevilla.

I wish to thank many of my friends for the encouragement that they have given me during the progress of this work; particularly Mr. Sanford B. Martin, A.B., LL.B., M.L., who read the manuscript and made many welcome suggestions.

H. H. S. A.

WEST HAVEN, CONN.,
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Slavery in Cuba

CHAPTER I

THE OLD COLONIAL SYSTEM

1511-1700

The Replacement of the Indians — The Decadence of Industry in the Island.

THE colonial system pursued by Spain in America was modelled on that of Portugal; both nations were driven into colonial enterprises by the desire for trade, and they carried the active commercial spirit of the middle ages into the modern era. As trading nations, Portugal was early eclipsed and Spain at last ruined by a too "tenacious resistance to the introduction of new ideas."¹ But however true this conventional statement of the reason for failures made by Spain may be in general, a perusal of this book will show for one thing that in regard to Cuba

¹ Colmeiro, *Historia de la economia politica*, vol. ii., p. 277.

and the slave trade, at least, Spain developed a policy which kept well abreast of the times, as consistently as local and international conditions would allow. The success of Cuba rivals that of Haiti and the Southern states and surpasses that of Jamaica. The policy of the United States and Russia, to-day, in introducing numbers of new people into undeveloped lands parallels that of Spain; the protective tariffs bring the two systems yet closer. During the period from 1550 to 1700, the island lay dormant, waiting for the time when it could respond to the world's demands for its products. The policy first followed by Spain in America differed from that inaugurated in the eighteenth century; her design was to exploit the Indies on the basis of their native populations. This *encomienda* system gave way to laws protecting the Indians in the labour which was forced upon them by the conditions of their new surroundings. It required a great effort to gain admission for the first negroes who were to do the work the Indians could not do, and still more opposition was arrayed against plans for European colonisation.¹

The Spanish colonists discovered for themselves the utility of accessions of labourers, and they were the ones who forced the Spanish policy into a new channel. The rulers of Spain were intending one thing, the colonists desired other

¹ Cf. Helps, *Life of Las Casas*, pp. 63-91. Cf. Oppenheim's introduction to Helps, *Spanish Conquest*, pp. vii.-xx.

things.¹ It took much effort to make the government abandon its earlier projects, but when the change was once made development was very rapid. One reason for the tardiness of the administrators is found in their imperfect knowledge of American conditions. They had in mind the example of Portugal which established trading-factories in the highly civilised East, and they imagined the same could be done in the Indies. Spain was the pioneer in the establishment of Western civilisation and commerce in America.

America was a land which could be made to supply products wanted by Europe and not produced there; such as the precious metals, sugar, indigo, dyewoods, hides, tobacco, skins, sarsaparilla, cinnamon, cacao, flax, hemp, vicuña wool, cochineal, vanilla, cinchona bark, balsam, gum, fibre, timber, precious stones, pearls, and drugs.² Spain bound the continent and islands into a series of kingdoms whose crowns rested upon the head of the king of Spain, and the mother country became the carrier and distributor of the colonial products. Her possessions were not regarded as lands to be peopled by Europeans, but as co-ordinate kingdoms to be administered for their own good, but, primarily, for the good of the whole realm. Their resources were to be developed as conditions demanded, but in the mean-

¹ Cf. Helps, *Spanish Conquest*, vol. iv., p. 260.

² Robertson, *History of America*, book viii.; Helmolt, *History of the World*, vol. i., p. 410 *et seq*; Colmeiro, *Historia de la economía política* vol. ii., p. 400.

while a province should be treated according to its worth. An interesting instance of this principle will be found in the case of Cuba in the following pages: the island has a succession of industries which were from time to time its main dependence; namely, gold, hides, tobacco, coffee, and sugar.

The strong control which Spain exercised for centuries over the trade of her colonies has been spoken of often as a monopoly. To the Spanish rulers the problem presented was one of supplying a market from a source of supply which lay across the ocean. The monopoly, if there were one, lay in America, which alone produced the commodities desired by Europe; and to America the profits of this end of the transaction were to redound. On the other hand, the kings or emperors, as Charles V. and Philip II., looked on the market also as their own; and, considering the vast extent of the Habsburg possessions, it was not too much to say that Spain was Europe. Spain had the greatest merchant marine in Europe; in fact, outside of Portugal, she was the only nation that could be said to have a merchant marine. Having the control of the source of supply and the market, and with the carrying trade in her hands, Spain's administrators organised commerce in a way to suit the conditions, just as administrators at the present day organise industries when in a similar situation. It was not until a later day when the development of France,

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Holland, and England brought them into collision with Spain that the term "monopoly" could be applied. The organisation which Spain instituted was a natural one in view of the fact that she was the producer, carrier, distributor, and, in large measure, purchaser of these colonial commodities.

The early conquistadores paid slight attention to agriculture¹; and after the discovery of Mexico and Peru this industry was still forced to occupy a position of secondary importance,² because gold and silver were the articles most demanded by Europe. Yet Spanish policy did not neglect agriculture in America by any means³; the attention of Spain's administrators was naturally "concentrated on those regions whose agricultural development promised immediate advantage from a European point of view."⁴ In some provinces, even, agriculture held the first position, *e. g.*, in Guayaquil, Guatemala, and Venezuela. In the islands the profitableness of gold mining soon came to an end, and agriculture and herding took its place. In this way Española was the chief source of the sugar supply for a considerable time. The process of substitution in Cuba was a slower one, owing to the competition of Española and other places in the production of sugar, and here other industries were fostered only to be displaced

¹ Roscher, *Spanish Colonial System*, p. 2 *et seq.*

² Beer, *Allgemeine Geschichte des Welthandels*, vol. ii., pp. 156-7.

³ Bourne, *Spain in America*, p. 219.

⁴ Helmolt, *History of the World*, vol. i., p. 397.

by its most favoured products, tobacco and sugar.

Diego Velásquez conquered the island of Cuba in 1511-12. It is probable that negro slaves were brought to Cuba in his expedition, or at least shortly after this time.¹ It was customary for expeditions of this kind to carry a few negro slaves among their members. Many settlers were coming to Cuba from the Isla Española which had a good supply of negro slaves whom they very likely carried with them. The Isla Española was comparatively a well-settled colony at this time and was the base from which Velásquez's and other expeditions started. The early importations of negroes were purely haphazard. Practically only Spanish born negroes could go to America, and therefore represented skill of a higher degree than that furnished by the Indian labour.²

Gold seeking and mining were the main employments of the settlers in Cuba who made the Indians do the work, and when they decreased largely in numbers some means of keeping up the supply of labour had to be found. The few white emigrants would not engage in manual labour. When the colonists discovered that the negro became very easily acclimated it seemed easy and desirable

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 73.

² In 1515, the *oficiales reales* of Santiago asked the king to send them artisans, carts, oxen, and twelve negroes from Española to be employed in building the fortifications of the city. Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 83.

to supplement the Indian by African labour.¹ The government did not receive with favour the requests of the colonists to allow the import of negroes. It was induced by the fervid and persistent appeals of Bartolomé de Las Casas, "the apostle of the Indies," to order a strict inquiry into the condition of the Indians, which he represented as deplorable. He asked, on request of the colonists, that each one be allowed to bring into the West Indies about a dozen negroes from Spain, who, they said, would free the Indians from much of their hard labour.² After consultation with the Casa de Contratación, the directive body for the affairs of the Indies, it was decided that 4000 negro slaves were needed for Española, Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico.³

Consequently, in 1517, the king granted the first *asiento*, or contract, giving the right to introduce the above number of negroes from Africa. The sale of the privilege later brought a plea from Las Casas that the price of slaves would be thereby raised too high for poor colonists and the purpose of the *asiento* vitiated.⁴ Three hundred were

¹ The fact that the labour of one negro was considered to be worth that of four Indians gave a reasonable basis to the demand. Herrera, *Historia general*, Dec. I., lib. ix., cap. 5; Dec. II., lib. ii., cap. 8.

² Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, lib. iii., cap. 102. Cf. Helmolt, *History of the World*, vol. i., p. 395.

³ *Ibid.* Las Casas was not the first to suggest the import of negroes into the Indies; that was done by the Order of Predicadores in 1511, Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 68. Cf. Helps, *Spanish Conquest in America*, vol. ii., pp. 10-13.

⁴ *Historia de las Indias*, lib. iii., cap. 102.

allotted to Cuba,¹ but the number actually carried there, if any, was small, because Cuba was very poor, the price was high, and the *asiento* short-lived. In spite of the high cost of special licenses to import slaves, a few were brought in at this time by that method.²

A small amount of smuggling took place and measures were taken to stop it,³ but the number of slaves brought in by this method was very small. A new *asiento*, in 1528, stipulating for the sale of negroes at a maximum price of forty-five pesos brought no relief. The slaves were carried to Española and other places⁴ because Cuba did not offer an attractive market; finally, the king, to satisfy the importunity of the colonists, set aside the revenues of the island for one year for the purpose of buying negroes, who were to be distributed to settlers giving security satisfactory to the officials for payment in two years. This order filled the island with joy, and the *oficiales reales* wrote saying that new and rich mines had been discovered which would assure a good revenue from the use of the negroes: "We are certain that God has given the island such riches because Your Majesty has made two

¹ Herrera, *Historia general*, Dec. III., lib. v., cap. 8.

² Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. III.

In 1527, the king "in order to lessen the labour of the Indians, ordered that 1000 negro slaves might be taken to Cuba." Herrera, *Historia general*, Dec. IV., lib. ii., cap. 5.

³ *Colección de documentos inéditos de ultramar*, 2 ser., vol. vi., p. 16; vol. ix., p. 285.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. iv., pp. 165 ff.

bountiful gifts to the island: one in sending it good justice, and the other in having the goodness to make the loan for the negroes." ¹

This burst of pious delight was premature. On July 7, 1532, the oficiales reales announced to the king that they had collected the 7000 pesos for the promised seven hundred negro slaves; but they wished to send the money to Lisbon or Seville where slaves could be had at ten pesos a head instead of at forty pesos, which was the price delivered by contract in the islands.² The king gave them permission to send the money, although the plan to purchase seven hundred negroes in Portugal for 7000 pesos made no provision for transportation; perhaps the king noticed this discrepancy, for the negroes never reached Cuba. Lacking any kind of skilled labor, faced with a rapidly decreasing population, the situation of the island was pitiful. In 1534, the governor said to the king, "the mines languish, costs are heavy, and taxes ought to be reduced in order to make amends to the plaintful citizens who sent to His Majesty the 7000 pesos, which they had destined to the purchase of negroes under the loan of 1531." ³

With the failure of gold attempts were made

¹ *Colección de documentos inéditos de ultramar*, 2 ser., vol. iv., p. 264.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 435. In 1527, Parada says twenty ducats in Portugal and sixty-five ducats in the Indies. The price had fallen.

³ Carta de gobernador Manuel de Rojas y oficiales à S. M. Santiago, 10 Nov., 1534. *Colección de documentos de ultramar*, 2 ser., vol. i., p. 353.

to establish new industries. Inquiries had been made in the Indies of the number of men required for sugar mills or *ingenios*,¹ and samples of different varieties of wheat had been sent over for trial; conditions were unfavourable, however, and matters proceeded slowly. In 1534, Hernando de Castro asked a license to ship log fustic and offered to establish an ingenio at Santiago which would be the first in the island, and that the privileges enjoyed in Española be extended to the mills of Cuba. He wished to be allowed to introduce fifty negroes before undertaking this.² The next year the same offer to build a mill was made by the governor of Santiago³; but no success in these undertakings appears to have been attained until 1547, when a *trapiche* was built at Santiago with the aid of sugar masters brought from Española. The governor thought that if this attempt succeeded other mills would be built.⁴ In the meanwhile petitioners were asking to be allowed to introduce slaves without paying the duties: coupled with complaints that Cuba had to pay a tax of one fifth on the gold mined, while other places paid one tenth; that the slaves were running away into the woods and could not be recovered without aid from Spain; that the fort was not

¹ *Colección de documentos inéditos de ultramar*, 2 ser., vol. i., pp. 432 ff. The term ingenio is applied in Cuba to the sugar plantation with all its appurtenances.

² *Ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 358.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 396.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 301; Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 195.

finished; and that they ought to be allowed to import Indian slaves. The *procuradores*¹ of the city of Santiago and the *villas* of Puerto Príncipe and Sancti Spiritus, say in 1542, "Here the chief urgency is negroes. We pray license for each citizen to bring four negroes and negresses free of all duty,"² and the *cabildo* of Bayamo tells the bishop that the island is ruined by lack of Indians and negroes.

The population of the island in 1532 was reported as consisting of about five thousand Indians and almost five hundred negroes, the number of Spaniards not being ascertained³; the latter could not have exceeded two hundred and fifty or three hundred, according to the statement of the *oficiales reales*.⁴

The island was in a wretched condition, bordering on abandonment.⁵ There were not enough

¹ The *procurador* was "the person elected for the purpose of promoting the interests of the people in the *Ayuntamiento* or council, to defend their rights and protest against any wrongs they might suffer. He had a seat in the *Ayuntamiento*." Escriche, *Diccionario razonado*, vol. iv., p. 730.

² *Colección de documentos inéditos de ultramar*, 2 ser., vol. vi., p. 173.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 252. A letter of the *Cabildo* of Santiago, printed by Saco, gives the number of negroes and negresses, as "almost one thousand." *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 161.

⁴ In 1538, there were six towns of Christians in Cuba; Santiago, with eighty spacious and well-conditioned houses; Habana, with seventy to eighty dwellings, Baracoa, Puerto Príncipe, Sancti Spiritus, and Bayamo with thirty to forty householders, each. Bourne, *De Soto*, vol. i., pp. 12-15.

⁵ Letter of Bishop Sarmiento, 1556. Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 211.

hands to work the plantations and there was no money to purchase them; finally, the council of Habana was forced to ask the government to send it thirty negroes for use in building fortifications.¹

One reason for the urgent call for negroes was the laws forbidding the employment of Indians in the mines and other works. The first of these orders, in 1526, occasioned much complaint, and they account in part for the many petitions for negro slaves²; in 1543, the application of the New Laws made the utter ruin of the island certain in the eyes of the colonists, because they depended upon this labour to work the mines and stock farms.³ This second application of the laws in favour of the Indians the government was able to carry out, and it created another crisis in the island and renewed calls for negro labour.⁴

Left to itself except for the occasional visits of the fleets at the fine harbour of the Habana, Cuba underwent a slow process of development. The chief industry was stock-raising which was followed in all parts of the island; the meat afforded a supply for the shipping and the hides were exported. Honey and wax soon became

¹ *Colección de documentos inéditos de ultramar*, 2 ser., vol. vi., p. 317 *et seq.*; Saco, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

² *Colección de documentos inéditos de ultramar*, vol. i., p. 339; p. 348.

³ *Ibid.*, vi., p. 189; p. 182, Carta del Obispo Sarmiento, 1543; consulta del Consejo contra la libertad de los Indios, 1543, *ibid.*, p. 182.

⁴ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 200; *Colección de documentos inéditos de ultramar*, 2 ser., vol. vi., p. 317.

important. The sugar industry grew slowly and chiefly in the favourable region of Habana, three ingenios being established in its vicinity in 1576. These mills were simple, crude constructions of rollers for crushing the cane moved by cattle or water power. The product obtained by simple boiling in open pans was of a very inferior quality, and was consumed in the island. The ingenios required from eighty to one hundred negroes each.¹

The Ayuntamiento of Habana petitioned the king in 1594 to extend to Cuba the special privileges enjoyed by the *fincas*, or farms, of Española; they were granted the next year consisting mainly in an exemption from execution for debt of the land of the ingenios, their slaves, animals, and machinery.² This law was intended to stimulate the sugar industry, and it shows that the energies of the islanders were being directed to this great industry at least in Habana and that the government wished to foster it. The *asiento* of 1586 procured few slaves for Cuba as it provided for 208 to be sold where the companies could get the best price. The *asiento* of 1575 provided for the introduction into the Indies of 38,250 negroes in nine years, to be sold at the best price procurable. A *cedula* of 1556 had fixed the price of slaves for the islands at not over one hundred ducats, or seventy pesos³; in Tierra Firme the price was

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 128.

² *Ibid.*, p. 245.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

110 ducats, and in New Spain 120. At this rate the *asientistas* would not seek a market in Cuba, but the special provision to allow them to sell at the best prices obtainable would indicate that even higher prices than those allowed by the cedula were expected. The government exacted a tax of thirty ducats on each head introduced which, added to the heavy bonus paid for the contract, raised the price very greatly. Such slaves as were obtained were devoted to sugar, now becoming a flourishing industry. A new *asiento* in 1601 provided for the introduction of six hundred a year into Española, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. Married negroes could not be carried from Spain except in company with their wives and children. On the death of the *asientista* before the expiration of this *asiento*, a new one was granted in 1605; the only change was the substitution of the port of Santiago for that of Habana as the place of entry.¹ Cuba did not get many slaves from these contracts; in 1604, Habana received 144 negroes from Cartagena for work on the fortifications. One third of the number were to be women. The officials found that they had more slaves than they required at that time, so they sold twenty of the negroes and sent the money thus received to Cartagena to buy twenty more where good negroes were to be purchased at convenient prices.² Thus

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 249.

² *Ibid.*, vol., i., p. 248.

Cuba did not offer a good market to the *asientistas*, probably because the demand then was not large enough to pay for sending cargoes there. By the *asiento* of 1615 Cuba was passed by entirely, Cartagena and Vera Cruz were the only ports *habilitado*, or qualified, for the introduction of slaves into the Indies; 3600 negroes per annum for eight years were called for.

In 1617, Bayamo had eleven trapiches turned by horses and two citizens rich enough to own two each; Santiago boasted twenty-six, five of which belonged to the captain, Francisco de Moya, and five citizens owned two each; these thirty-seven mills produced twenty-eight thousand arrobas of sugar, which was sent to Tierra Firme and to Spain. The governor of Santiago at this time prayed that the slave ships on the way to Cartagena and New Spain, instead of stopping at Jamaica to procure fresh supplies should be sent to Santiago for the purpose, where they could be had cheaper and paid for by exchanging slaves.¹ There were proprietors in the government of Santiago at this time who owned from two thousand to six thousand head of cattle, and twenty thousand hides were exported annually from the *embarcadero* of the Rio Cauto, besides tallow and horses. But from the abundance of these herds the money value was small. There were also mines of gold, copper, and iron, and a con-

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 257.

siderable contraband trade with the English and Dutch. Other exports were cocoa, indigo, and ginger. The trade of this region received a disastrous check by the formation of a bar at the mouth of the Rio Cauto which closed it to vessels of the larger classes. In the year 1617, thirty-three poor families left this region and went to Habana, followed in later years by others. Trade and agriculture sank into decadence, and were only partially revived by the *habilitación* of the port of Manzanillo at a later date.¹

The development of Habana went on rapidly, especially along the lines of sugar manufacture and the culture of tobacco; there had never been any mining in this region, neither was it adapted to herding. Incomplete figures give the population of Cuba in 1620, as 6974, of which Habana had 4082.²

The asientos of the following fifty years make no provision for Cuba, Cartagena, Puerto Bello, and Vera Cruz being the only ports *habilitados*; indeed, the trade shows a distinct tendency to

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 259.

² Report of Bishop Almendares; Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 261.

It seems reasonable to place the total population at this time at not over 10,000, including 500 slaves.

Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, p. 82, estimates the population in 1610, as not over 20,000 of all classes, but his figures are at least double those of Bishop Almendares. Turnbull, *Cuba and the Slave Trade*, p. 234, estimates it in 1580 at "nearly 16,000," 10,000 being in Habana and vicinity. Ogilby, *America*, p. 335, says that in 1627 the island had not over 60,000, "according to the Spaniard's relation to the admiral, Henry Jacobson Lucifer, when he was before Habana." It is customary to overstate the population of Cuba.

diminish, for between 1639 and 1662 there was no specific contract, all importation being under the care of the Casa de Contratación. At this time the trade fell under the ban of the church; for, in 1639, Urban VIII. issued a bull denouncing the trade and forbidding Catholics taking part in it.¹ It had already been denounced by the Jesuits. If slaves were wanted, the islanders must of need go to Spain or the ports of the continent, or resort to smuggling. In 1630, a ship bound for Vera Cruz with five hundred slaves put into Batabanó to escape a corsair; instead of proceeding she remained and sold out her cargo to the *hacendados*, or landed proprietors, of the island. This was illegal and gave rise to an accusation against the governor.² The contraband seems to have been the only resource of the island to procure slaves; the sugar industry whose complicated processes would create a far larger demand for hands than the simple pursuits of stock-raising and tobacco culture had not yet grown to a point warranting the payment of the prices demanded by the companies, but in order to grow at all it had to have slaves. At least so thought the *hacendados*, and the English, Dutch, and French being actively engaged in the contraband could easily supply the slaves wanted. The *Real Órden* of 28th June, 1683, in view of the report that there was considerable smuggling of slaves into Habana

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 275.

² *Ibid.*, p. 273.

and Cuba ordered the governors to strictly enforce the penalties against it and stop it.¹

Another addition to both the white and slave population came from Jamaica, when upon the taking of the island by the English in 1655, a large number of Spaniards passed into Cuba, Honduras, and Venezuela with their slaves.² The government received a supply from the asiento of 1662 for use in the shipyard at Habana which now begins to become of great importance. Cuba again appears in the asiento of 1674, which assigned seven hundred *piezas de Indias* to Habana, Vera Cruz, Campêche, and Honduras, and to Puerto Rico, forty, per annum for five years, paying 112½ pesos per head tax. The company failed at the outset as might have been expected from the size of the tax. The asiento of 1676 lowered the tax to 37½ pesos per head; the asientos of 1682, 1692, and 1696 provided for Cuba but were interrupted by the wars in Europe and produced little. A petition from Vera Cruz to the Council of the Indies in 1682 asked that foreigners be admitted to the asientos, but the project was not adopted.

The facts which have been brought out in this chapter show that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Spain adhered to her policy of rigidly enforced navigation laws, and her colonies had to depend almost entirely upon

¹ MS. Archivo general de Indias, Estante 153, Cajón 4, Legajo 12, tomo iv., p. 21.

² Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 43.

their own resources for development. We have seen that Cuba did not fail to protest against the mediæval restrictions from which she was suffering. Particularly, the need of labourers for developing the plantation system was repeatedly brought to the attention of the government. Spain did not merely decline to afford relief, but she even shut off completely, in response to the will of the church, the uncertain supply of slaves which had occasionally reached the island. As a result, Cuba sank into the position of a nearly forgotten island. Furthermore, the condition of Cuba was made more hopeless by giving the right to import slaves to *asiento* companies, an expensive method which placed slaves beyond the reach of poor planters. How the restrictive system was replaced by a more liberal one and a free import of slaves was obtained during the next century is for the following chapter to tell.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW COLONIAL POLICY

1701-1789

The Development of the Island—The Beginning of the New Colonial Policy.

THE Spanish imperial system was practically stagnant after the death of Charles V. The French alliance infused new life into government and colonies.¹ Capital and industrial enterprise were injected into the colonial system. In 1701, the French Guinea Company entered into an *asiento*, or contract, with the government for the introduction of negroes into the colonies, by which trade between France, Spain, and America to the amount of the sale of negroes was allowed.² The first consequence of the alliance was to open a new market for Spanish colonial products, thereby creating a stronger demand for plantation labourers in the colonies—that is, negro slaves—a demand which was supplied in turn through French shipping. The union of French and Spanish interests caused the War of the Spanish

¹ Beer, *Allgemeine Geschichte des Welthandels*, vol. ii., p. 158 ff.

² Calvo, *Recueil des Traités*, vol. ii., p. 65.

Succession which prevented the advantages expected from the *asiento* from accruing, as France and Spain were forced by Europe to turn the monopoly of the slave trade over to the English. The South Sea Company in 1713 received the right of introducing 144,000 slaves into the Spanish colonies in thirty years, on payment of a duty of 33½ pesos per head. Both *asientos* favoured the windward coast over the other Spanish dominions.¹

Thus, Spain was trying to find a way to provide a supply of labourers for her colonies, which could be done by means of the slave trade only—a course closed to her own subjects by their religion, customs, lack of capital and manufactures. It should be noted that the French at this time came to Cuba to trade for tobacco, chiefly, and gave the first great impulse to its industries. The tobacco industry afforded the means by which Cuba entered the world's markets and built up her trade on a secure foundation. Cuban tobacco was a monopoly product with a wide, growing market. During this period Habana began to have an independent desire and ability to buy slaves; letting down the bars that shut out foreign trade started an industrial development which brought prosperity to the province during two hundred years.

For Spain the results of the British *asiento* were utterly disappointing. It had been ex-

¹ Calvo, *Recueil des Traités*, vol. ii., p. 82.

pected that the sale of slaves in the colonies, by increasing the sale of agricultural products, would increase the volume of peninsular trade; this did not transpire, for the English developed an enormous smuggling trade under cover of the treaty and flooded the colonies with cheap manufactured goods. Similar illicit tactics robbed the custom-house of a great part of the duties on imported negroes. Finally, these contraband trades centred around the Cuban tobacco trade, which was a government monopoly, and seriously reduced the royal revenues. The Spanish navy began an active campaign against the smugglers which led to the war of 1740 between Spain and Great Britain. Spain abrogated the *asiento* as a forfeited contract and it was never renewed.

Thus the first two attempts of the Bourbons to develop systematically the colonies and extend the trade of Spain failed; the first on account of the jealousy of Europe which deprived her of all advantage from the French alliance, and the second because of the advantage the English were able to take of the exhausted condition of Spain after the War of the Spanish Succession. Although the English established factories at Habana and Santiago for entering and selling slaves the urgent demand for slaves in Cuba was never satisfied. The island was growing rapidly in wealth and importance, otherwise the English would not have made a formidable attempt to capture it in 1741.

Stated in another way the case was thus: in order to supply the colonies with slaves the English were allowed to introduce them, with the understanding that they should be paid for in Spanish and colonial products *via* Spain. The anticipated increase in Spanish trade and values did not come, because Spain was not only left out but lost a larger part of the trade and profit that she had at the beginning. As a matter of fact the colonies were benefited both by getting a supply of negroes and through an increased trade, yet it is equally true that the English had no interest in them beyond the goods that they were selling, and in this respect the colonies were losers by having business and social morals placed upon a degraded basis. It is well to remark here that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the price of negroes supplied by the Spanish *asientistas* was so high as to prevent anything like an adequate import, but this was the evil that the French and the English *asientos* sought to remedy.

When the English *asiento* was annulled some way of filling the void had to be found. In Cuba, the trade in tobacco, sugar, hides, *et cetera*, was placed under the control of the Real Compañía Mercantil de la Habana, which was also authorised to introduce negroes into Habana. From 1740 to 1760, this company sold 4986 negroes at an average price of 144 pesos per head, over 4000 being sold on credit, or paid for with

tobacco, then the chief commodity.¹ The purpose of the company not being slave trading it supplied slaves to those industries only which best served its objects; in 1741, therefore, an *asiento* was confirmed with D. Martin Ulibarri y Gamboa, to introduce 1100 negroes in two years, and to sell them at a price not over two hundred pesos each, paying the usual tax. Industry in general was not thriving, or the tax and price were too high, for he introduced 793 only, lacking 307 of the allowed number.² Some of the reasons for the failure of Spanish importers of slaves appear in the following extract from an interesting letter of the captain general in 1745:

Not one of the many means which the company has adopted to provide the island with the 1100 slaves which His Majesty conceded to it, in order to give it a suitable supply of labour, has been sufficient to obtain it. Every plan has been frustrated by the difficulties, hazards, and uncertainties which have obstructed the voyages of their vessels, as well as the interruption of the *asientos*. Considerable damage and losses have thus resulted to the great prejudice of the people of this jurisdiction in their husbandry, harvests, and produce, which it is not possible to repair by ordinary means on account of the restrictions of the law, which only His Majesty can dispense.³

¹Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i. p. 312.

Manufacturing of sugar had practically ceased in Cuba at this time.

²MS., Archivo general de Indias, Estante 84, Cajón 7, Legajo 21.—*Carta del gobernador Güemes*, 28 Dic., 1743.

³*Ibid.*—*Carta de Gobernador al Rey*, 12 Feb., 1745.

A great deal of illicit introduction of slaves went on between 1740 and 1750, and in July, 1747 the mercantile company had exceeded the allowed importation by 413 negroes but they were permitted to pass them on payment of the duties because of the great demand for them. In October of the same year a cargo of 497 from Jamaica was admitted on the same conditions.¹ Such small and uncertain relief could do little more than provide for the increased crops of tobacco; the sugar planters were threatened with ruin on account of the lack of slaves.²

Planters and officials alike saw no other way of supplying the deficiency of labourers than by the slave trade and they urged the king to permit more open importation. They expected that this would lower the price of slaves which was almost prohibitive while the import privilege remained a monopoly of the trading company. Foreigners were excluded from the trade by law thus adding to the prices of slaves because Spanish ships always carried larger crews. Other causes added to the expenses of Spanish traders, for example: they had to arm their vessels heavily for protection, because there were no Spanish frigates on the African station; they had no slave trading establishments on the coast of Africa, and they experienced long delays and heavy risks

¹ MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 21.—*Carta de los oficiales reales*, 20 July, 1747; *idem*, 25 Oct., 1747.

² *Ibid.*, 15 Feb., 1751.

because they had to send their ships to Europe to procure the goods needed in the exchanges on the coast of Africa. The company could bring slaves more cheaply from the near at hand foreign colonies but this was impossible owing to the prohibition of intercolonial trade.

A notable peculiarity of the Spanish slave régime made the islanders unusually dependent on the trade for their working force of slaves: the laws of Church and State, which were well supported by public sentiment, required that the ties of civilised family life should be strictly regarded, and this was something that the African could not and would not do. In consequence planters composed the stocks of their estates almost entirely of males.¹

The tobacco *vegas*, or farms, were very prosperous in this period, having procured slaves from the mercantile company in exchange for their produce. The company carried the tobacco to Spain, exchanged it there, and brought cargoes

¹ "I can assure Your Excellency that this island needs from six to eight hundred negroes annually, because the custom here, unlike that of the foreign colonies of America, is not to employ both sexes in the haciendas in order to repair by procreation the losses which occur. The annual loss by death has been eight or ten, at least, out of eighty. And the owner must purchase in order to replace them in proportion, as they may die in the *vegas de tabaco*, in the *estancias*, and in the other country estates, and unless cargoes of slaves come to the island, its produce must diminish as a necessary consequence."—*Carta del gobernador Cagigal al Rey*. Habana, 24 Dic., 1752. MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 22.

of merchandise needed in the slave trade in Africa whence their ships returned with slaves. The production of tobacco was too limited, however, to provide enough slaves for all the growing industries of the island, from whence arose an appeal for the grant of a privilege to the company to import negroes from the various American colonies, to be paid for in the produce of the island exclusive of tobacco. A reduction of the duty from fifty to twenty pesos was prayed for also.

The king was still unwilling to deviate from the closed trade principles governing Spanish commerce, but in 1753, in response to an urgent appeal from the governor of Cuba he allowed five hundred slaves to be brought from Africa direct for the relief of the planters. This was a small concession when the sugar planters had called for two thousand.

Two points appear clearly on the commercial horizon, namely: that the supply of negro slaves was curtailed by the joint action of the laws and the monopoly enjoyed by the mercantile company, and that the price of slaves was thereby maintained at too high a level. In 1754, the cost of landing slaves at Habana was certainly less than 150 pesos per head, including the tax of fifty pesos; in that year the company was selling them at 220 to 300 pesos according to age and quality.¹

¹ MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 22. In 1785, the asiento company passed their slaves through the custom-

A good demand existed for slaves at a price not far from 150 pesos,¹ which was as much as the haciendas unconnected with the monopoly company could afford to pay. In 1757 and in 1758, the government relieved the situation slightly by giving special permission for the entry of 350 negroes from the French and British islands on the payment of the duties.

In extenuation of the home government it must be borne in mind that the case for a more open slave trade was not a clear one in the minds of all the colonists. Men feared that a franchise granted to a new company would result in withdrawing the small amount of money then in circulation, and, furthermore, it was believed that one company, having a special concession, would guarantee a fulfilment of the contract better than two companies who would very likely become enemies of each other. The first objection was due to the common experience of new colonies whose people have small requirements for cash and the tendency for it to leave the country being in this case accelerated by the closed trade system which left the traders little choice in exchange between cash and long and perhaps doubtful credit. One of the advantages which the island lacked at this period, particularly, was extensions of time payments which would enable

house valued at 155 pesos with the tax paid, but the tax was increased shortly making them worth 185 pesos; Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 284.

¹ MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 22.

planters to make extensive developments and pay for them later when production and sales had increased. Spain appears to have been unable to furnish long credits at this time, probably because it had ceased to be a trading nation. In regard to the latter objection, the islanders had had such experiences with *asiento* companies as to justify in a measure their scepticism. It required years of patience and experiment to disentangle the complexities of the situation; more will be said of this later on.¹

From 1740 to 1760, when Cuba was in the hands of the Real Compañía Mercantil de la Habana, the population, industry, and trade of the island increased rapidly. Eighty new and renovated ingenios besides ranches and tobacco vegas were added to the wealth of the island. During the twenty years, 1714 to 1734, the royal duties in Cuba amounted to 221,910 pesos; in the same length of time, 1740-60, they reached a total of 772,257 pesos, exclusive of taxes paid on imported

¹ The changes in the Spanish colonial system made during the eighteenth century were much wider in scope than those mentioned in this text, for example: in 1718, the Casa de Contratación was removed from Sevilla to Cadiz for the purpose of facilitating trade with America; in 1728, the Guipúzcoa Company received the privilege of trading between the Carácas and San Sebastián; trading privileges were widely extended in 1765 and 1782. Moses, *Establishment of Spanish Rule*, p. 22 et seq. Since the time of Charles II. means for bettering the conditions of Spanish trade had been under consideration, *Mémoires et Considérations sur le Commerce et les finances d'Espagne*, vol. i., pp. 9-120; in direct line with them were the sweeping changes in the system made by Charles III. in the cedulas of 1782 and 1786, continued by Charles IV. in 1803.

negroes amounting to 150,000 pesos. The duties paid in Spain on the cargoes of the company amounted to 91,828 pesos.

The great progress in trade, 1740 to 1760, was made while the island was suffering from an inadequate labour supply; so far the company had been able to prevent inroads on its monopoly aided by the exclusive trade policy of the metropolis.

In 1760, a company headed by José Villanueva Pico proposed in return for being allowed to introduce into Cuba one thousand negroes, or more if required, per year for ten years, to carry free of charge all the tobacco of the Real Factoría from Habana to Spain, Vera Cruz, or Tierra Firme, as required, all the cannon and munition of war from Spain intended for the fortifications of Habana, and to bear one half of the expenses of providing and maintaining a coast-guard to prevent illicit introductions. This *asiento* is interesting on account of the objection made to it by the members of the Real Compañía at their meeting in Madrid. They represented that it would be very dangerous to introduce ten thousand negroes in the short space of ten years, claiming that this excessive number would be more harmful to Cuba than a continued scarcity, which would merely retard progress; an immoderate introduction would jeopardise the security of the whole island. They cited the numerous revolts of slaves in America in support of their position.

Further than this, the sale of one thousand negroes at three hundred pesos each would mean an expenditure of three million dollars, thus absorbing all the resources of the island.¹ The argument, which has been present in the Spanish colonies practically from first to last, marks the strong aversion from any policy tending to the too rapid increase of the negro population. It seems clear that Cuba might have absorbed into her numerous industrial activities a thousand negroes a year; but it is very doubtful whether it would have been done, had the price been maintained at three hundred pesos. A thoughtful writer thinks that the sugar industry would have reached a product thirty times larger, if it had been pushed from the beginning.² The government had determined to break into the monopoly of the trading company and thereby extend the market of the planters, and thus facilitate the introduction of negro slaves.

It proposed to allow negroes to be exchanged for the tobacco, sugar, hides, indigo, and other products of Cuba and to further aid the sales of both by requiring Villanueva to sell his newly imported negroes at a price two pesos below that charged by the company.³ The outbreak of

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 313 ff.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Real Cédula*, 27 July, 1761, Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 22. The *Asiento*, 21 July, 1761, Arch. de Ind., Est. 153, Caj. 4, Leg. 13.

war prevented the fulfilment of the *asiento*.¹

The *asiento* and *cedula* of 1760 are one indication only of the changed attitude of the metropolis towards its colonies. The power of Spain had been rising steadily since the accession of the Bourbon monarchy, and now had for its director, Charles III., a monarch decidedly enlightened and progressive, determined to break down the old restrictive system and replace it by one of greater breadth and freedom.²

The development of plans intended to make Habana the centre of a vast system of colonial trade was terminated for the nonce by the outbreak of war and the capture and occupation of that city by the English in 1763.

The English occupation serves well to mark the close of the old system and the starting-point of the new. The needs of the island had been fully recognised and after the evacuation of the city the liberal policy of Charles III. was pursued throughout the remainder of the century. During their occupancy of ten months the port of Habana was opened to the traders of Great Britain who seized the opportunity to push the sale of their goods and slaves. The inhabitants were not slow to avail themselves of a chance to increase their stocks at a low rate, but the stock of English goods thrown into the market exceeded

¹ Cf. Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 315.

² Cf. Robertson, *History of America*, book viii.

the current demand. In the first five months the English brought in 10,700 *bozales*, or negroes fresh from Africa, selling them publicly to citizens for use on the haciendas at ninety pesos each.¹

It has often been asserted that the license enjoyed during the English occupation was the cause of the awakening and economic development of Cuba. The claim can be accepted as one instance of Anglo-Saxon self-glorification. It has been shown above that the real development of Cuba began much earlier, and that the plans which were later carried out were conceived long before in the minds of both French and Spanish rulers. The occupation helped the Cubans, undoubtedly, by giving them supplies of cheap goods and slaves, but the period of time and amount of goods were alike too small to have been factors of any importance. What the island needed was a continuous liberal policy of trade and commerce, not the sporadic influx of buccaneer traders; for we find the governor pointing out that in 1765 there was not in the entire jurisdiction of Cuba,

¹ MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 13. Habana, 21 Abril, 1763.

El Fiscal Dn. Juan López Gamarra da cuenta de la Introducción de negros, y Generas hecha por los ynglêses; y los depravados yntentos con que procuran venderlos todas. He says, "La introducción de generas ha sido Guantiosissima, de modo que no es posible se consuman aqui en muchos años, particularmente Lienzos, paños, Listados ordinarios, zarasas de todas calidades. . . . siendo la intension . . . continuar la venta aqui, introducirlos en el resto de la Ysla y si pueden en la Nueva España, y en otras Provincias de esta America."

a single *estancia*, *hato*, or *ingenio*, that had enough hands to care for its harvest; total ruin impended unless more labourers could be secured, and the import of negroes, the only workers suitable for plantation work, had ceased.¹ Furthermore, license like that displayed during the occupation never formed a part of the Spanish or colonial ideal; it will be frequently remarked in the course of this history that the prospect of a large negro population was unfavourably regarded in the Spanish colonies. The basis of the wealth of Cuba has been the fertility of its soil and the favourable character of its climate, but no advantage of these would be taken until, by a slow process of assimilation and development, the original population had worked up to a point of civilisation and wealth sufficient to make use of the things before them. The eighteenth century includes a period of intense colonial activity; the increased emigration of capital, accompanied by the invention of improved sugar-making machinery by Père Labat which was building up the great sugar colonies of France and England, and the widening market of Europe, was giving a new impulse to that industry in Cuba. Cuba was greatly aided in her development by the emigration of Spaniards—by that from Jamaica, followed by that of Florida on its cession to England in 1763—which, recurring from time to

¹ *Carta del gobernador Marqués de Casa-Enrile*, 5 July, 1765. MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 23.

time, brought in an intensely energetic and thoroughly Spanish class, bent upon retrieving its fortunes. Habana usually received the greater share of these people, but Santiago received many from Jamaica. The growth of the demand for colonial products in Europe gave increasing opportunities for development and wealth.

The home government was at this time seeking new branches of agriculture which—according to the prevailing industrial or mercantile notions—could be added to the list of colonial activities. The city of Habana in 1765 asked for the annulment of the company's *asiento*, because its chief prospective products—indigo, wheat, cotton, coffee, and cocoa—were hampered by the exorbitant prices asked for slaves by the contractors. "Few owners of the ingenios," they say, "have bought negroes."¹ The last remark shows that sugar was receiving more attention than formerly as a staple product of the island. All of these signs point to a prosperity which could only be the result of slow growth. Before 1762 the exports of Cuba had amounted annually to twenty-one thousand arrobas of sugar, thirty thousand of tobacco, and some thousand hides, and the imports were made in three ships sailing annually from Spain. The trade with Cuba in 1765 required about six ships; in 1778, it required two hundred ships; while, from 1765 to 1770, the income from the

¹ *Informe de la ciudad de la Habana*, May 11, 1767. MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 153, Caj. 4, Leg. 13.

duties collected at Habana increased three-fold and exports from the whole island increased five-fold.¹

Profiting by the bitter experience of 1763, Spain proceeded at once to restore the affairs of the island, to reorganise its military forces, to plan defences and other public improvements. At an expense of millions of dollars, the great Cabaña fortress, begun in 1765 and completed in 1776, made the port of Habana impregnable.

It has been estimated that up to 1763, a total of 60,000 negro slaves were imported into the Island of Cuba.² Various special licenses to import slaves were granted during the years 1763-73. By royal cedula of October 15, 1765, the Spanish company of the Marqués de Casa-Enrile obtained the right to import 1000 slaves annually for ten years³; the Real Compañía Mercantil imported 4957, between 1763 and 1766; under the asiento of 1773-79, 14,132 were introduced; and the English house of Baker and Dawson sold 5768 from 1786 to 1789.⁴ During the years 1763-89, 6000 others are estimated to have been brought into the eastern part of the island,⁵ making the total import, 1763-89, about

¹ Roscher, *Spanish Colonial System*, p. 36; see also pp. 38-9.

² Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre la Isla de Cuba*, p. 142; the same figures are given by Saco, *Papeles sobre la Isla de Cuba*, vol. i., p. 164.

³ Arch. de Ind., Est. 153, Caj. 4, Leg. 13.

⁴ Humboldt, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-3.

⁵ *Ibid.*

30,904.¹ By adding to this last number the 10,700 brought in by the English in 1763, the footing comes to 41,604.

A large part of the slaves came from the British islands, Jamaica and Grenada, to which cargoes were brought for re-export, illicitly, or by means of the *asiento* companies. Special measures were necessary to protect the *asiento* company against the clandestine trade from foreign colonies.² During the war of 1780-83, trade was stopped by the blockade, and the colonists except those of Rio de la Plata, Chile, and Peru were permitted to supply themselves with slaves from the French colonies, paying for them in money or produce, excepting the cocoa of Carácas and the tobacco of Cuba, which could be sent to Spain only.³ Habana was being made the distributing point of slaves and commerce for the rest of the island and the continent, two thousand five hundred to three thousand slaves being imported annually and half of them re-exported. To this must be added an indefinite illicit trade, so that the number absorbed by Cuba during this period was not far from one thousand five hundred annually. The general permission which had been given

¹ The census of 1774 showed a population of 96,440 whites, 30,847 free negroes and mulattoes, and 44,333 negro and mulatto slaves. Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. i., p. 148.

² *Real Cédula*, July 18, 1775. Arch. de Ind., Est. 153, Caj. 4, Leg. 13. Cf. Edwards, *History of the West Indies*, vol. i., p. 300.

³ MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 153, Caj. 4. Leg. 13, 13 Feb., 1780; MS., Mus. Brit., Eg. 520, p. 213, 25 Enero, 1780.

to neutrals to import slaves was withdrawn at the close of the war, and the duty lowered to nine pesos per head. The contraband trade was at its height in this period, and Spanish smugglers drove a furious trade to New Providence and Jamaica. The Cuban smugglers were largely European Spaniards, who seemed to have driven out the English smugglers at this time.¹ In 1778, Spain purchased some slave-trading stations on the west coast of Africa, thus procuring a base for her slave trade, which she had lacked to her great disadvantage. The *alcabala*, or six per cent. tax, on the sales of slaves amounted to 312,274 pesos in 1782, and the import tax to 677,322 pesos in 1783.²

These things show the readiness of Spain to meet the changing needs of her colony.

In 1780, a memorial was presented to the king, pointing out the obstacles which hampered the agriculture of Cuba, complaining that the hacendados were always forced to buy their slaves at second hand, necessitating higher prices, and asking that the slave trade be opened to foreign ships through Habana and Santiago, by which means the number introduced could be easily watched and the import of too many prevented. The memorial further states that there is little

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 388; Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 284.

² Saco, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

danger of uprisings among the negroes.¹ From this free trade it was hoped that an immense increase of production in Cuba would result, which would swell the trade with Spain and the rest of Europe through her ports.² In response to these representations, the decree of August 24, 1784, for improving the condition of the Indies, provided for a monthly packet line from Spain, and made Habana the centre of Spanish-American colonial commerce.³ The next year the taxes bearing on agricultural pursuits, which had been increased during the war of 1780-83, were lightened.⁴ The duties on slaves reduced at the same time were restored a few years later to the great discontent of the planters, especially those in tobacco culture.

The solicitude of the government for the welfare of its American dominions is shown in a remarkable paper sent out in 1781 by the king, in order to collect the opinions of his advisers thereon. It calls attention to the fact that foreign nations were receiving great benefits from their possessions, while the Spanish colonies were entailing loss, excepting Cuba which had recently begun to cover expenses.

Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Española from their

¹ Saco, *Papeles sobre la Isla de Cuba*, vol. i., p. 406. MS. in the Ayala Collection.

² *Ibid.*, p. 407.

³ Ferrer del Río, *Historia del reinado de Carlos III. en España*, p. 452.

⁴ *Real Cédula*, 8 Nov., 1785; Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 320.

favourable situation, might produce a great part of the products required by Europe. Cuba was producing only 30,000 *cajas* of sugar and 40,000 arrobas of tobacco, while Puerto Rico and Española were nearly out of cultivation; far less fertile and extensive foreign colonies produced and exported far more wealth than the vast possessions of Spain. The responsibility for this condition falls upon the laws.¹ The way to remedy the situation is indicated by the foreigners, whose colonies are flourishing while the Spanish colonies are unpopulated and uncultivated. Instead of granting lands gratuitously to poor settlers, who usually continue to hold them in their unimproved state, it is proposed to sell them at proper prices to well-conditioned citizens who will develop them. Confirmation of the argument was found, by comparing the condition of Española and Puerto Rico, which had received most attention from the government in the past, with that of the best foreign colonies: the former had a joint population of 103,762, of which 10,000 were negroes; the French colony of Haiti had 50,000 whites and 350,000 negro slaves.

This disparity is one of the causes of the prosperity of Haiti and the misery of the Spanish

¹ MS., Mus. Brit., Eg. 520. ff. 215-228. Endorsed "Copia" and "Machado." "Ponderese enhorabuena la sabeduría de las Leyes de Yndias, pudieron ser buenas para el tiempo que se establecieron, y ser hoy contrarias a las circunstancias en que nos hallamos. . . . Luego, el Atraso que padecen no debe atribuirse á otra causa, que á los Leyes y Reglamentos con que se han gobernado hasta ahora."

islands, as the field work is done generally by African slaves, because white men cannot stand it; the cedula of 1778 dividing the land of Puerto Rico among the citizens therefore remains of no effect, and the required fees and formalities make an added hindrance only. Regulations are not needed; the owners know best how to make use of their lands. Negroes are what is wanted, and tools and machinery in abundance; franchises, and foreigners who understand the care and culture of corps and a new code of laws which should be directed solely to the advancement of agriculture. There are scarcely half a dozen persons in Puerto Rico able to buy twenty negroes each; little advancement can be expected from them.¹

The supply of negroes should be facilitated, as it is one of the most important branches of commerce to a monarchy having colonies, and Spain has more colonies than any other power; but Spain has heretofore contented herself largely with *asientos* with foreigners, so the colonies have received negroes at second and third hand, and these of inferior quality and at a high price, besides being subjected to a tax. Foreign colonies were enjoying entire freedom in this matter.

The expenses of the trade were heavy. Traders to the French and English islands made quick sales, short voyages, and, consequently, large

¹ "Assi, debe el Gobierno precisar á los actuales posehedores á cultivarlos, ó á venderlos á sugetos de conocido caudal, y de quienes puede esperar el cumplimiento de sus deseos."

profits; whereas, even in Buenos Aires and Habana, sales were slow in Spanish colonies. Agriculture in the Spanish colonies was in its infancy, and they devoted their slaves mainly to the cattle ranches (*vacadas* or *hatos*) which called for least capital, care, and intelligence. Spain, having abundant population and wealth, should formulate new laws at once for the better government of the islands on the following plan: the actual possessors should be obliged to cultivate their lands, or sell them to citizens with means to develop them; the slave trade should be open to all merchants of the kingdom, who should be granted all the aids and franchises made use of by France and England; premiums should be awarded for the introduction of a specified number of negroes; the laws of the Indies should be modified, as they contain many hindrances to the development of agriculture, the new code being based upon the experience of France and England; finally, foreign Catholics should be allowed to settle in the islands and should be treated as natives, but the privilege should be restricted to artisans, especially to those having a specified number of negroes. A ship of war was needed on the coast of Africa to protect the slave traders.

The importation of implements of foreign manufacture required for sugar, indigo, coffee, and cotton plantations should be stimulated. The most of these utensils are not made in Spain,

and their importation has been prohibited by the *reglamento* of October, 1778.

It is easy for us to see that the scheme here outlined by the king only carried a step further the conditions which had grown up in America, that is to say: he proposed to allow an unlimited importation of negroes. As time went on the plan unfolded in all its logical details, except that the Spanish could never bring themselves to the point of allowing an unrestricted import of Africans.

In applying this new system to America, Spain selected the West India Islands for its trial because they could be made to produce the tropical products which were desired at that period to make up the balance in the closed trade or industrial system as then practised. The tropical colonies were to produce products that could not be produced at home, and the carrying trade was to be grounded in the exchange of products between the home country and the colonies; thus, Jamaica produced sugar, rum, coffee, indigo, and sent them to Great Britain, receiving tools, machinery, and goods in exchange. France maintained the same conditions in Haiti. From this trade foreigners were strictly barred. At this time Jamaica had about two hundred thousand slaves devoted to the production of those products; but the island had reached the height of its prosperity, and its productiveness began to decline after the year 1774. Great Britain and France were importing

slaves for the cultivation of these products; Spain had introduced them for work in the mines, and when it had allowed the introduction for agricultural purposes, it had done so grudgingly, and had always tried to keep the supply under strict control.¹ Spain's American dominions, having large native populations, had been expected to cultivate their soil, as far as possible, with their own people. The practical objection to this method turned out to be that while New Spain, Venezuela, and Peru had large populations, it proved impossible to direct them into the channels followed by labourers in highly organised communities. The process of raising a people from a low stage of civilisation to a very high one requires a long period of time. The Indians found it easy to live in their own way side by side with the Spaniard, and had no desire to enter upon an intensive mode of cultivation of the soil, or of the living, either as slaves or as free men. The government would not permit them to be enslaved.

The West India Islands had small native populations, which of course were inadequate for such purposes. A breach was made in the older Spanish system, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, by making the slave trade dependent upon the tobacco industry; negroes could not be supplied in this way in sufficient numbers to develop the other lines of production, so a cry

¹ Cf. Nuix, *Reflexiones imparciales*, p. 251.

was raised for more slaves, which led to the plan outlined by the king.

The islands had an excellent relation to the other American possessions; they presented the same favourable conditions for agriculture as Haiti and Jamaica, where the French and English had already been so successful; the native American population had apparently disappeared; and they had a large superficial area. For many reasons—its magnificent harbours, the paucity of its population, four to the square mile, large area of rich vacant land, unmatched geographical position, the impregnable Cabaña, its energetic moneyed class, the early loss of Española—Cuba represented the heart of the system as it developed. The proposals of the king received endorsement in Spain¹: they were certainly favourably regarded in Cuba. The rise in the price of sugar and the formation of new ingenios and *cafetales*, or coffee plantations, had occasioned brighter prospects and increased demands for negroes.

¹ MS., Mus. Brit., Eg. 520, ff. 230-1. *Don Juan de Yriarte al rey*, Madrid, 7 Junio, 1781.

The Conde de Aranda is reputed to have suggested a plan to the king of Spain in 1783, whereby the West Indies should be the only possessions kept under the control of the king of Spain and be made the centre of a vast system of commerce to be built up between Spain and satellite kingdoms of Spanish America; Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., pp. 406-13. The notion that Habana was the key of the Western Hemisphere, "llave del Nuevo Mundo," was not a new one. The development of Habana since 1760 had been distinctly along these lines, and the plans of Charles III. and Aranda correspond upon this point. The document here printed by Saco, he copied from a newspaper published in Madrid in 1835.

Men of high standing and means like the Conde de Riela, ex-governor of Cuba and grandee of Spain, were receiving special concessions to introduce slaves for their own use.

The last *asiento* was in operation from 1786 to 1789; and in 1788, the English house of Baker and Dawson, who held it, proposed a new *asiento* to introduce three thousand negroes a year into America for six or eight years. The price was not to exceed two hundred pesos for each; the company receiving in payment either money or such produce at current prices as Spain might allow and might have free entry into the ports of Great Britain and her colonies. The introduction was to be made in English ships making the passage between Guinea and Habana without stop. No other foreigners were to be allowed to import slaves, but citizens might bring slaves from foreign colonies in Spanish ships; and all negroes imported and all produce exported by the company were to be free of duty, except tobacco.

In spite of the efforts of a strong party in Cuba headed by the governor the proposed *asiento* was defeated. The merchants of Habana stated a series of objections to it. Three thousand negroes per year was thought a very small number for Cuba and Carácas, the only colonies demanding slaves. The proportion of women to men was left undetermined; no specifications as to the state of health of the negroes arriving in the island were made, and the islanders had been made hitherto the

victims of asientistas who imported only sick and poorly conditioned negroes; there was no guarantee that the company would fulfil the terms of the contract, a misfortune that the planters had experienced on more than one occasion at the hands of the monopoly companies. Negroes were divided into three classes, called respectively *piezas*, *mulecones*, and *muleques*,¹ each commanding a different price, but the proposed asiento did not fix the price of any but the first, nor did it name the price for *esclavas*. The quantity of produce allowed for each negro was not determined, nor were those products named which would be received free of duty in English ports of Europe or America. Of the products of Cuba, tobacco was the monopoly of the Spanish government, and the import of sugar and coffee was prohibited in Great Britain and foreign colonies, so that the only produce left for exchange was cotton and hides. The export of the two last was so small, that it could only be inferred that the company intended to sell for cash only, which could result only in withdrawing the already small supply from circulation; the small output of cotton would all be taken to England, where the demand for it was high, and the

¹ In the language of slave trade, a *muleque* was a newly imported or bozal negro 6 or 8 to 12 or 14 years of age; a *mulecon*, one from 12 or 14 to 17 or 18 years; a *pieza*, from 17 or 18 to 30 or 35. In 1754 the price ranged from 210 to 225 pesos for muleques, 250 to 270 for mulecones, 280 to 300 for piezas. (MS., A. de I., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 32); in 1768, 235, 240, and 260 pesos (MS., A. de I., Est. 153, Caj. 4, Leg. 13); in 1788, 230, 250, 260, pesos fuertes (MS., Mus. Brit., Eg. 520, ff. 237-240).

mills of Spain would be thus deprived of their supply. The promise to send their ships direct from Africa to Cuba amounted to nothing, because the contraband trade was already large, and the authorities at Habana would be unable to tell whether ships stopped at ports in the West Indies or not. The exemptions from duties proposed by the company would deprive the royal treasury of a large part of its revenues.

The government was asked to reject the proposals of the English company and to give the trade entirely to Spaniards and Spanish ships, or, if this was impossible, to make the trade free to all nationalities, as the only way to avoid the inconvenience of monopolies, and give opportunity to the agriculture and commerce of the island.¹ The forces making for the maintenance of navigation laws excluding foreigners from the carrying trade were the last to yield to the pressure of a greatly enlarged market and an enlightened policy. The object of the government in admitting foreigners was to afford a rapid and cheap supply of negro labourers, the crying need of the island.

The Ayuntamiento of Habana chose as its agent the young and brilliant Arango y Parreño, then in Madrid, who presented its memorial asking a concession of three years to Spaniards and foreigners to introduce negroes as required.²

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., p. 358.

² *Ibid.*, vol. vi., p. 7 ff.

Shortly afterward the Real Cédula of February 28, 1789, permitted Spaniards and foreigners to introduce negroes into qualified ports free of all charges for two years, and to sell at the prices obtainable. The negroes had to be of good races, and at least one third women. Spaniards importing in Spanish vessels were to receive a bonus of four pesos a head out of the royal revenues. As the chief object in allowing this free trade was to foment agriculture, every negro not destined to employment in it or the sugar mills was taxed two pesos yearly, that is, all negroes in domestic service in the cities, villas, and towns. The ports open for the trade were Puerto Cabello, Santo Domingo, San Juan de Puerto Rico, and Habana, while Santiago was *habilitado* for Spaniards only.¹

Four thousand negroes were imported into Cuba in nineteen months under this law, more than one half by the house of Baker and Dawson, whose agent, Philip Alwood, had been located in Habana for eight or ten years and understood the business and knew the people wanting slaves.² Yet Habana was still too poor to compete with other colonies in the market for slaves and its agricultural development was inferior to that of other colonies.³ Prices were kept up because the time allowed by the cedula was too short to enable the traders to make on the average more than one voyage, so

¹ Mus. Brit., Eg. 520, f. 257; Arch. de Ind., Est. 153, Caj. 4, Leg. 13.

² Arango, *Obras*, vol. i., p. 31 ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 33 et seq.

that larger profits had to be realised on a single cargo; delay and expense were also occasioned because cash sales could not be made, and because the importers were forbidden to have agents in the interior. The merchants and planters, therefore, sent a second memorial to the king in 1791 through Arango, praying that, in view of the advantages resulting from the free trade, the privileges might be extended for six or eight years. Accordingly, after some hesitation, caused by the condition of affairs in Haiti, the Real Cédula of November 24, 1791, extended the provisions of the preceding cedula for six years from the first of January, 1792. The proportion of women was left to the traders themselves, and, as domestic servants were needed in some parts of America, the tax of two pesos on them was withdrawn; also, the bounty to Spanish importers was abolished, having proved a burden on the treasury rather than a stimulus to importation. The qualified ports were Cartagena, Montevideo, Puerto Cabello, Guaira, Maracaibo, Cumaná and Barcelona, Santo Domingo, San Juan, Habana, for both foreigners and Spanish, and the ports of Santiago, Nuevitas, Batabanó, Trinidad, and Rio de la Hacha were *habilitado* for Spanish only, who were also allowed to import foreign-made sugar machinery on payment of the duties.¹

¹ Mus. Brit., Eg. 520, f. 261. "Como la gracia de este comercio se dirige al fomento de la agricultura, permite á mis vasallos, que además del renglon de negros, puedan tambien retornar herramientas para la labranza, máquinas y utensilios para los ingenios, satisfeciendo los Derechos"

The captains-general were ordered to report the number of negroes imported monthly, and whether the plantations were sufficiently supplied and prices properly regulated, and any further information showing whether it was expedient to continue the trade. These reports of the port officials were carefully returned up to 1820, but it does not appear that the governors ever reported that a full stock of slaves had been secured.¹ However anxious the Spanish government might be to build up great plantation colonies in America, it did not propose to allow the introduction of negroes to go beyond its control.

In a memorial presented to the king, the city of Santiago had complained that Habana was obtaining all the advantages of the trade between Europe and America, and that Santiago had been deprived of the captaincy general and had suffered other losses in commerce and importance. Among other favours, it asked to be allowed "absolute liberty for the introduction of negroes, as they are the only labourers serviceable for agriculture and other labours of the field, vegas, ingenios, etc., without limitation of number, together with exemption from entrance duties and alcabala on first and second sales; provided that the negroes be destined to field work."² They also desired the same

¹ In 1789, 64 ships entered the ports of Cuba; 35 American, 26 Danish, 2 Spanish, and 1 Swedish, carrying 2046 negroes. In 1790, 1084, from January to June; July, to December, 1903. MSS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 20.

² MS., Mus. Brit., Add. 13,975, ff. 127; MS., Mus. Brit., Eg. 520, ff. 242. The protest is dated March 3, 1789.

exemptions on the importation of coppers, caldrons, and machinery of all kinds for sugar making and agricultural development. But this part of the island was too poor to accomplish much by its own efforts, and it needed assistance in the establishment of new plantations and mills, reduced taxation to aid them not only in Santiago but in Bayamo and other towns. The tobacco of Santiago being the best of Cuba, measures were urged to help it by the free introduction of negroes.¹ These favours had all been granted to Española by Real Cédula, April 12, 1787. The cedula of 1789 qualified Santiago for free entry of negroes in Spanish ships, but as only two cargoes of slaves entered that port in Spanish vessels in the two following years, it would seem that it was not to take a leading part in the development of the island. The current of activity had turned in the direction of Habana. The region of Santiago was not so well adapted to sugar growing as the plain of Habana; the country was mountainous, which under primitive conditions made communication too difficult.

The events recorded in this chapter may be summed up as follows. The planters of Cuba steadily complained that their industries were hampered by a dearth of labourers and pointed to the navigation laws as a chief obstacle in the way of improvement. The government of Spain became anxious to build up the colonies and increase the labouring force, but with characteristic con-

¹ MS., Mus. Brit., Add. 13, 975, ff. 127.

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servatism was very loath to break into the navigation system. Furthermore, those who favoured a freer policy were firmly opposed by a powerful element, in the colonies and at home, which feared the growth of the African population. At last the trading element of Habana represented by Arango joined forces with the liberalised government at home and secured practically free trade in slaves.

CHAPTER III

PROSPERITY AND LIBERALISM

1790-1817

Prosperity—The Embargo—The Conflict with Liberalism
—Foreign Interference.

LUÍS DELAS CASAS was captain-general from 1790 to 1796 during one of the brightest and most prosperous periods of the island's history. We have seen how the legal barriers to the development of Cuba existing in the colonial system had been lowered from time to time. Still others existed in the internal condition of the islands. They may be divided into two categories, namely, physical and moral. In the first class,—the distribution of the land in large parcels whose owners stood in the way of improvement; the poor roads, impassable in rainy weather; lack of bridges; the feuds existing among the people in the *campos*, or country; the lack of hands and other means of cultivating the soil. The moral drawbacks to development lay in the absence of education among all classes of workers; in the continuous residence in the city of youths possessing estates which they allowed to take care of themselves; in pensions *et cetera* which prejudiced vigorous labour;

in the misery in which labouring families lived; in the pride which kept men from honest toil; and in the thinly scattered population.¹ The captain-general instituted reforms wherever it was possible to do so. He was a leading spirit in the foundation of the Real Sociedad Patriótica y Económica de la Habana; roads and bridges were constructed, asylums and hospitals founded, the aqueduct built, and the number of public schools greatly increased. He merited the position he enjoys of being one of the most popular of Cuba's governors. The king chose well in selecting him to initiate his new plans.

The law required that cargoes must be sold within eight days, in order to prevent opportunities and temptation to smuggle; but it was found quite impossible to dispose of cargoes in this time, for travel was slow and the plantations were scattered. Either the government must wink at the infringement of the rule by foreigners, or the island must have its supply of slaves very much curtailed. Las Casas, therefore, formed an association to receive consignments of cargoes made to it by Spaniards and foreigners. The company executed the orders of the consignors under the rules of trade customary at Habana; it really acted as distributing agent, receiving the cargoes and sending them to places where there was a call for them. The company was made up of men who were generally purchasers of slaves² and was approved by

¹ *Papel periódico de la Habana*, 1792, No. 4.

² Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 18 *et seq.* The document is printed in *Papel periódico de la Habana*, Núm. 27

Real Órden, July 20, 1792, and was to last six years. The Real Órden of November 22, 1792, gave many privileges to the industries of Cuba; coffee, cotton, and indigo were exempted for ten years from paying the alcabala and tenth taxes, and the duties on sugar were remitted; the time allowed foreigners for selling their cargoes of slaves was extended to forty days.¹ The slave trade was increasing, 8498 having been introduced in 1791 and 8528 in 1792.²

Many slaves were brought from Africa, but most of them came from the other West India Islands, Dutch, French, Danish, English, and Spanish. Some cargoes came to Habana from Charleston, Baltimore, Long Island, and North America.³ It was not until the close of the year 1792 that a Spanish vessel brought a cargo of slaves from Africa. Ships with cargoes of slaves from Africa, Española, or other parts, were in the habit of touching at Habana on their way to New Orleans.

The West India Islands were being overshadowed by the Pearl of the Antilles. In marvellous fertility of soil, Cuba far surpassed Jamaica; this, together with being far larger in size, was sufficient to place the former beyond competition in production of sugar. Improvements in sugar-making entitled *Noticia de la nueva compañía de comercio establecida para consignaciones pasivas de negros bozales con la autoridad y aprobación del gobierno, y capitania general de la Habana*, 31 Marzo de 1792.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20; *British and Foreign State Papers*, 1816-17, p. 521.

² Humboldt, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

³ *Papel periódico de la Habana*, 1792, *passim*.

machinery introduced by the English at this time, instead of aiding Jamaica to regain her position, served only to make possible a faster advance in Cuba.¹

Events in Haiti aided the development of Cuba in two ways. The insurrection of the slaves utterly destroyed the wealth of the sugar plantations and expelled the white proprietors. This left a wider market for Cuban sugar by cutting off the Haitian supply. A large number of the inhabitants who managed to escape came to Cuba, settled in the plains south-east of Habana, in the vicinity of Matanzas, in the hills of Santiago, and in the fields of Baracoa,² and added a very industrious and intelligent element to the population. They suffered terribly in the uprising of 1808 against the French, and many went to New Orleans whence some returned later, but they aided greatly in exploiting the resources of the island, particularly in coffee cultivation which they brought to a high state of development, especially in the vicinity of Santiago. They brought a small number of slaves with them. In consequence of the insurrection in Haiti, Cuba became fearful of a large negro population, and importation of slaves was sensibly checked for a number of years.³

As a result of the wars in Europe, the decline

¹ Cf. Edwards, *History of the West Indies*, vol. ii., p. 263.

² Masse, *Cuba et la Havane*, p. 248 ff.

³ Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 285. The population of Cuba in 1792 was as follows: whites, 136,559, free negroes, 54,852, slaves, 84,590. Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, suplemento, p. 9.

in importance of Jamaica, and the destruction of the prosperity of Haiti, the price of sugar and coffee rose greatly.¹ The leading minds of Cuba were not slow to see the advantages before them. But there were yet impediments to the development of the island: the dearness of negroes, machinery, and tools as compared with prices in foreign colonies; the cost of maintaining the slaves was higher in Cuba; in some colonies the negroes worked more, as in Peru which produced better and cheaper sugar than Habana because the negroes could stand more fatigue in the cooler and more healthful climate; the roads were poor; Cuban planters were deficient in knowledge of the industry and in method and economy.² The government took steps to remedy these defects by allowing Spanish ships which failed in getting a cargo of slaves in Africa to take home a load of machinery. The old mills with ox power (*trapiches de bueyes*) were being replaced by new ones with mules (*trapiches de mulas*) and water mills (*trapiches de agua*) like those used in Española. The result was to greatly increase the efficiency of the ingenios. Capital for the new undertakings was furnished to the planters by the merchants of Habana, and some was brought by the emigrants from Santo Domingo, who left that colony upon its cession to France.³

¹ Levi, *History of British Commerce*, p. 85.

² Arango, *Obras*, vol. i., p. 65 ff., 146.

³ Humboldt, *op. cit.*, p. 191 ff. New favours were extended to the island by Real Orden, Feb. 23, 1796, lightening the bur-

The Ayuntamiento of Bayamo had prayed in 1794 for the opening of the port of Manzanillo to Spanish trade, because it received many negroes from Jamaica and was the chief port of supply for Puerto Príncipe, and the request was granted. The Archbishop of Santiago, though opposed to the trade, wrote to the king in 1794 saying that the free introduction of slaves would be a great benefit to the eastern part of the island because of the scarcity of labour, but he hoped that the labour of whites and freemen would eventually do away with the demand for negroes from Africa.¹

The insurrection of negroes in Haiti and Jamaica led to fears for the safety of Cuba, if unrestricted introduction continued. Plans were discussed in the *Consulado* in 1795 for increasing the number of creole negroes; such as, taxing male slaves, or fining estates that did not have a due proportion of women, the exemption of country negroes from the alcabala tax, and compelling the owners of married slaves to sell them so that they could live together. These proposals met with strong opposition from the hacendados, who thought that the laws already provided sufficiently for the propagation of creole slaves. The matter was dropped and taken up again in 1799 and had a strong

dens on sugar, in consequence of representations by Arango and the Conde de Casa-Montalvo; Arango, *Obras*, vol. i., p. 205 *et. seq.*; coffee, cotton, indigo, and tobacco were exempted from many duties by royal orders in 1801-5, Zamora y Coronado, *Registro de legislacion ultramarina*, tomo iii., pp. 34-5.

¹ Letter of Archbishop of Santiago to the king, Nov. 30, 1794. Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., pp. 24-5.

influence upon the legislation of 1804.¹ The importation of slaves from foreign colonies was seen to be very unfavourable to the peace and security of the island, and new measures were adopted for dealing with the runaway slaves, or *cimarrones*.

In 1798, the trade was again extended for six years under the previous conditions. The number imported in 1796 was 5711, in 1798, 2001, and in ten years, 1789 to 1799, the whole number imported was 41,500.² The years 1801 to 1804 saw greater tranquillity in the neighbouring islands and a restoration of confidence in Cuba due to the prosperity which followed the peace consequent on the treaty of Amiens; Cuba was able to find a market for her products while peace lasted and a larger demand for slaves ensued. In 1802, 13,832 negroes were imported, in 1803, 9671, and in 1804, 8923. A rosy future seemed open to the planters, and a new extension of the trade was asked for at an early date; the petition was referred by the king to the Council of the Indies, who advised that great caution be used in allowing an unlimited introduction, and they pointed out the fate of Haiti and the danger that enemies and rivals might stir up the negroes to revolt; but they thought it entirely safe to grant twenty years of free trade to Spaniards and twelve to foreigners to introduce bozal negroes.³ The Real Cédula of April 22, 1804,

¹ *Recueil de diverses pièces sur la traite et l'esclavage des nègres*, p. 122 et seq.

² Humboldt, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

³ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. iv., p. 522.

however, granted twelve years to Spaniards and six to foreigners, to import bozales only, who were more likely to attach themselves to the religion, laws, and customs of the new country. Those ingenios having only male slaves on them were ordered to supply themselves with women so that all men wishing wives should have them, which would end in doing away with the necessity of the trade, then by the increase of creole slaves and the betterment of their condition the planters would be saved the expense of constantly buying bozales. The government was ordered to have this provision, which was contained in the cedula of 1798, strictly enforced; but the cedula was not to be published, for fear that the slaves might understand it and make trouble.¹

European war broke out again in 1804, and in 1808 began the guerilla War of Independence in Spain against the French; exports and imports decreased at once, and the introduction of slaves fell to 1607 in 1808, and to 1162 in 1809. The condition of the country was very bad. The Marqués de Casa-Peñalver, one of the largest planters, testified in 1807 before the Consulado that he had lost sixty slaves in the last two years and had not replaced them because his properties did not pay. The slave-trading house of Poey and Hernandez likewise said that purchases in the last five years amounted to less than one sixth of those made in former years. The sugar industry seemed to

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 133 et seq.

be most unfavourably affected.¹ The receipts at the custom-house of Habana fell from 2,400,932 pesos in 1802 to 1,178,974 pesos in 1808.²

It is easy to see the cause of the depression from which Cuba was at this time suffering. The changes made in the laws of the colonial system during the last half of the century placed the island in a position to take full advantage of the circumstances which made it the most important sugar-producing colony in the world. The development of the neutral carrying trade opened for nearly ten years the markets of all nations to its products, only to have them suddenly closed by the British orders in council, Napoleon's decrees, the embargo, and non-intercourse. The foundations of the island's prosperity were too well laid, however, not to recover at once when these obstacles were removed, and development continued with few interruptions for another half century. The independence of the United States transferred to Cuba the patronage of that country, an ever-increasing source of profit.

The years 1810-14 witnessed a great crisis in Spanish affairs. The predominance of English influence, added to the tide of ideas coming out of

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, pp. 130-3. Expediente por el Consulado de la Habana, Informe del Síndico, Francisco Arango, Nov. 29, 1808, complains of the decadence and destruction of Spain and the misery of Cuba, "en tan nuevas y extraordinarias circunstancias no puede ser útil el sistema mercantil que se combinó y estableció en otras muy diferentes." They ask more freedom of commerce and removal of restrictions on exports and imports.

² Humboldt, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

the French Revolution, brought a pressure to bear on the government which was nearly strong enough to destroy the monarchy, abolish the slave trade and slavery, and break up the colonial system which the Bourbons had laboured to create. The government of Spain in 1811 consisted of a regency representing the executive power of the crown and a single legislative body called the Cortes; the latter had been largely elected within the city of Cadiz and represented the most radical wing of the liberal party. During the debates on the proposed constitution two proposals were laid before the Cortes relating to slavery in the Spanish possessions. On March 26, 1811, Señor Alcocer proposed that trade in slaves, both buying and selling, be prohibited. The slaves, however, he proposed to leave with their masters because it was not possible to take property from the owners, but the children should be free from birth. The same treatment should be given the slaves as domestic servants, and they should be paid wages fixed by the judicial authorities. Any slave paying to his master his first price should be entirely freed at once, and the masters were to be bound to take care of the aged and infirm.⁴ This meant abolition. The project was referred to the committee on the constitution. On the first of April, the plan of Señor Arguelles proposed to abolish torture, and to prohibit the introduction of African slaves and that the regency should at once inform the

⁴ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 1 ff.

government of Great Britain of the fact. The next day the Cortes approved the proposition to abolish torture and referred the others to the committee.¹

In the discussion of these propositions much opposition developed to any plan which would free a large number of slaves in a short time, but the opinion was that the trade in bozal negroes ought to be stopped, and that steps should be taken to better the condition of the slaves. The awful fate of Haiti was constantly pictured as threatening Cuba both as the result of precipitate abolition and of continued introduction of bozales.¹

The arrival of the news of these proceedings threw the city of Habana into a ferment of indignant excitement, the government was greatly alarmed and took special precautions to preserve order and tranquillity throughout the island. The captain-general, Marqués de Someruelos, wrote to the regency from Habana and the letter was read in the Cortes. He pointed out that the

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 3 ff.

² *Ibid.*, p. 6 ff. Jauregui, representative from Habana, applauded the sentiments and principles voiced in the proposition, but warned the Cortes of the great danger, and asked that the matter be discussed in secret session and not put on the minutes, p. 12. The Cortes was opposed to secret proceedings, however.

Mexia said, "Je m'oppose formellement à ce qu' on attende la constitution; ce long ouvrage, malgré la promptitude avec laquelle il pourrait être présenté donnerait lieu dans l'intervalle à multiplier les fraudes contre les intentions de V. M., p. 8.

Arguelles said, "Spain ought to be in line with Great Britain," p. 8.

arrival of the news had been especially inopportune because the people were then considering a plan for sending aid for the support of the armies in Spain, but that such matters had now been dropped.¹

From this Cortes, elected in the midst of political passion, cooped up in the city by the French army and without experience or the aid of the best men in Spain, little could be expected in the way of brilliant achievement. It is not surprising therefore that it showed slight grasp of the real difficulties of this peculiarly intricate subject, and needed urging to grant time for a committee to investigate and report the best method for abolishing the trade.²

The city of Habana through the Ayuntamiento, the Consulado, and the Sociedad Patriótica y Económica addressed a remonstrance to the Cortes against the proceedings which it had taken.³

It is a question of our life, Señor, of our fortune, and that of our descendants ; and we have every reason to feel a lively fear, because we see that Your Majesty who had so much regard for these diverse objects, the 26th of March, has neglected them the 2d of April following ; Your Majesty

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 20 et seq. The letter is dated May 27, 1811.

² "Entre todos los que tomaron la palabra, solo el Señor Aner supo conocer los males que causaría la inmediatamente aprobación de tan aventurados proposiciones." Saco. *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 61.

³ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, pp. 22-104.

has admitted not only to discussion but to debate in public, questions which are especially out of place at this critical time, and which have always been difficult and hazardous, but which it is now proposed to dispose of off-hand.¹ The precedent set by other nations ought to be followed in first abolishing the trade and leaving abolition for the future.

The inconsequential piety of Las Casas introduced negroes among us ; a stupid policy has paralysed the progress of the world and the vigour and number of the whites. We are just awakening with all the lethargy of three centuries of exhaustion and neglect. We listen contentedly to the voice of justice which announces to every Spaniard that the day has come to break the chain of these evils, and while we are expecting confidently that all the links would be recast at the same time, or that the proper preferences would be observed, we see that without remedying our internal situation, without having any regard for it or providing new aides for us, it is made a question of depriving us suddenly of the means given us by the old laws and customs for our subsistence, or for keeping up the culture which maintains our existence. We see, too, that without heeding the crisis at hand, the most convulsive of all questions, that touching the essence of

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 24. "Il n'est ni permis ni convenable d'agiter ces questions préalablement à la constitution que doit avoir notre monarchie."

property and the fate of our slaves, is agitated, and that it is to be decided not under the constitution but before it is adopted. Above all the measures proposed have confounded the torture of a criminal and the slave trade, two elements foreign to each other, and we are condemned without a hearing.

The laws have not only authorised but they have obliged us to acquire negroes. It is

pretended that the stopping of the new introduction of men so proper for the labours of this zone is the way to increase the national family; confounding the increase of the human species with the means for making it uniform in its possessions, it is desired to begin this work among us where it ought to end, and he (Arguelles) turns his attention to the indifferent object of increasing a little the number of bozal negroes who, among our men of colour, are the least identifiable to the whites, as well as the least to be feared and the least worthy of our charitable care. It is best for many reasons for us to stop a moment to consider the facts and principles of the essential point, namely, the uniformity or identification of rights.¹

The principle that one drop of negro blood dishonours the white to the remotest degree, followed by the English and still followed by them with some modification, has been foreign to our

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 47.

"Conviene por muchos razones que nos detengamos un poco en aclarar los hechos y los principios en este punto esencial de la uniformidad, é identificacion de derechos." *Documentos sobre el tráfico*, p. 25.

laws.¹ The question to-day is that of multiplying the means for acquiring civil freedom, and so long as it is a question of assimilating the men of colour to the whites, instead of stopping at the first and chief obstacles, we leap over them; without reconciling ourselves with the numerous and different classes of men who exist here between the whites and the bozales, it is upon the latter only that our attention is fixed and upon whom all our solicitude is concentrated.

The centre of this great work of the uniformity or possible identification of privileges between the individuals of our numerous family ought to be the declaration of new qualities, prerogatives and guarantees of the Spanish citizen; without determining this point it is not possible to foresee how the benefits of political liberty and civil freedom can ever be attained.²

The remonstrance then goes on to show that the island is dependent on the trade for its supply of negro labour; on account of the heavy expenses entailed on owners from losing the work of the mothers, the care of them and their children, breeding was not encouraged.³ Not one estate

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 50.

² "Il est de toute nécessité de fixer ce centre, de prendre cette hauteur pour procéder, avec succès et par une échelle naturelle, à l'ouvrage magnifique de l'identification nationale; et il est de la dernière évidence qu'on ne fera rien de bon, relativement à nos castes, tant que l'opinion et la loi ne seront pas purgées d'avance de l'inconsequence manifeste de qualifier de barbare notre esclavage civil, et d'attacher pour toujours l'infamie aux descendans de cette race malheureuse." *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 52.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

in the island had a sufficient number of negroes, and very few had any females at all. Humanity required that measures should be taken to prevent them from being overworked.¹ During the last fifteen years a very much smaller proportion of females than males had been introduced. They were sold for one third less than the males; whereas in the English islands the same value was represented in each. Women were carried into the new estates in small numbers, but the old estates were still without them.

In 1762, agriculture had not extended beyond the immediate vicinity of the cities; after 1789, in consequence of the new franchises and the catastrophe of Santo Domingo, the products of the district of Habana had suddenly tripled, but all of this progress had been stopped by the recent wars, and the island had been nearly ruined. The trade should, therefore, be allowed to continue for a time, not only to allow the islanders to repair the losses caused by the wars, but also that the estates might get enough women to ensure a domestic supply of negro labour in the future.

The negroes have come and are here to our misfortune; not by our fault, but that of those who first opened and encouraged this course in the name of the law and of religion; we were, and are yet, told in the works of respectable authors, that it was a religious duty to save these souls from eternal damnation. It

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 56.

is not just to leave the whites who have obeyed these precepts to be deceived of their hope and exposed to danger. It can not be good to condemn the negroes already introduced to celibacy and to a harder toil in the fields; and it cannot be prudent, in any respect, to cause these certain evils in order to obtain an advantage which was formerly spoken of as a positive harm and which will always be a very doubtful good.¹

In the opinion of Arango and the committee the current belief that colonies would have been impossible without slaves was in error; they thought that without slaves the colonies would have been less profitable and their development less rapid.² Nevertheless they maintained that the condition which had been built up in this manner could not be easily or precipitously disturbed. Instead of putting an end to the introduction at once in the Constitution, they counselled long and careful examination. Precautions should be taken to ensure that the new negroes should go into the country and not into the cities. They considered that it was impossible to execute such measures at this time and that the island must wait for the time when Spain could secure the destruction of the evils of slavery.

These resolutions of Arango were endorsed by the Ayuntamiento of Habana and bore the signatures of the leading planters; among the twenty-

¹ *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 66.

² *Ibid.*, p. 104; Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 76; Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre la Isla de Cuba*, p. 281.

two are those of Ibarra, the president of the Sociedad Patriótica, the Condes de Casa-Montalvo, de O'Reilly, de Casa-Bayona, Luz Caballero, *et cetera*.

The remonstrance was presented to the Cortes by Arango, and his weighty arguments and prudent reflections convinced it of the grave dangers which were wrapped up in the propositions of Arguelles and Alcocer,¹ and no further action was taken.

It is remarkable that the remonstrance throws the blame for the introduction of slaves on Bartolomé de Las Casas and charges the laws and asientos with forcing the planters to buy slaves. However, it was not on account of the laws providing for the introduction of negroes into the Indies but in spite of them that Cuba had procured her slaves.

In their treaty of May 30, 1814, France agreed to join England in efforts to stop the slave trade. These powers brought pressure to bear on Spain, but they were unable to gain a hearing for propositions which seemed destructive to the Spanish colonial interests. The protest of Habana had produced a marked effect, but now it was a question of treating with the king of Spain and not with the revolutionary Cortes. The colonies had proved loyal to Ferdinand; he proposed to respect their wishes and strengthen his position in the monarchy. Accordingly, the second additional

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 77.

article to the Treaty of Madrid, July 5, 1814, went no further than to say that

the sentiments of His Catholic Majesty, being wholly conformable with those of His Britannic Majesty, respecting the injustice and inhumanity of the slave trade, His Catholic Majesty will take into consideration, with the prudence which it requires, the means of combining these sentiments with the necessities of his American possessions. His Catholic Majesty promises, moreover, to prohibit his subjects engaging in the slave traffic for the purpose of supplying islands and possessions which do not belong to Spain.¹

- v The efforts of Great Britain to secure final abolition of the trade at the Congress of Vienna failed, but in February 1815, the Congress issued a declaration denouncing the traffic. Napoleon on his return from Elba, put an end to the French traffic. Spain and Portugal still held out and not even the threat of exclusion of their exports could induce them to abandon their slave trade.

The extension of the trade under the Cédula of April 22, 1804, expired in 1816, and the question of extending the limit again came up in the Council of the Indies. In their report to the king on February 15th, they recommended its immediate abolition. They professed to look upon the use of slaves in domestic and field labour as a matter of habit strengthened by the practice of three

¹ Escriche, *Diccionario razonado*, vol. ii., p. 845. Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 286. The article was ratified Aug. 28, 1814.

hundred years. But, they say, some argued that agriculture in America, especially in Cuba, required the continued introduction of slaves and that certain serious consequences would result from a sudden abolition, so they are, therefore, inclined to a gradual abolition such as has been practised by other European nations.

Others on the contrary, apprehend, and with more than sufficient reason, that great disadvantages and well-known dangers would ensue from the continuance of the trade; nor can they perceive the asserted utility of it, nor the indispensable necessity of African hands which might not be done away with by a system of a more humane, just, and equitable nature. They, therefore, feel that it would be perfectly in conformity with Your Majesty's well-known sentiments of Christian piety, and with the relations which unite us to the generous British nation, more especially since the interposition, on her part, of her friendship and influence, not merely to limit this illicit commerce to the period of five years, but rather to strike immediately at its root,—care being taken, by prudent and proper measures, to prevent injury being done to those who are engaged, under the late Royal Grants, in that Trade at the present moment; and to supply with white men the demand for manual labour, which such a prohibition might occasion in some Provinces of the American Hemisphere.¹

The council goes on to state some of the objections of those opposed to abolition. England,

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. ii., p. 519.

say that the trade ought to be prohibited, but point out that England took nineteen years to do this, the United States twenty-one, and Portugal five. If the importation were stopped it would make the lot of slaves harder because the number of women was too small, the same amount of work would have to be done by a smaller number, the value of slaves would be greater and it would become correspondingly harder to buy freedom and owners less generous in granting it.

A further blunt statement was made before the Council; namely, that the abolition of the trade, "laws dictated by the influence of foreign powers," would be the occasion of open resistance on the part of the colonists and the loss of the island.

The dissentient members recommend that the trade north of the line cease at once and south of the line on April 22, 1821; England paying a competent indemnity for the Spanish slavers already captured; the king should adopt measures for increasing the white population in America, especially in Cuba where lack of hands is most severely felt.

To this reasoning the majority replied that they had experienced no change of opinion. To argue for a delay as in the case of foreign powers was the same as asking twenty years for the trade to continue. The traffic is in direct opposition to humanity, and while the question was new to those nations it is not so to us. Discussion is exhausted and "we have only sufficient time left

to us for putting an end to this traffic with a strong, firm, and steady hand." To the argument that the price of domestic slaves would be increased in the event of abolition of the trade, it was answered that it has been allowed by royal permission for limited periods only. The supply of creoles is large and increasing. If the importation is to depend on the cultivation of land in America, who will say how long it will take to cultivate its vast and fertile tracts? The argument that this abolition will injure the landowners becomes a question of injuring many to save a few from losing their wealth. "We ought, therefore, never to forget, that the question is not one between Men and Brutes, but between Men and Men, lest our judgment should overlook the cause of humanity and lean towards that of Interests." The abolition will naturally lead to some labourers being worked less hard and to more humane treatment if a new supply is impossible, so that instead of getting four or six years in excessive labour it will be possible to get twenty years' labour out of a slave. The contention that the price will be raised and emancipation in consequence made more difficult is out of place, because the law and equity would remedy the evil; a continuation of the traffic will only add to the number of the unfortunate. The majority pointed out that the only place in America in which the proposed suppression had produced any sensation was at the Habana.

This sound and unprejudiced treatment of the slave trade question bears out the high opinion which has prevailed of the businesslike and patriotic character of the Council of the Indies.¹ Of the two reports, that of the majority bases its arguments on the broad principles of general humanity, which smack strongly of abolitionist influence. Both reports admit that the present supply of labour with its natural increase would not be sufficient to carry on the industries of the island in their actual condition, for each recommends that measures be taken to increase the supply of white labourers. This was the real question so far as the trade was concerned, for the majority distinctly says, "nothing has been alleged against slavery in general—indeed it is found to have existed in all nations; nor is it at variance with evangelical law."²

If the trade should be stopped at once, without making adequate provision for the increase of native slaves, or if the plans for increased immigration should fail in their expected results, the best that the advocates of this policy had to offer was that announced in 1811, namely, slower

¹ The council made these remarks on the effect of the trade and slavery: free labour has not been used because of the trade; negroes are used exclusively; whites shun labour to avoid being confounded with them; when whites are employed they are careful not to work hard and keep as distinct as possible. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. iv., p. 533. For an estimate of the ability of the Council of the Indies, see Bourne, *Spain in America*, p. 226; and Depons, *Voyage to Terra Firma*, vol. ii., p. 14.

² *British and Foreign Papers State*, vol. iv., pp. 543-9.

development and smaller profits, or, as the minority now stated it, a return to the conditions of the middle of the last century; but this was just what the planters did not want to do, and they had considerable show of reason on their side. It seems that the minority used entirely unjustifiable terms when they speak of the "sudden abolition of this traffic," in view of the fact that the day set by law for the end of the trade was then only two months distant. It had been known for twelve years that the license of the *Cédula* of 1814 expired on April 22, 1816. A renewal of the license must depend upon the king's will alone. Why should the minority complain of an injury if an extension were not granted? An explanation must be sought in the past colonial policy of Spain. In the last decade of the eighteenth century Spain had undertaken a plan for the development of plantation colonies in America, selecting the West India Islands as the spot for the especial application of her scheme, and the *Cédula* of 1814 had issued in furtherance of the undertaking. Puerto Rico was eliminated by its peculiar inadaptability, and Santo Domingo had been lost through its cession to France. All energies became centred in Cuba. Rapid progress was made only to be cut short by prolonged wars, and when peace came it was time for the trade to cease and interrupted commerce to begin. Plantation colonies require abundant capital and a very large supply of labour; the new colonial policy had

induced the investment of capital, but the transaction was incomplete if the supply of labourers was withheld. The planters regarded a steady increase of hands as the only vehicle of prosperity and impressed upon the government that measures must be taken to induce white emigration, especially of Catholics and Spaniards.¹

The part that Great Britain played in influencing the action of Spain well illustrated the utterances of Lord Brougham, one of the leaders of the Whig party and closely identified with Wilberforce. In 1810, he said that the use of the American, Spanish, and Portuguese flags in the slave trade must be stopped before abolition in the English colonies could be possible. He urged an arrangement with the United States for mutual search; it would be a great advantage to English planters, for if foreign colonies had the trade while it was prohibited to ours, our planters might be undersold for a certain time at least. Cuba, being the only Spanish colony having much sugar, gets the bulk of the slave trade and would be the only Spanish colony to suffer materially from its suppression. It was not reasonable, therefore, to expect that Spain would refuse this small sacrifice.² The discussions in Spain showed clearly that the British government did not fail to urge this small sacrifice in such a way that the Spanish government feared that it would lose

¹ Arango, *Obras*, vol. ii., pp. 372 ff.

² *Works*, vol. x., p. 100.

the friendship of Great Britain if it did not comply. Wilberforce wrote to Stephens that the Council of the Indies favoured the proposition of England for abolishing the trade and that amongst the minority there was one large property owner of Cuba; "they are afraid of our quarrelling with them."¹

The Spanish government, having received the advice of the Council of the Indies, could act as it saw fit in the matter, but could hardly reject the recommendations entirely. The majority had recommended the immediate abolition of the trade, but such an action might clearly be at the expense of large interests which had been acting under the well-defined policy of the government. The latter asked an extension for at least five years. The government took the only reasonable course open to it, providing for the final suppression of the trade at the end of five years. The humanitarian sentiment was of too recent origin to have become well enough defined to be opposed to such clear and practical objections as those of the minority. In 1865, for example, the case would have been different. It was then possible to say that the opinion of the world was set firmly against the traffic; in 1816, this was not the fact. On the other hand, if the justice, utility, or advisability of slavery be admitted, it becomes difficult to say whether the trade was contrary to

¹ London, March 29, 1816. Wilberforce, *Life of Wilberforce*, vol. iv., p. 285.

humanity, or any more barbarous than the emigrant traffic of that day. Especially is this true of the Spanish system which provided carefully against the overcrowding of slave-ships and for the treatment of the slaves. Large numbers of slaves probably died on the passage, but so did emigrants, and the passage in the tropics was especially hazardous. It must be borne in mind that most of our knowledge of the traffic with its horrors of over-crowding, disease, and brutish treatment comes from the period when the trade was illicit, without regulation of any kind, and in the hands of outlaws. We hear comparatively little of the trade when it was a deliberate, legitimate business transaction engaged in by people of a better class, and when its evils were looked upon as inseparable from long voyages.

In the treaty of 1814, the king of Spain promised to consider means for abolishing the trade; so, referring to this promise the king states in the treaty of September 23, 1817, with Great Britain that "having never lost sight of a matter so interesting to him and being desirous of hastening the moment of its attainment, he has determined to co-operate with His Britannic Majesty in adopting the cause of humanity."¹ The king bound himself "that the slave trade will be abolished in all

¹ The treaty is printed in Spanish in Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 286 *et. seq.*; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. iv., p. 33 ff., Spanish and English in parallel columns; Martens, *Nouveau Recueil de Traités*, 1808-18, vol. ii., p. 135 ff; *African Reports*, vol. iii., p. 80 ff.

the dominions of Spain, May 30, 1820, and that after that date it shall not be lawful for any subject of the crown of Spain to buy slaves or carry on the slave trade upon any part of the coast of Africa." But five months from that date were to be allowed for the completion of voyages legitimately commenced before May 30th, thus placing the date of final suppression on October 30th. The subjects of the king of Spain were forbidden to carry slaves for any one outside of the Spanish dominions, or to use the flag to cover such dealings.

Great Britain agreed to pay Spain £400,000 sterling, "to be considered as a full compensation for all losses which the subjects of His Catholic Majesty, engaged in this traffic, may have suffered, by reason of expeditions intercepted before the exchange of ratifications of the treaty, as well as those which would be a necessary consequence to the abolition of the commerce; the purpose being to reimburse private persons for the loss of their ships and business.

The right to search vessels suspected of being unlawfully engaged in the trade was mutually conceded under the provisions of the treaty; indemnification for detention without legal cause was to be made by the government whose ships should be at fault. Ships with slaves on board intended for domestic commerce, that is, in transportation between Spanish ports not in Africa, were not liable to seizure.

To provide for the adjudication of seized vessels and cargoes, two mixed commission courts were constituted, consisting of an equal number of persons from each nation appointed by their respective sovereigns. One to sit in Spanish territory and the other in British. The ports chosen for the residence of the courts were Habana, and Sierra Leone. The commissions decided the cases presented to them without appeal and according to the rules annexed to the treaty.

CHAPTER IV

ATTEMPTED REPRESSION

1818-1834

The First Attempts to Suppress the Slave Trade—Domestic Difficulties.

IN the Treaty of 1817 the abolitionists saw the end of the trade definitely marked, and the advocates of extension attained their minimum demand. The continent, which had a plentiful supply of labour, did not murmur against it, but the Consulado of Habana protested, saying that the higher price of slaves in Cuba already seriously embarrassed the island in competition with Brazil and that the treaty was a direct blow at her industries.¹ The Brazilian slave trade remained open and was a leading factor in displacing Cuba's coffee industry.² The failure of this product increased the amount of attention

¹ April 21, 1818, Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 95. The price was \$120 to \$150 in Brazil and \$300 to \$450 in Cuba. Andueza, *Isla de Cuba*, p. 149.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xvii., p. 606; *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., class A, p. 67 ff; in 1827, there were 2064 cafetales in Cuba and only 1760 in 1849, *Accounts and Papers*, 1850, vol. xvii., class A, p. 62 ff; Concha, *Memorias sobre Cuba*, cap. 1; Dana, *To Cuba and Back*, p. 115 ff; Hewitt, *Coffee*, p. 63.

given to sugar and thus added to the demand for slaves, because a relatively larger number of slaves was required for its culture and manufacture.

The government issued a cedula ordering the enforcement of the treaty on December 19, 1817.¹ It stated that the special permissions which had been given from time to time for the importation of negroes were exceptions to law made solely to supply temporary deficiencies in the labouring force of the realm, and that no reason remained for their continuance; the import of negroes on any considerable scale into the Spanish continent had long ceased; there had been a prodigious increase of native born negro slaves, and of free blacks owing to the mild government and to the Christian and humane conduct of Spanish proprietors; the whites were rapidly increasing because the climate was no longer dangerous, owing to the removal of the forests; as many missionaries were now going into Africa, it was no longer necessary to bring negroes to America in order to insure the blessings of religion to them; the cessation of the trade satisfied the wishes of the Congress of Vienna—such were the reasons given for putting an end to the trade. The penalty for violating the treaty was confiscation for the cargo and vessel and ten years imprisonment in a fortress in the Philippine Islands for the purchaser,

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. iv., p. 68 ff; *Pezuela, Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 291.

captain, master, and pilot. The negroes in the cargo were to be freed.

So far as the intentions of the government at any time are concerned the cedula stated the truth: it had allowed importations to supply deficiencies in labour for development, and Cuba had enjoyed the privileges longer than any other colony; for the importation on any considerable scale of slaves into the Spanish continent had long ceased. The government had supposed that the island would fill up with labour as the continent and Santo Domingo had done, but it failed to comprehend the situation in which Cuba was placed. Cuba had become the centre for the international exploitation of coffee and sugar—its demands for slaves were beginning at the point at which those of other colonies ended. The islanders, however, showed their knowledge by stipulating that the suspension of the trade must be accompanied by active measures for increasing the number of white labourers; but even they did not foresee, that for a time at least, the immigration of whites would add to the demand for slaves. It was a sad blow to the hopes of investors, actual and perspective, Spanish, Cuban, and foreign, in all lines of activity touching the island, as well as to the aspirations of the republican patriot, to find the road to wealth closed to the island by this act. Small room for wonder then that loss of the ever-faithful isle on its account was narrowly averted. Hereon the state-

ment of an eminent Cuban writer is important, as it shows the opinion which became current in Cuba on the treaty:

The movement was not a national one and only culminated through outside pressure which the ministers opposed as long as possible. The traders therefore felt that they could act with impunity. The colonials never believed in the sincerity of the government, thinking that the import of slaves would give satisfaction, and they looked on the suppression as a calamity which had been brought about by the desire of Great Britain to rid itself of a competitor which was supplanting its West India colonies. This idea was reinforced by the conditions at a time when Cuban agriculture had taken, thanks to the advantages of peace, a sudden start which was more difficult to restrain because of the grant of free commerce with all nations. And as yet no writer had arisen either in Spain or the colonies to give direction to the humane movement and teach the colonials their own interests.¹

In view of the protests which were coming

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 94 *et seq.*

Andueza, *Isla de Cuba*, p. 145. "Por cualquier aspecto bajo el cual se mire el tratado, se conocerá que en el obro la precipitación, el mezquino interés, y que no se respetaron derechos sagrados, faltándose al mismo tiempo á las consideraciones que dictaba la política y la justa y verdadera conveniencia pública," quoted from "Observaciones sobre la suerte de los negros del África, considerados en su propia patria y trasplantados á las Antillas españolas, y reclamación contra el tratado celebrado con los ingleses en el año de 1817." This purports to be from the protest of the Diputación Provincial de la Habana made to the king in 1818, Madrid, 1821.

in from Cuba it began to appear that too much haste had been used in stopping the trade, and the British government made serious inquiry into the intentions of Spain.¹ The problem might have been examined more sympathetically by the Council of the Indies, but the rapid development of Cuba in the two following decades could scarcely have been foreseen. The government wavered when it saw itself called on to trample down its most flourishing colony. On the other hand it lacked the physical power to crush a determined rebellion. At this time Spain was losing her American possessions, Cuba was constantly threatened by attack or revolt, the French invaded the peninsula, and the country itself passed into a long civil war—thus chaos and necessity aided the designs of those who wished to see the trade continue.

According to the census of 1817, the total population of the island was 553,033, an increase of 103 per cent. since 1792; there were 239,830 whites, showing 93.5 per cent. increase, 114,058 free coloured, 110.6 per cent. increase, and 199,145 slaves, 135.4 per cent. increase.² The highest percentage of increase of whites was in the Occi-

¹ Cf. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. viii., p. 124, Nov. 19, 1818.

² Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural de la Isla de Cuba*, suplemento, pp. 9, 11. The increase of population from 1791 to 1810 had been very rapid. The suburb of Habana called Guadalupe increased 278 per cent.; whites 251 per cent., free coloured 295, slaves, 310. *Recueil des diverses pièces*, p. 144.

dental, 70.8; of the free negroes in the Oriental 241.1; of the slaves in the Oriental, 227.8. The relative increase of the free coloured and the slaves were higher than that of the whites, and it appears that the combined number of free coloured and slaves, which in 1792 was about equal to the number of whites, now exceeded it by a large margin. The comparatively small increase in the Centro, whites, 11.3, free coloured, 24.5, slaves, 68.9 per cent. shows the smaller amount of activity devoted to that part.

The government did not fail to adopt the supplementary measures recommended by the Council of the Indies for the benefit of Cuba and intended to counteract the effects of the suspension of the trade. The Real Cédula of October 21, 1817, granted special land privileges to settlers, which were an extension of like privileges granted to Puerto Rico in 1815. The cedula was modified and extended by the Cortes in 1821, so that settlers under the earlier grants might receive extensions of their holdings when brought under cultivation.¹ If Cuba was to prosper and reasonably develop its resources it could no longer be bound by the existing restrictions on its trade, so the policy inaugurated in 1764, and continued from time to time of dropping one restriction after another, was now carried a step farther by the

¹ Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 301; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. viii., p. 1306; *Niles's Register*, vol. xiv., p. 96; Bachiller y Morales, *Historia de letras*, vol. iii., pp. 186, 199.

royal decree of February 10, 1818, which gave Cuba open trade with all foreign nations.

This measure had been proposed by Alejandro Ramirez, a Spaniard, superintendent of the Hacienda, or Treasury Department, at Habana, who was seconded in his efforts by Arango. At the same time the old factory monopoly of tobacco was destroyed,¹ allowing great extension in that branch of industry. Habana was given the privileges of a port of deposit, which attracted capitalists and made the port the centre of a large trade.² Many settlers took advantage of the opportunities for obtaining land under the liberal proposals of the Spanish government, particularly French families from Louisiana, some of those whose ancestors had fled in 1808; and many Spanish families from East and West Florida.³ The town of Cienfuegos was settled in this way with colonists from Louisiana in 1819.⁴ Refugees from Mexico and South America came in large numbers to add to the stream of prosperity.⁵

In order to carry on the agricultural development of the island, which included the installation of new machinery for sugar making, the opening

¹ By *real decreto*, 23 diciembre, 1817. Since 1740 the monopoly of supplying Spain with tobacco had been in the hands of the Real Compañía mercantil with disastrous effects on the industry. Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana*, vol. i., pp. 392-3.

² Humboldt, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

³ Niles's *Register* vol. xiv., p. 271.

⁴ Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 301; Humboldt, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

⁵ Pezuela, *Necesidades de Cuba*, p. 31.

up of new estates, as well as the purchase of slaves, in short, making those changes which the progress of the acts and the keen competition of rivals both foreign and domestic required, the proprietors or hacendados became borrowers. This led to "the more intimate connection between the country proprietors of the sugar manufactories and the merchants of the Habana, and the great capital employed by the latter in agricultural establishments."¹ The hacendados were chiefly natives of the island.² The great majority of the Spaniards lived in the cities, especially in the great commercial city of Habana. Two results flowed from this linking of interests: the commercial class of Habana became strongly opposed to measures designed to stop the trade in order to protect the capital which they had loaned, thus becoming more and more identified with the trade itself,³ the nerves of this element centred in the Casino Español; the second result was that the proprietors, entangled in the meshes of the same net, had to struggle to meet their obligations, which could not be done from season to season without fresh labour, so they, too, were forced to support the *status quo*. Habana, enwebbed by these relations, came to stand for a well-defined principle; namely, the protection of its interests. As this city constituted the main strength of the

¹ Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre la Isla de Cuba*, pp. 193, 199.

² *Lettres sur la Havane*, p. 43; Cabrera, *Cuba*, pp. 190, 214.

³ Masse, *Cuba et la Havane*, p. 286.

island, it would soon become apparent that if Spain wished to preserve its dominion the desires or interests of this part of the island must be consulted. It will be seen, therefore, that the attempt of the liberal party in Spain to spread their institutions into Cuba resulted in failure because merchants and planters could see no way of saving the wealth of the island without slaves, nor of admitting democratic institutions without setting free a hazardously great number of negroes.

In this particular the contrast between the Occidental and the Oriental is again very sharp. Up to this time the Oriental had participated in the great development and prosperity; it had received a good share of the emigration and had been able to invest capital in new plantations and in placing new machinery in the old ones. The great increase of the number of its slaves shows this, not to mention that of the free coloured, but in the ten years following 1817 there was a great falling off in this prosperity and the number of slaves increased only slightly. Here the proprietors had no prosperous trading class to aid them in development, and when the days came when it was necessary to discard old methods entirely in order to keep up with the rapid improvements in the manufacture of sugar they were left completely behind; the larger amount of capital required for a big ingenio made it yet more difficult.¹ The eastern end became more and more

¹ Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre la isla de Cuba*, pp. 182, 201.

dissatisfied with the state of affairs, and the opposition to revolutionary ideas correspondingly weakened.

As a rule Spaniards had refrained from participating in the slave trade beyond a very limited extent; a few more had entered it after 1806; but the great majority of vessels in the trade were British and American, sailing under the Spanish, Portuguese, and American flags.¹ From 1810 to 1812, the introduction was over 6000 per year; in 1813 and 1814, it was 4300 in each year; in 1815, it was 9111; in 1816, 17,737; in 1817, 23,560.² The heavy import in the latter years was due to better prospects of prosperity and to the fear that the trade would be prohibited. In 1820, the number introduced through the port of Habana was 17,194 and in 1821, 4122.³ From 1790 to 1821 inclusive, 240,721 bozales were brought to Habana. There was some importation into the eastern end most of which went to Santiago; probably this trade did not exceed twenty-five per cent. of the Habana import.⁴ This would give a total import for the period of 300,901.

¹ Cf. Depons, *Voyage to Terra Firma*, vol. i., p. 156; Walton, *Present State of the Spanish Colonies*, p. 144; Andueza, *Isla de Cuba*, p. 148; Masse, *Cuba et la Havane*, p. 253; 2 *American State Papers*, vol. v., pp. 101, 104; *Parliamentary Papers*, 1819, vol. xviii., p. 15; *Niles's Register*, vol. vi., p. 152.

² Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre la Isla de Cuba*, pp. 143-4.

³ *Ibid.*; Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 285. The figure for 1821 appears to cover a part of the year only.

⁴ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 83; *Papeles sobre Cuba*, vol. i., p. 165; Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 285.

The import at Habana, 1818-20, was 95,817. In 1819, the 15,147 bozales landed at Habana and sold at \$400 each represented the sum \$16,058,800.¹

The British Government early decided to locate their mixed commission court in Sierra Leone, and the Spanish Government announced that theirs would be located in the Canary Islands, but agreed to place it at Habana on request of the British minister. The Spanish commissary judge at Habana was Alejandro Ramirez, the intendant of the island; and Francisco Arango, counsellor of the Indies, was commissioner of arbitration. The British officials were J. T. Kilbee and R. F. Jameson. Before the time set for the expiration of the trade arrived it became apparent that the five months allowed by the treaty for the completion of voyages legally commenced before May 30, 1820, was too short, if the vessel shipped her cargo anywhere south of the line, and ships had often to go as far as Mozambique to obtain a cargo. Ten months was considered a fair length of time to allow for a voyage.² A request that the limit be extended was made to the Spanish government which asked the concurrence of the English government. It was generally believed at

¹ Prices for healthy bozales ranged from \$370 to \$450, *Niles's Register*, vol. xvii., p. 44; Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre la Isla de Cuba*, p. 179; *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, Class A, vol. xxvii., pp. 120-1. The import of 1819 was estimated on lowest valuation at \$5,000,000, *Lettres sur la Havane*, Huber, *Aperçu de l'Île de Cuba*, p. 163.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. viii., p. 201, Kilbee to Hamilton, February 6, 1820.

Habana in trade circles and by the Spanish authorities that the request would be granted, and the Spanish commissioners refused to take any part in condemning vessels until a reply to the request had been received. It certainly was unfair to condemn a ship which had properly cleared and had been forced to extend its voyage in order to obtain a cargo. October 30, 1820, passed and slavers continued to arrive at Habana and discharge their cargoes without molestation. The captain-general and the intendant told the British commissioner that all slavers would be admitted which had legally cleared before May 30th, until orders to the contrary arrived from Spain.¹ At the same time a delegation from Habana was in Madrid urging the new government to secure an extension of the trade.² In view of these things the British minister under orders from London protested strongly, and was finally informed on August 27, 1821, that the authorities at Habana and Sierra Leone had been ordered "to proceed, in as far as regards them, to the faithful execution of the stipulations of the treaty which fix the thirtieth of October, 1820, as the final term."³ On December 10th, the British commissioners were informed that orders to carry out the treaty had been received.

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. ix., p. 51.

² Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., pp. 96-7; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. ix., p. 55.

³ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. ix., p. 58. The dissentient members of the Council of the Indies had recom-

The Cortes almost unanimously appointed a commission, March 26, 1821, to propose measures to stop the violation of the treaty and abuse to the Spanish flag.¹ The committee reported, its measures passed the three readings without objection, and a day was fixed for vote. The president of the Cortes then announced that the government had suggested the expediency of consideration in secret session; after some opposition, the assembly went into a long secret discussion, at the end of which it was announced that there were "no grounds for coming to a vote." This seemed to the British authorities a very serious lack of good faith. However, the action seems explicable on the ground that the decree of the king in 1817 had already provided laws to cover the enforcement of the treaty. The decree stood as law of the land, but it might be expected that it would be incorporated in the new criminal code drawn up by the Cortes, and this was accordingly done in the Code of 1822.²

R. F. Jameson, the British commissary judge, sent in a long report of the slave trade in 1821. From October 31, 1820, to September, 1821, twenty-six slavers had entered Habana with 6415 slaves. Of these, eighteen used the Spanish flag, five the French, two the Portuguese, and one the

mended April 22, 1821, as a final date. *Ibid.*, vol. iv., p. 536 ff.

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. ix., p. 53; Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 99.

² *Ibid.*, vol. ix., pp. 60-1.

American. Not one had been judicially noticed by the government, vessels were still fitting out and sailing openly for the slave trade. No capture had yet been made either by Spanish or British cruisers. It was indeed a very difficult undertaking to blockade the coast against the illicit traffic, and the commissioners expected little help from the navy. The island of Cuba presented a coast line of over two thousand miles, very little of which could be said to afford a cruising ground which would not be justly dreaded by a vessel of war. About fifteen hundred vessels annually entered the ports of Cuba, and, as it was not possible to tell a slaver from another ship by simply looking at her, the alternative of bringing-to all of them was presented, an extremely difficult and aggravating duty. The shipment of slaves between the Spanish colonies was still permitted and exposed the captors to heavy responsibility. The same difficulties were not present in guarding the coast of Africa, where the duty was comparatively simple.

From the above mentioned causes it would appear that the power of preventing and punishing illicit trade does, and must rest entirely with the local government. The tone it takes, and the apparent insufficiency of naval police, seem to have given encouragement to illegal traffic, which, even in the supposition of the zealous and unimpeded vigilance of both, it would too strongly meet with in the enor-

mous profits usually realised by slave dealing. Vessels are publicly clearing out for Africa, whether in legitimate trade for gold dust and ivory is a doubt that is only answered here by a smile. Two schooners are now fitting out in the harbour of Habana expressly for the slave trade. At Matanzas, Nuevitas, Trinidad, Baracoa, and Batabanó, it is carried on with perfect impunity; and it is only ten days ago that a cargo of negroes, landed at the latter port by a French brig, were publically advertised for sale in the Havana. The majority of the vessels that have lately sailed on the well understood voyage to the African coast have cleared for other destinations. Some to Montevidéo, others to Teneriffe, Cape Verde Islands, and Princes Islands. The voyage is patronised by some persons of established credit, and *acionistas* (or shareholders) are admitted to bear its charges. The shares are as low as \$100, and are eagerly sought for.

When the vessel returns from Africa, if the principal owners have sufficient weight and influence, she touches at Puerto Rico and provides herself with a passport for the total or surplus cargo to this island, thus removing all subsequent danger of seizure. . . . If she is without this, she directs her course through the Cayos, which lie around the north and south-east part of the Island, into one of the bays on the coast; the cargo is frequently bespoke; if it is not, it is conveyed to the plantations of the consignee, and either sold from thence in parcels, or as I have known in several instances, marched to the Habana as "the stock of a planter about to retire."¹

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1822, Further Papers Relative to the Slave Trade, vol. iii., pp. 82-4.

The British commissioner thought that there were about 155,000 slaves on the 750 sugar plantations in the island; 54,000 on 900 cafetales; 36,000 on 13,700 minor estates such as tobacco vegas, cattle ranches, and farms, which were often worked by free people of colour; and 20,000 household slaves.¹ The development of coffee estates had been very rapid and absorbed a large part of the import. In 1816, Habana had exported 370,229 arrobas of coffee and 40,097 tons of sugar. It takes six or seven years to get a coffee plantation into full bearing, so the trend of development about the year 1820 will be shown by the export in 1826; in this year 1,773,778 arrobas of coffee were exported from Cuba, and 73,381 tons of sugar.² Sugar plantations were returning seven per cent. and the coffee plantations over thirty per cent. in 1821.³ Coffee required a smaller capital than sugar and therefore made a particularly favourable investment at that time. Many persons of some wealth were seeking an asylum in the island from the opposite shores, attracted by the very favourable grants of land made by the local government. About fifteen hundred persons annually came to settle from Europe as well as Florida, Mexico, and South America. Not one of these persons, if above the

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1822, Further Papers, vol. iii., pp. 82-4.

² Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, vol. ii., p. 84.

³ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1822, Further Papers, vol. iii., pp. 82-4.

condition of mere labourers, could form even a domestic settlement without slaves; this new source of demand for slaves was continually forming, and the fact that there were 14,000,000 acres of arable land of which scarcely 3,000,000 were in cultivation gave assurance that the demand was not likely to cease at once.¹ White emigrant labourers sought employment on tobacco vegas, cafetales, and in the towns, and often sought in the end to become proprietors of small farms; but only to a slight degree did they enter sugar ingenios.

The arrival of circular orders in November, 1821, addressed to the captain-general and authorities of Cuba, ordering the enforcement of the treaty, marked a change, the first step in the actual suppression of the trade. The trade was now distinctly contraband, and no more slavers were actually allowed to enter the port of Habana.² The Mixed Commission Court had its first chance to exercise its functions soon after this, when the Spanish privateer *Páxaro Verde* brought into Habana the cargo of a wrecked Spanish schooner and laid claim to them; the captain-general referred the case to the court, which declared its incompetency on the ground that the captor was not a government vessel. The owner claimed

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1822, Further Papers, vol. iii., pp. 82-4. Emigrants from Florida had their slaves admitted by the captain-general in 1823 on strict proof of ownership. *Parliamentary Papers*, 1824, class B, vol. xxiv., p. 171.

² Kilbee and Jameson to Canning, *African Reports*, vol. v., p. 233.

that he had bought the negroes in the Cape Verde Islands, and as there was no evidence that he had not done so the authorities had nothing to do but let them enter.¹

In September, 1822, the French schooner *Marie* entered the Habana from Africa with a cargo of 176 negroes, saying that she was bound for Martinique but had been chased in by a privateer. The grounds were improbable, and it was doubtless intended to repeat the expedient of claiming the benefits of a harbour of refuge. She was ordered to leave as soon as possible, and a guard of soldiers was put on board to prevent any attempt at landing while in the harbour. The vessel sailed, avowedly for Martinique, and there were strong grounds for supposing that she landed her cargo on the coast shortly afterward.² A ready means of avoiding the consequences of the law was by renewal of royal passports used in the legal traffic for fresh voyages by means of notes or memoranda endorsed on the margins. The passports, of course, bore the signatures of local authorities, and some cases may have existed where the annexations were made by them either fraudently or under cover of plausible pretext, but it is more likely that the additions were made by the traders themselves. The abuse brought out a strong protest from Lord Londonderry, and

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1822, Further Papers, vol. iii., p. 85.

² *African Reports*, vol. v., p. 61.

positive orders were sent from Spain to stop it.¹ It does not appear that this means of evasion was continued. The effect of the action of the local government during the early stages of the operation of the treaty had been to stop smuggling into the port of Habana, but as the trade was driven beyond the direct control of the captain-general it became more necessary for him to depend on others for the enforcement of the laws.

Under the treaty a vessel could not be seized unless it had slaves actually on board at the time of seizure, so if she only succeeded in landing her cargo she might proceed anywhere and in any manner she pleased, even bearing all the marks of being in the illicit trade, or having unloaded in plain view of the captor. An explanatory article, agreed to December 10, 1822, had sought to remedy this defect by declaring that "if there shall be clear and undeniable proof that slaves have been put on board for the purpose of illegal traffic on the particular voyage, the vessel shall be detained and finally condemned."² This law was not communicated officially to the Spanish commissioners, nor to the captain-general for over two years³; the omission seems very strange and is explicable only by the woful confusion which existed in the home government at that

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. x., p. 179.

² *Ibid.*, vol. x., p. 87.

³ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, vol. xxvii., Class A, p. 154.

time. Such seizures would in almost every case have to be made in the harbours of Cuba or at least within the three-mile limit, which would evoke very delicate questions of sovereignty if made by the ship of a foreign nation.

The British commissioners felt fully confident that captains-general Mahy, Kindelan, and Vives were completely sincere in their expressed desire to enforce the treaty, but there were great difficulties in the way of carrying out these intentions. It is clear that the Spanish navy as a matter of national honour and self-respect resented the interference of a foreign power in the domestic affairs of the nation and had no intention of being used as the instruments for enforcing its dictations. Vives told the judges that his authority over maritime and commercial matters was very limited, the examination of ships' papers belonging to the navy department over which he had no control. But when a slaver came into the harbour after having landed a cargo somewhere on the coast, an examination of the crew and papers would show that the vessel had sailed from some port of Mexico or South America making it impossible to verify the details. The navy department soon disclaimed all responsibility for examining into the places of departure and objects of the voyages of vessels, that duty it was claimed devolved upon the intendant of the island. The case stood, then, that the officers of separate departments must collect sufficient evidence to warrant re-

porting a vessel as suspicious; it would thereupon belong to the captain-general to take measures against her if the facts warranted it.¹

Cargoes at this time were run at such places as Cabañas, Bahía Honda, Mariel, and Batabanó. Even from these near-by places news travelled slowly, and information reached the judges and captain-general too late to be of avail for the detection of the smugglers. It was not until the vessel entered Habana after landing her cargo that the officers were in a position to get any facts concerning her.² With timely warning it was a very difficult matter to capture a cargo. General Vives received information several days before the *Decamisada* entered Habana, that she had landed a cargo near Bahía Honda. He at once sent a detachment of soldiers to take the negroes, but owing to bad weather the column was delayed on the road and on his arrival the officer was not able to find any trace of the cargo³; the governor ordered the captain of the port to examine the ship's papers and crew, but no suspicious circumstances were reported which justified further proceedings. The governor said he was very sorry that his exertions had not been successful this time, and that he was resolved to do everything in his power to stop the trade, and invited

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, Class A, vol. xxvii., p. 129; p. 66 *et seq.*

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xv., p. 227.

³ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1824, vol. xxiv., Class B, p. 177 *et seq.*

suggestions at any time from the British commissioners.¹ It was absolutely necessary to have certain proof before entering upon legal proceedings, and this proof was hard to get. After one of those fruitless references to and replies from the captain of the port,

his Excellency did not profess to be satisfied with these assertions, but he expressed his conviction that the undertaking a prosecution without bringing it to a successful conclusion (of which in the present state of things little hope could be entertained) would unavoidably tend to the increase of the evil of which I complained.²

The continuance of the illicit trade and failure of all attempts to capture an expedition led the commissioners to suspect that the authorities were conniving at the evasion of the law, and they went so far as to intimate this to the captain-general. In a note to Kilbee of June 21, 1824, General Vives says:

I must add, that, having observed a paragraph in your note which may effect my responsibility, I am under the necessity of doing away with the impression it might make without delay. It relates to your having stated to me, on various occasions, that the illicit slave trade was carried on in this island, to which I replied, that, although I had had similar information, I had not received official intelligence from any of the

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1824, vol. xxiv., Class B, p. 177 *et. seq.*

² *Ibid*, 1825, Class A, vol. xxvii., p. 64 *et seq.*

local magistrates of the fraudulent importation of slaves, for which reason the laws have not been put into execution against those aggressors, but the Government on its part has fulfilled its duty by circulating and repeating the strictest orders, to see if it could succeed in the apprehension and punishment of the violators of a treaty solemnised between our respective Governments.¹

In view of the complaints of the British government, a royal order was issued January 2, 1826,² ordering that every vessel upon its arrival in Cuba should immediately deliver up its log-book to the naval commandant. If an examination of it developed any suspicion that the vessel had brought negroes he should at once report to the captain-general so that he could proceed at once to investigation and punishment. But this only led to the possible quibble, that unless the log-book had an entry, in so many words, that the ship had sailed from an African port with a cargo of slaves, there was no ground for suspicion. Of course, the log-book was useless for evidence. The order states that the captain-general must proceed only with advice of his assessor.

The order contained a far more important clause,

that any person, of whatever class he may be, may denounce the negroes who shall be received by smuggling, and, should the informer be a slave, that, in the

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, Class A, vol. xxvii., p. 75.

² *Ibid.*, 1826-7, Class A, vol. xxvi., p. 111.

very act he becomes free, the purchaser being fined two hundred dollars for each of the slaves he shall have acquired.

A slave might denounce the name of the ship which brought him and thus obtain his liberty, provided that the ship had landed after the date of the order. The Archbishop of Cuba and the Bishop of Habana were ordered to impress on their rectors and people that the trade was no longer permitted in conscience, "a real robbery having been committed by those who should acquire any of them fraudulently."

This order was duly published and was a far more serious blow at the trade than any of the laws which preceded it, because it applied to the slaves themselves. The falling off in the trade in 1826 was due to the deterrent thus offered, because people wished to see what effect the new law would have and how it was to be enforced. It made new precautions necessary and when these had been taken the trade went on as before. The British commissioners thought that this law, too, would become a dead letter by the system of devolving on inferiors the responsibility of examining slavers on arrival; they thought that the captain-general alone should be responsible. However this may be, the provision requiring the reference of all cases to a legal advisor was a proper one, for the captain-general could not be expected to act without legal advice, and the presumption was that all procedures must be in

due legal form. Perhaps this attitude of the government was too conservative, but it is difficult to see what else could have been done; he had to depend upon some one.¹

The captain of the Spanish schooner *Tres Manuelas* picked up five English shipwrecked seamen and brought them to Cuba where they swore to depositions before the British commissioners stating that the *Tres Manuelas* was engaged in the slave trade; the depositions were given to the captain-general who said that they would be given the proper course, which meant that they were turned over to the Auditor of War for his opinion. The latter reported that the British commissioners, acting without their colleagues, had no authority to take depositions, that the case, therefore, should not be proceeded with. The captain general sent the case together with his own report to Madrid, where it was referred to the Supreme Council of the Indies. In consequence a real órden of June 30, 1828, was issued

that the Auditor of War ought to be reprimanded for not having proceeded to the examination of the English mariners, and for not having taken such further steps as were necessary to ascertain the fact

¹ The smuggling was very active on the south coast. "Casi nunca llegaban estos hechos al conocimiento oficial de las autoridades; si los sabían en privado y confidencialmente, era cuando ya era difícil impedirlos entablar procedimientos." Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., pp. 292-3.

of the alleged conveyance and disembarkation of negroes.¹

The order directed the captain-general to discontinue the proceedings because the British government did not wish to have the captain prosecuted, because of his humanity in rescuing the sailors. The captain-general was ordered to make a detailed report of the ships which had sailed for Africa since 1820, the cargoes taken out and brought back, of the captures made and measures taken to enforce the treaty,

and since the expeditions to the coast of Africa are nothing more than a pretence to cover the forbidden traffic in slaves, Your Excellency shall procure from the Chamber of Commerce a statement of the articles of legitimate trade which they export to that coast, of the products of that country which are sold in the island or received in exchange.

All of which were to be used by the government as the basis for more specific action against the trade. It was obviously impossible to control the traders in this way. A list of exports and imports to and from Africa showed a very small trade in proportion to the value of the slaves introduced; but aside from this it was not possible to prevent ships sailing for Africa even without cargoes²; Vives required all vessels clearing for

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xvii., p. 665.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xvii., p. 609. Captain-General Ricafort told the Mixed Commission Court that his assessor had informed him that he would be liable for damages for interfering with free commerce, if he persisted in

the coast to give a bond that they would not engage in the trade.¹

All such attempts to stop the trade even if executed with the utmost good-will were doomed to failure. If ships could not sail from Cuba to Africa, they would sail there from somewhere else, and so long as it was possible to land the cargoes, just so long would the trade last. It has never been possible to entirely stop smuggling, and Cuba had had the reputation for centuries of being the home of the most expert persons of this class in the world. To have guarded the coast efficiently would have required the exertions of a large army; it was too much to demand, therefore, that Spain should saddle this enormous expense upon herself. It is indeed doubtful whether under the conditions then established it was a feasible undertaking from any point of view.² Occasionally a slave trader was unfortunate enough to be caught. But the injustice of such cases was palpable. One Spanish captain, who was sent to the Philippine Islands for ten years in 1832, applied for pardon. The government referred the case to Palmerston, and on his acquiescence he was released in 1834.³

No abatement of the traffic followed the order his orders to stop sailings for Africa. *Ibid.*, vol. xxii., p. 34, Class A.

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1824, vol. xxiv., Class B, p. 179.

² Twenty leagues from Habana the country was a wilderness, and so it was with the rest of the island. Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., App., 162, quoted from Varela, *Memoria sobre esclavitud de Negros*.

³ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxiii., p. 66.

of 1828, and the British commissioners urged that nothing short of declaring the trade piracy and enforcing the law against the owners themselves would be successful¹; so, in 1830, another royal order to the captain-general was issued, stating that

his Majesty is desirous that so severe a fine should be imposed, upon so inhuman a traffic, which is so repugnant to the generous feelings of his beneficent heart, that it may put an end to the impunity with which it is carried on, in despite of the Laws and Penalties imposed upon the offenders.²

Decree after decree [says Macleay] has been made, and eluded, and at this very late period, the treaty is merely directed to be observed, while not the slightest precaution is taken to amend the notorious inefficiency of the present state of the Spanish laws. When I venture to make use of the words "notoriously inefficient," I mean in the eyes of the Havana authorities, for I am bound to believe that the Spanish tribunals really deem these laws to be faulty, or they would never have allowed *every* vessel denounced to them by His Majesty's Commissioner to have escaped punishment.³

He declared that neither of the last two orders

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xvii., p. 610.

² *Ibid.*, vol. xviii., pp. 499; 505. Royal Order, March 4, 1830.

³ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xviii., p. 482. Kilbee, June 21, 1824, says he is convinced that the evil is not remedied because of the inadequacy of the laws, not because the captain-general is indisposed to enforce them. *Parliamentary Papers*, vol. xxvii., Class A, p. 75. Macleay thought the orders sufficient if carried out. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xvii., p. 624.

had been published in Habana; but he thought that an excuse existed for omitting the first because it touched upon the slaves themselves and might therefore be dangerous; but no law, he knew, was ever effective at Habana which had not been published, and if it was really intended to enforce it, it would be unjust to do so without fair warning, because the open evasion had been of such long duration.

The traffic as carried on in Cuba at this time was entirely in the hands of the commercial class and foreigners. Those actually engaged included Spanish, English, American, French, Portuguese, and Dutch, having business connections in Europe, the United States, the West Indies, and Africa.¹ Probably very little bona-fide Spanish property was covered by that flag.² Many armed vessels were engaged in the trade, the majority being American ex-privateers from the War of 1812, and some severe encounters are recorded between them and small British cruisers.³ It was some-

¹ Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre la Isla de Cuba*, p. 197; *Lettres sur la Havane*, p. 163,—“Je suis très porté à croire que la plus grande partie des capitaux employés à ce trafic ne provenait pas des richesses de l'île, mais bien de l'étranger”; ² *American State Papers*, vol. v., p. 102; *Further Papers*, 1822, vol. iii., p. 65; *Reports of the Select Committee on Slave Trade*, 1832, § 2612; *Columbian Register*, Dec. 24, 1836; *Niles Reg.*, vol. xlii., p. 224; Gurney, *Winter in West Indies*, p. 219; Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 139; 141; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xvii., p. 161; vol. xviii., pp. 467, 502; vol. xx., p. 157; vol. xxv., p. 94; vol. xxix., p. 283; *18th Report of the African Institution*, p. 84.

² *American State Papers*, vol. v., p. 101.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 102; *Parliamentary Papers*, 1819, vol. xviii., p. 25; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. x., p. 183.

times hard to distinguish between these traders and the pirates who infested West Indian waters,¹ and they often preyed upon each other as an easy way of getting a cargo.² Later, the trade became more regular and vessels, large and small, were built in and sailed from the United States, and small steamers were sometimes employed to land cargoes from the offing.³

Slavers plied their trade from Africa to Brazil, the West Indies, and the United States. The ocean seemed filled with a supply of slavers which, like a body of water, was ready at all times to flow into the first opening that presented itself. Here is the letter of a slave-trading house in Martinique to one of its skippers:

In case any unforeseen misfortune should preclude your returning to Surinam or Martinique, you will go to Porto Rico, to St. Jago, or to the Havannah. In either of these ports you will in default of bills on France, England, or the United States of America sell in preference for specie, or for goods—preferring coffee or cotton; or, if you cannot procure these, white sugar, in chests only; give a good price, but let them be of the best quality. Give the preference to the Havannah where ivory sells best.

It then names houses at each of the above places to which consignments may be made.⁴

¹ *Further Papers*, 1822, vol. iv., p. 30; 2 *American State Papers*, vol. v., p. 343.

² *Niles Register*, vol. xiv., p. 421; Gurney, *Winter in West Indies*, p. 208.

³ Turnbull, *Cuba*, pp. 186, 436; Madden, *In Re Slave Trade*, p. 120; *Senate Document*, 28 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 150, 108 ff.

⁴ Nov. 21, 1821, *18th Report African Institution*, p. 84.

Another interesting letter from a house in Santiago, after setting forth the great advantages of that port for good prices and short credit, goes on to give directions for running cargoes.

If on making Magua they discover a suspicious vessel, they must immediately proceed to the Morro, and anchor under the fort with their signal flying; then they will receive instructions relative to the spot where they must land, and they may without inconvenience send a boat on shore; the commandant, who is devoted to us, would deliver a letter of instructions for the captain. In the event of it being chased, it would be advisable for the vessel to continue her course leeward, as far as the small bay called Assaradero, which is situated six leagues from Fort Morro, where she would meet with assistance; observing, that, in a case of imminent danger, one may run ashore in the first small creek that presents itself: there are always there Indians, through whom a letter can be forwarded to town. When once the cargo is on shore, all danger is at an end.¹

British cruisers could not capture the French flag, and only one cruiser was qualified to capture the Dutch.

We consider, therefore, that there is no longer any risk upon our coast, and that vessels may present themselves with all safety before Magua, where we constantly keep a pilot. The sales meet with no opposition and are carried on in some measure publically.

¹ Dec. 12, 1824, *19th Report of the African Institution*, p. 145 ff. Dutocq's Letter, captured in the "Zee Bloem." *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, vol. xxvii., Class B, p. 20.

A very interesting landing was made on August 16, 1826.¹ On April 3d, the Spanish schooner *Minerva* sailed from Habana for the coast of Africa, and the British commissioners reported the case to the captain-general on April 16th. In the morning of August 17th a suspicious-looking vessel off Cabañas was chased into the port of Habana by two British cruisers. An officer was sent into the harbour, who went on board and found a Spanish officer and guard already on board. Not being allowed to search her, but believing that she did have negroes on board he went to the flagship in port, stated that he believed her to be from Africa, and asked permission to examine her; he was referred to the commander-in-chief of the naval forces; the officer arrived at the Admiralty, stated his suspicions, and was directed to seek the commandant at the governor's. He was not at the governor's, so the officer made a general statement to several officers there for the information of the governor himself, whereupon one of them proceeded with him to the wharf in order to make further inquiry. This officer went on board the vessel, asking the British officer to meet him again at the governor's, where, after the visiting officer had consulted with the governor, he was told that His Excellency was not authorised to submit any particulars about the vessel until she had been officially reported by the commandant of the

¹ The following particulars are taken from reports in *Parliamentary Papers*, 1826-7, Class A, p. 121 ff.

naval forces to whose department the case, as it then rested, entirely belonged, and recommended that he acquaint the said officer with the details. Upon calling at the Admiralty, however, the commandant was reported to be in the country. It then being sunset the officer returned to his vessel. Then the cruiser sent a boat to watch the schooner, and between eleven and twelve at night they saw six boats leave her full of negroes, which they said were landed at one of the principal wharves of the city. In the morning the lieutenant in command reported these observations to the commandant and received permission to examine her in company with a Spanish aid, and found "indubitable proof of her having had on board, and very recently landed, a cargo of slaves."

All these details were presented to the captain-general in a very forceful manner by the British commissioner, and he was asked to proceed against the vessel. Throughout the voluminous correspondence which passed on the matter it is clear that the officials resented the officious activity of the British ships and officers, and Vives took occasion to rebuke the commissioner for many of his remarks and suggestions, saying that he was proceeding according to law, and that he by no means endorsed the action of the commandant in allowing the lieutenant to search the *Minerva*, which was merely an act of courtesy. He did not believe it possible for a cargo of slaves to be landed at a public wharf and

marched through the city, without the police or patrols seeing them. He pointed out that the rumours and notoriety which were advanced as proof were valueless, and that according to the law the log-book of the vessel must be examined by the commandant, and if the facts revealed warranted, he must report at once to the captain-general; the petty justices had been ordered to inquire into the alleged landing on the wharf.

Twenty-six depositions were taken in the case in addition to those of the British officers and sailors.¹ The captain of the *Minerva* swore that no negroes were carried or landed; the pilot did the same; the adjutant who had accompanied the British officer on his visit of examination deposed that he had found no signs or suspicious circumstances indicating that there had been slaves on board, and that the British officer was also satisfied. Twelve members of the crew swore that there were no negroes on board and that they came in ballast. The owner of the quay at which the schooner was moored, and others who were on the dock, swore that they saw no negroes landed. A sergeant of grenadiers, who went on board with a party of mariners to take off seamen for service in the war boats, and likewise an ensign of the Spanish navy, who was on board at the time of the first visit of the British officer, swore that they had seen no negroes in her. In the same manner the testimony of the captain of a British ship and

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xv., p. 308 ff.

some of her crew upon which the British commissioners had relied broke down completely.

In the opinions of the Fiscal, the Auditor of War and the Adjusters of the Registers, the evidence of one British officer was opposed to two Spanish officers and twenty-four other deponents; there was no proof, therefore, and they recommended that she be discharged, and it was accordingly so decreed by the captain-general.

It is an extremely perplexing case. The Habana correspondent of the *Charleston Mercury* wrote that between the time of the first visit of the British officer and that of the Spanish official who went with him from the governor's, the schooner hauled into the dock at Casa Blanca, and the negroes were put ashore and marched into the country.¹ This could have been easily done. A very short time would have sufficed for such an operation, and the interval between the two visits could hardly have been less than two hours. Casa Blanca is on the side of the harbour opposite to the city of Habana; it was the resort of slavers and smugglers. The Spanish ensign made an official visit to the schooner and doubtless took care to leave soon after he turned away the British officer. He said that he did not "see any negroes," but, probably, he did not make any great search after them. The alleged six boat loads of negroes were probably a mistake; they, doubtless, removed the equipment of the schooner.

¹ *Niles Register*, vol. xxxi., p. 60.

The census of 1827 in a total population of 704,487, showed 311,051 whites, 106,494 free coloured, and 286,942 slaves.¹ The total value of 138,992 slaves in agricultural employments was \$41,797,600.² The distribution of the population was as follows:

	<i>Whites.</i>	<i>Free Coloured.</i>	<i>Slaves.</i>
Campo,	.38	.06	.56
Ciudades,	.54	.24	.22

Fifty-seven per cent. of the total population being in the country, and 43 per cent. in the towns.³ Since 1817 the white population had increased 29.6 per cent., the free coloured had decreased 6.6 per cent., and the slaves had increased 44.4 per cent.⁴

It really seemed that the captain-general, surrounded as he was by people who told him daily that the prosperity of the island depended upon the trade and that attempts to suppress it would not only be unsuccessful but would bring general unpopularity and odium upon the government at a very critical juncture, was not inclined to push matters to a definite conclusion.⁵ The number of people who believed that the suppression of the trade was a matter in which Great Britain was actuated simply by the desire to dispose of an im-

¹ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, suplemento, p. 9.

² Sagra, *Historia económica de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 123. This figure includes workers only, not children or aged, and makes the average value \$300.

³ Sagra, *Historia física*, Vol. I., p. 156.

⁴ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, sup. p. 11.

⁵ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, Class A, vol. xxvii., p. 67.

pregnable rival and that so long as the commission was allowed free scope in the performance of its duties, the treaty obligations were fulfilled, was unquestionably large¹; and probably a large number of local officials were financially interested in the ventures in slaves.²

What was needed was a definite plan, carried out with determination by the local authorities, with the assistance of the best classes of the cities.³ The authorities were proceeding along these lines, Vives had stopped the sale of bozales at the Barracoons of Habana, and had driven the trade away from the port. Until effective measures had been taken to provide for the domestic security of the island any further progress was impossible.⁴ The strong incitement held out to slaves to denounce the illicit transaction of the trade created universal alarm and dissatisfaction in Habana⁵; it added very greatly to the dangers of a disordered society if it was understood that the courts were to protect the claims of freedom of all the slaves in the island—all possibility of control over the slaves would have been at an end.

The task of reducing the domestic situation of Cuba into the settled channels of civilised life was taken up by Miguel Tacón, a native of Venezuela,

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 143; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xx., p. 157.

² *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, vol. xxvii., Class B, p. 7.

³ Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre la Isla de Cuba*, pp. 284-5.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1826-7, vol. xxvi., Class A, p. 111. This was in royal order of Jan. 2, 1826.

who had risen to high consideration in military life. If we may trust the judgments of contemporaries and historians, the island was in a condition bordering upon anarchy.¹ Vagrancy, murder, and robbery were common; the free negroes and mixed races were very restless,² and the smouldering political embers threatened to burst into flames of greater fury than those of 1823. Tacón restored order and security, prevented the establishment of the new Spanish constitution in Cuba, and obtained the permanent lodgment in the captains-general of the extraordinary powers granted to Vives in 1825, giving them power to temporarily suspend any law. Hostile as well as impartial observers agree that his rule of four years was of great benefit to the island.³ He punished with impartiality, but as most offenders came from the creole element he has been thoroughly reviled by them.

But if one obstacle to government had been removed by Tacón, another was substituted. The constitution of 1834 had been established in Spain,

¹ Turnbull, *Cuba and the Slave Trade*, p. 54; Letter of Lieut. E. Maisin, in Blanchard et Dauzats, *San Juan de Ulúa*, p. 575; Guitéras, *Historia de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 328; Abbot, *Letters*, p. 114; *Niles Register*, vol. xlix., p. 212; Saco, *Papeles sobre Cuba*, vol. i., p. 205.

² *Un interrogatorio absuelta por el capitán-general D. F. D. Vives*,—Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 373; *Papeles sobre Cuba*, vol. iii., pp. 207–8.

³ Beauvallon, *L'île de Cuba*, vol. i., pp. 298–9. Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 57. Blanchard et Dauzats, *San Juan de Ulúa*, pp. 575 ff. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxiv., p. 49; Tacón wrote a defence of his administration, entitled, *Relacion del gobierno superior y capitanía general de la Cuba*; he says not a word about slavery or the trade.

but its franchises were not extended to Cuba.¹ The Cuban delegates were not allowed to take their seats in the Cortes, and it was announced that Cuba would be governed by special laws. This brought about the final crystallisation of the two extremist parties, Cuban and Peninsular. Between them oscillated the Creole-Spanish element, which was forced by circumstances to take the side of the Peninsulares, but which had strong Cuban sympathies.

It is very hard to see what other course was open to Spain. In 1821, the entire commercial and mercantile element, including the sugar, coffee, and tobacco industries, refused absolutely to be governed by the laws of Spain in the case of the tariff.² To go contrary to the wishes of these people meant the certain loss of the island. To grant unqualified constitutionalism threatened negro rule.³

¹ Tacón was largely responsible for this, having represented the inadvisability of extending the constitution to Cuba. "Siendo incompatible con los condiciones de su ser social, reproduciría los peligros que la pusieron en 1823 al bordo de un abismo y ahora infaliblemente causería su pérdida." Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, p. 110 ff.

² *National Gazette*, Sept. 12, 22, and Oct. 10, 1821; *Niles Register*, vol. lxi., pp. 63-4.

³ Extract of a speech by Deputy Sancho in the Cortes over admitting representatives of Cuba: "If the island of Cuba should cease to be Spanish it must belong to the negro. . . . There is no nation powerful enough to subjugate 400,000 negroes, who under the tropics shall say, we will not be governed by you, . . . some rival power would oppose the design. . . . There is no alternative . . . the island of Cuba must remain under Spanish protection or it must be abandoned to itself. If left to itself, it must become a negro government. The effeminate and enervated whites would not be able to oppose

Spanish colonial administration was designedly contrived so that officials were largely independent of each other. The captain-general received royal orders and passed them on to his subordinates, who were responsible to him indirectly only; he was responsible to the crown for the district which he governed personally, namely Habana. This is a prime reason why the trade was quickly suppressed at Habana while it thrived in other parts of the island. The dispersiveness of local administration prevented the growth of a power which might be dangerous to the metropolis, but royal authority was thereby weakened. In the course of the suppression of the slave trade, however, an absolutism was built up in Cuba alike to the distaste of colonials and peninsulares. Some evidences of this will be pointed out in these pages.

the negro population in that burning climate" June 17, 1837. *Niles Register*, vol. lli., p. 254.

CHAPTER V

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

1835-1844

The Repression of the Trade—Economic Depression—General Valdés—Industrial Changes.

ABOUT 1830, it became clear that it was impossible to suppress the trade under the treaty of 1817 in view of the refusal or inability of the authorities to prevent the open fitting out and sailing of slaves from the ports of Cuba. Palmerston began in 1831 a long series of urgent demands on the Spanish government, pressing it to agree to the detention of ships obviously fitted up for the trade, to declare the trade piracy, and to make laws enforcing order in Cuba.¹ Addington wrote from Madrid, February 9, 1832, that he was not very sanguine of success, but strongly recommended continuing the application again and again until some favourable combination of circumstances gave an opportunity for compelling attention to the demands.² The Conde de Alcudia declined to accede to these demands, saying that

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xix., pp. 174-494.

² *Ibid.*, vol. xx., p. 187.

he had sent to the captain-general for information on the subject, and had given strict orders to stop the alleged abuses; the reply of the captain-general pointed out the grave social and political dangers which threatened the island, and stated that the continued increase of the number of negroes set free in the island by the action of the treaty of 1817 was extremely perilous.¹ The British minister did not fail to urge this aspect of the situation upon Alcudia, who appeared sensible of the evils to be apprehended from a large slave population in the Spanish colonies. The opportunity came in 1835, when the new Constitutional Government of Martinez de la Rosa desired to secure the friendship of a European nation and consented to a new treaty to amplify the old one.

The treaty of June 23, 1835,² once more declared the slave trade abolished in Spanish dominions, and Spain agreed to take the most effectual means to prevent the use of the Spanish flag by slavers, and to publish within two months after the exchange of ratifications a penal law "inflicting a severe punishment" on Spanish subjects taking any part in the traffic; the crews of captured vessels were to be punished according to the law of their country; condemned vessels were to be at once broken up and the owners should have no

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 373; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xvii., p. 633; *ibid.*, vol. xx., p. 159.

² Accounts and Papers, 1844, vol. xiv., Class D, p. 265 ff.; Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 293; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxiii., p. 343.

compensation. Two important additions were made. Naval vessels especially provided with instructions might visit and detain vessels suspected of being engaged in the trade or of being fitted out for it. This was a long way from the old treaty, which allowed only the detention of ships having slaves actually on board. The so-called equipment clause warranted such detention in the presence on board of the paraphernalia common to the trade: a great quantity of mess tubs, mess boilers, water casks; an extraordinary amount of rice, manioca or cassava flour, Indian corn or the like; shackles, bolts, or handcuffs; extra bulkheads or decks, and gratings. The presence of any of these was to be *primâ facie* evidence of slaving. The other noteworthy clause provided that the negroes on board a condemned slaver should be placed at the disposal of the government whose cruiser made the capture, each government guaranteeing that they should be immediately set at liberty and that full information of their condition from time to time should be furnished.

This treaty wrought a great change in the character of the trade; it ceased to be practised under the Spanish flag, ships no longer fitted out in Cuban ports and sailed openly for Africa; it became far more difficult to procure information in regard to the trade, and fewer slaves were introduced.¹

¹ Consul Schenley's letter, May 31, 1836, Turnbull, *Cuba*,

The slave traders were forced to adopt new methods of evasion. Formerly the names of slavers had been registered on books in the slave exchange, now this was forbidden as well as the publication of their arrivals and departures, in the papers.¹ In 1835, 78 out of 80 slavers sailed under the Spanish flag; in 1836, 14 out of 43 carried the Portuguese; in 1837, 48 out of 50, and in 1838, 44 out of 50.² This did not mean, of course, that the trade was actually any different than it had been, but that the law was now in such shape that the risk of capture or prosecution under the old method was too great. The appearance of American-built vessels also became more frequent; in 1837 there were eleven such in the trade and in 1838, nineteen.³ The British commissioners wrote to Admiral Hackett in 1836, giving him the details of this new system, the use of Baltimore-built schooners of 50 to 120 tons' burden, very light and fitted with thirty sweeps, rigged like New York pilot-boats. These schooners were unarmed and very fast and closely resembled the coasting schooners common in Cuban waters, so that they would be very hard to detect and catch.⁴

p. 362. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxv., p. 115 ff. *Jamaica Movement*, p. 20.

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxx., p. 723; vol. xxv., p. 115. The practice of registering bozales in this private exchange seems to have gone on until 1840.

² Consul Tolmé, *Correspondence with Spain*, p. 52. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxvii., p. 256.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxv., p. 95. The famous *Amistad* was one of these matchless Baltimore

The greatest difficulty in dealing with the slave trade lay in the fact that it was thoroughly mixed up with legitimate traffic and exchange.¹ The development of Cuban industries brought the island into close commercial relations with the rest of the world, and the United States were one of its best markets; the codfish, staves, and salt pork of New England were constantly seeking better terms in the island.² The trade offered then a ready and perhaps a necessary means of adjusting trade balances. Commercial houses in Habana with a balance in their favour in New York or New England received a schooner from Baltimore on account of the New York house; the vessel came to Habana, where she was actually or nominally transferred to Spanish owners, shares were opened, and she sailed either with a Spanish captain and crew entered as passengers or with the supercargo or original captain in actual command, and with her original American papers, registry, and colours. It might be thought wise to get a Portuguese registry and thus have two sets of papers on board. The equipment would be picked up at some minor port in the island, or would be sent direct from the United States in an American vessel and trans-shipped in African waters. Both vessels could then take on a cargo of slaves, being protected in African waters by the

schooners. Barbour, *Amistad Captives*, p. 4. Cf. Du Bois *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade*, p. 143.

¹ Archibald Hamilton in *Jour. Stat. Soc.*, vol. xxxi.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxv., p. 1029 ff.

American flag, because English warships could not search American vessels and the United States government had few vessels in African waters, and against the latter the Portuguese flag would be very handy. In approaching American waters the Portuguese guise would be assumed and the cargo landed in an out-of-the-way spot so quickly that all trace of it would be immediately lost.¹

American capital was not alone in this employment. English manufacturers and capitalists were deeply interested, not in supplying the ships but in furnishing the equipment and the goods with which the trade was carried on.² The Quaker, Gurney, was particularly impressed with this feature of the business.

Certain it is [he says] that the articles used in the slave trade, and often transmitted to Africa in American bottoms; are manufactured in England and employ a large amount of British capital. The lamentable fact is, that filthy lucre is often found too strong for moral principle, on both sides of the water. But this is surely no affair of national rivalry.³

These new tactics were designed especially to avoid the danger of being seized by the Cuban authorities or prevented from sailing from Cuban

¹ *House Document*, 26th Cong., 2d Sess., V., No. 115, p. 120. Madden, *In Re Slave Trade*, p. 120. Gurney, *Winter in West Indies*, pp. 213-19. *Accounts and Papers*, 1844, vol. xiii., p. 48. Foote, *Africa and the American Flag*, p. 261. *Columbian Register*, Dec. 24, 1836. It may be added that it was very difficult, if not entirely impossible, to convict a slaver by ordinary legal processes.

² Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 141.

³ Gurney, *Winter in West Indies*, p. 219.

ports. The British ship *Antonio*, Liverpool-built for an Habana house known to be engaged in the slave trade, sailed for Habana under a Spanish captain, where a bill of sale to the local house was produced, and the cancellation of the British registry asked: the British consul having been notified of the facts, refused and left the case to the captain-general, who decided that the ship could not be received under Spanish colours as he had orders to the contrary.¹ In the case of the American consul, N. P. Trist, a more subservient tool was found; he afterwards defended himself at great length in a very complicated paper, from any criminal intention, but the fact is he was very generous or slack in giving transfers of registers and giving out signed printed blank forms.²

As for the equipment clause, it does not appear that the trade was seriously checked by it.³ The Spanish navy made no captures, except the *Maria de la Gloria*, in 1824⁴; the captures by British cruisers on the coast of Cuba became less frequent after 1835 and they came more and more to focus their attempts upon the coast of Africa. The Mixed Commission Court was reduced to a sinecure so far as condemnation proceedings were con-

¹ The case occurred in 1840, and is reported by Turnbull. The ship found means to evade this order of the governor's, by change of name and false declaration. *Jamaica Movement*, p. 424.

² *House Document*, 27th Cong., 1st Sess., No. 34, p. 21; 26th Cong., 2d Sess., V., No. 115, p. 112.

³ Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 364.

⁴ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxx., p. 727.

cerned by it; although two more cases came before it only to be discharged, one in 1848 and the other in 1870. Two slavers were condemned in 1836. In 1837 the Spanish schooner *Vencedora* was brought in with twenty-six bozales. She had sailed from Cadiz to Puerto Rico with a cargo of negroes which had been brought from Africa to that place; the negroes were under hatches all the way from Cadiz, and the passengers did not know that there were any on board. At Puerto Rico she sold part of the negroes and got fresh papers for the rest, and proceeded to Cuba where she was taken and brought in by a British cruiser. The British judge held for condemnation and the Spanish judge for discharge; the case then going to the Spanish Commissioner of Arbitration, he pronounced her free on the ground that the slaves were stated in the papers before the court as coming from Puerto Rico, and having been actually sold to a person in Cuba; and hence not brought to Cuba for traffic.¹ Although the British minister protested against this decision, there can be no doubt that the slaves when captured were in domestic traffic, although the fact might be equally clear that they had been unlawfully introduced into Puerto Rico, and the spirit of the law thus be evaded. There was, therefore, still a gap in legitimate procedure which must be filled before efforts to stop the traffic could be made effectual.

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxvii., p. 321 ff; p. 234. Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 385.

When this gap is filled the final stage in the suppression is reached.

The damages in the case of the *Vencedora* amounted to six hundred pounds sterling. In 1839, two cargoes were condemned and the ships broken up.¹ However, the introduction began to decrease in 1856, and never regained the magnitude it had attained in 1835; the decrease was due more to the domestic restrictions, proceeding from the Spanish and local administration than to similar efforts exerted on the high seas.

The British agents at last became convinced that the stoppage of the trade by purely external means was not possible. When once landed the slave dealer was secure and the negroes could be trans-shipped and sent to any Spanish locality.² Another cause for dissatisfaction lay in the treatment of the *emancipados*, or negroes freed by the Mixed Commission, and apprenticed by the Spanish government. Taking the two together the agents proposed that Great Britain "was entitled to demand the instant liberation of every individual consigned to slavery in any part of the Spanish dependencies since the date of the first convention."³ It was proposed, therefore, that the Mixed Commission Court should be invested with power to investigate the case of any negro held in

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1839-40, Class A, vol. xxv., p. 129.

² Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 343.

³ Turnbull to Palmerston, May 13, 1840. *Jamaica Movement*, p. 24.

slavery and to enforce the law of the country in which it was established. This preposterous suggestion was made to the Madrid government by Palmerston through the English minister.¹ To have carried such a plan into operation would have required the presence of a British army, for the Spanish authorities were unable to stop the introduction. But this invasion of the sovereignty of an independent state would have been only the beginning.

To this proposal the Spanish government replied in a tone remarkable for its good temper and calm statement of fact.² Her Majesty's government was convinced of

the utter impossibility. . . of giving their adherence to a measure which, besides its not being derivable from the literal text, nor even from the spirit of the existing treaties upon the subject, would be the most peremptory renunciation of their authority as government of a free and independent nation, and the strongest avowal of their impotence.

The letter points out that the trade had admittedly decreased very much since 1835; and that the claim of the British agents that the increase of the slave population was due to the illicit trade was not true, because such increase was due chiefly

¹ Aston to Ferrer, Dec. 17, 1840. *Ib.*, p. 38.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., pp. 414 ff. Gonzales to Aston, Dec. 20, 1841. Upon receipt of the proposals of England, Spain had submitted them to the Cuban government for opinion, and this reply, one year later, is based upon that opinion.

to the higher percentage of native-born slaves of late years. The treaties forbade the purchase of slaves on the coast of Africa and outside the coast of Cuba; by no means could the treaty be made to extend to purchases made within Cuba itself; so that the rights of owners acquired during the last twenty years were legitimate,

even the most severe fiscal laws respect acquired rights; and even supposing that this measure could be carried into effect without endangering the security of the island, it would produce incalculable evils, by creating numberless reclamations, law-suits, and demands of eviction and compensation from one owner to another, without it being possible to find out the first purchaser, as it is to be supposed from the changes, inheritances, partitions, and deaths which have occurred in the lapse of twenty years. . . . You cannot but be aware of the very fatal consequences which would be occasioned by calling the negro population to a trial, in which their absolute liberty should be a question. In the island of Cuba there are 660,000 people of colour, and 440,000 whites; this disproportion in the physical forces, excited by the passions peculiar to the black race, would occasion the most ferocious disorder and anarchy, and conclude by reproducing in Cuba the bloody scenes which, at the close of the last century, took place in Santo Domingo; and the island of Cuba, at present rich and flourishing, would become the prey of a savage race, who would even blot its name from among civilised nations.

Another line of objections made by the minister was that it was proposed to make a "fanatical

individual, interested in the triumph of certain doctrines. . . . instigator, informer, judge, and executor of his decision."¹ Turnbull had openly declared that the destruction of slavery in Cuba was necessary to the prosperity of sugar cultivation elsewhere, and his conduct in many ways had been very inconsiderate and irritating to the Spanish authorities, who could see in the proposal no other end than the abolition of slavery. In the years 1830-40 the increase of material prosperity had been nearly one half, the impossibility of getting negroes to work in a country having the abundance presented in the tropics left no room to doubt that ruin would succeed the abolition of slavery. It seemed very strange that Great Britain should make such a proposal to Spain, while similar conditions prevailed in Texas and the United States, and yet no effort was being made there to restore illegally imported slaves to liberty.

Lord Aberdeen stated in reply that the British government did not intend at present to press the question.² This sudden modification of a policy which had been well considered before the demand was made was due undoubtedly to the

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., p. 437. Turnbull suggested that the proper way of determining whether a negro was free or not was to place the entire burden of proof upon the alleged owner. This was at variance with the law in every slave-holding country. Turnbull's activity in this respect met with a rebuff from Aberdeen.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., p. 426, Feb. 12, 1842.

firm and reasonable reply of Spain. But it is quite possible that the British government knew of the interest which the United States government was taking in the matter. That government had never ceased to watch carefully over the "destinies" of Cuba, and in the face of the intense activity of the British agents in the island, it became known to it that Great Britain might take such steps to enforce fulfilment of the slave-trade treaties as would affect the territorial rights of Spain in Cuba; in view of this possible contingency the United States minister at Madrid was "authorised to assure the Spanish government that in case of any attempt, from whatever quarter to wrest Cuba from her, she may securely depend upon the military and naval resources of the United States to aid in preserving or recovering it."¹ This anxiety for the safety of Spanish sovereignty in Cuba was due to the "similarity of its domestic institutions," but at the same time, Spain was urged to stop the slave trade and so remove the cause of fear. But whether the British government knew of these circumstances or not, the Spanish government did know of them, also that the adoption of the British proposals would undoubtedly afford, in fact, grounds for

¹ *House Executive Document*, 121, 32d Cong., 1st Sess., 1851-2, pp. 36-7. Forsyth to Vail, July 15, 1840. Cf. Wharton, *Digest International Law*, § 60. The adoption of the proposal of Great Britain would, of course, have meant the abdication of Spanish authority in the island. The document was printed, 1858, in *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxii., p. 861. ff.

intervention by the United States. Such being the situation, we have ground for believing that the government intended of its own volition to do everything it could, without creating a revolution in the internal affairs of the island, to stop the trade. On March 6, 1841, the new captain-general Gerónimo Valdés, arrived at Habana, sent out by the new liberal government with orders to enforce the treaties.

The replies of the Junta de Fomento and the Sociedad Patriótica of Cuba to the call for information by the Regency on the subject of the proposition of Great Britain give the opinion of the intelligent and patriotic class of Cuba. The Junta de Fomento asked for the cessation of the trade and for white colonisation, which would ultimately give workers enough to do the work more economically than by negroes; but they especially declaimed against any action which would tend to produce a sudden liberation of a large number of slaves; such action could only result in the loss of the island to Spain, not only through the vice and indolence of the blacks which would ruin its industries, but also because the slaves would make common cause with the free coloured against the white man.¹ They

¹ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 184 ff. *Exposición de la Junta de Fomento de la I. de C. á la Ré gencia provisional del Reino, pidiendo, entre otras cosas, la cesación de la trata y la colonización blanca; Habana, Feb. 27, 1841.* "Ya tendríamos el número de trabajadores blancos suficiente para que abaratarán los jornales hasta el punto que los preferiera la agricultura por más económicas que el trabajo de los negros. . . ."

pointed out that the consequences of the proposed convention would be a judicial battle of the slaves for liberty, a cessation of work as in Jamaica, and consequent certain ruin, resulting in a heavy loss for Spain; the spirit of restlessness and insubordination which would result amongst the slaves would make the situation of the island extremely dangerous, and they denounced in strong terms the interference of foreigners in the internal affairs of a sovereign state.¹

The Sociedad Patriótica y Económica replied in the same strain. The adoption of such a project would unquestionably result in the ruin of the island; but the treaties of 1817 and 1835 ought to be fulfilled, so extraordinary measures should be taken at once to promote white emigration to the island to supply the places of the negro workers.²

The Junta de Fomento and the Sociedad Patriótica were the two most influential bodies in Habana, and were large enough to make it certain that their opinions were not those of particular individuals.³ The Junta de Fomento had under its care the development of agriculture and commerce and has played a very important part in the history of Cuba. By analysing a little further the feeling in opposition to the slave trade some interesting facts appear. Unquestion-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 208, ff. Informe de la Junta de Fomento.

² Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 200 ff. Informe del Censor de la Real Sociedad Patriótica, D. M. M. Serrano, sobre el convenio propuesto por el Gobierno de S. M. B. para la abolición del tráfico de esclavos. Habana, Oct. 25, 1841.

³ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., p. 379.

ably there were many planters in Cuba who would not buy bozal negroes¹; some were actuated by the desire to keep clear of the illicit trade, and some by the fear of increasing the number of Africans in the island; but it was not an easy matter, when new hands were wanted to avoid it, because it was not possible to get anything else, and planters had to keep up with their neighbours.² Some proprietors who had succeeded in getting their estates properly stocked with both sexes seemed to have an obvious interest in wishing the trade stopped.³ But these facts show the great demand for labour as well; and many of these older planters undoubtedly would have been glad to have gone on working their old plantations in the old way without being put to the exertion of opening up new ones, as they would have been compelled to do if the influx of new men and capital into the field continued; these people, as affairs stood, were the unprogressive class, who would, if they had had their way, soon have brought the progress of industry to a standstill. What the moderate and progressive class wanted was to stop the trade without checking the development of the island. The new slaves were generally employed on the new estates, rarely by old

¹ *Report of the Select Committee*, Ad. Fleming, § 2613. The slave trade had been forbidden by papal bull, in 1557, 1639, 1741, and again in 1839. *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i., pp. 109-110; Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 47.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xx., p. 157.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. xxxi., p. 381; *Jamaica Movement*, p. 22; Turnbull, *Cuba*, pp. 169-71.

proprietors.¹ The British commissioners, Kennedy and Dalrymple, in their report for 1840, have this to say: "The creoles are against the trade because it does not tend to their benefit, but to that of those opening new estates, who are new settlers. The creole estates are usually well stocked. The new settlers are generally foreigners, a large proportion of them are from the United States; they are regarded as rivals and are therefore distasteful to the natives. As soon as a planter has his estate well stocked, it is his direct interest to have the trade stopped. His stock would double in value at once."²

The issue was clean cut. Three alternatives were presented: stop the trade and stagnate by leaving the industries of the island in the hands of those who wished merely to remain in the positions already secured by them and thus shut off the rise to wealth of the newer or less fortunate classes, a condition which has no place in a new and undeveloped country; stop the trade and bring in other supplies of labour; and, last, let the trade go on. Spain was determined that the lessons taught by the experience of Santo Domingo and Jamaica should not be lost on her. If slavery was to be abolished it must be by a gradual and logical process of evolution, and not by an arbitrary and precipitate action. Spain stuck to this

¹ *Report of the Select Committee of the Slave Trade*, Ad. Fleming, §§ 2613, 2614, 2633, 2573.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxx., p. 726 et seq.; vol. xxxi., p. 381.

policy to the end. It was not an answer to this problem to suggest abolition with compensation to the owners. That, no less would have brought the same ruin. A few proprietors would have thus received a large sum of money and could have left the country and survived well enough, but the great staple industries, sugar and coffee, would have fallen into at least temporary decay and dragged with them a host of dependent industries scattered over the entire island. On the other hand, such a process would have set at liberty a great mass of savage people who, even if controllable at all, would still have made the situation of the island extremely precarious. So far as Jamaica was concerned, slavery had ceased to be profitable there, the slave owners were absentee proprietors who cared nothing about Jamaica, so when the question of abolishing slavery came up they made a furor, but so soon as their injured feelings had been soothed by a sufficient money consideration they quieted down and left Jamaica to take care of itself. In Cuba, the case was very different; there by far the great majority of slave holders were resident in the island ¹ and had an interest in it which went far beyond the payment of the annual dividend. If Cuba suffered they would have to bear the

¹ From this epoch, say from 1835 to 1845, there begins a change in this respect; proprietors tend to live less upon their estates and more in the cities, and the employment of outside capital in sugar becomes more general, but employers were still creoles or resident Spaniards.

burden. The evil of the slave trade which perpetuated itself by the continued importation of men to fill the places of those who died were recognised on all sides.

Another force which helped to bring matters to a crisis was political. The combined slave and free coloured population had outstripped the white, and now the slaves had grown to such numbers that they threatened to overthrow the others. In 1841, the population stood thus: whites, 418,291; free coloured, 153,838; slaves, 436,495.¹ It has been stated many times that the Spanish government intentionally permitted the slave trade to go on for the purposes of building up a great counterpoise to the creole power which was bent upon independence.² The statement is without foundation in fact. The great preponderance of negroes was equally dangerous to Spanish supremacy; the British government had gone so far as to represent to the Spanish government the great danger which threatened the convulsion and even loss of Cuba through the "most impolitic increase of the negro population"³; and the government, Spanish as well as Insular, always regarded the condition as very grave.

¹ Sagra, *Historia física*, suplemento, p. 9.

² *Sessional Papers*, 1844, vol. xiii., Class B, p. 26; Valiente, *Reformes dans les Iles de Cuba et Porto Rico*, p. 6; *Report of the Select Committee of the Slave Trade*, § 2573; *Niles Register*, vol. xii., p. 411; Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 151.

³ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xx., p. 193.

But there is no doubt that the creole revolutionary element looked upon it in this light; that is, that the presence of a very large negro population was a great obstacle to independence, and they accordingly charged the loyal party with the design of keeping up the trade for that purpose. With the facts of the Haitian revolt fresh in their minds and having a clear understanding of them, it was patent that for self-preservation the whites must stand together.¹ It will be remembered that a very large mass of the revolutionary party was composed of free negroes and mixed bloods, between whom and the slaves there was not complete sympathy. The slaves tended to take the side of the government, not only because they were taught to do so²; or because the government enforced the law in their behalf; or because the creoles formed the body of the police which guarded them; but also because the half-breed looked down upon the negro slave and treated him as a degraded person, to whose level he might be forced to sink.³ If independence were accom-

¹ "Les deux couleurs sont dans un état de crainte continue l'une de l'autre," *Lettres sur la Havane*, p. 95. "Es una verdad innegable que la población negra hace muchos años y todavía hoy es la que impone á los blancos insulares y peninsulares la necesidad de mantenerse en íntima union." *Información sobre reformas*, vol. ii., p. 161. Voto de Argudin, 1867.

² *Sessional Papers*, 1844, vol. xiii., Class B, p. 26; *Report of the Select Committee of the Slave Trade*, §2573.

³ *Flinter, Exámen del estado actual de los Negros de la Isla de Puerto Rico*;—"Los mulatos en las colonias españoles tienen mortal antipatía á los esclavos, y anhelando por elevarse á una esfera mas alta, se adhieren firmemente á los blancos,

plished, the withdrawal of Spanish troops and influence presented the possibility that negro domination of the island would result. On the other hand, the slaves afforded excellent material in which to foment revolts and conspiracies. Thus many circumstances combined to make the suppression of the trade desirable.

Space does not admit any account of revolts and insurrections. It is, perhaps, sufficient to remark here that in Cuba there has always been a very striking coincidence of servile revolts and unrest and the periods of economical depression and political crisis. Thus, Aponte's conspiracy occurred in the bad times of 1812, when the radical movement was on in Spain; the revolts in 1820 and 1823 accompanied similar economic and political phenomena; the years 1843 and 1844—time of liberal triumph in Spain and industrial crisis in Cuba—developed a servile conspiracy of extraordinary extent. It is therefore noteworthy that no matter how ready they might have been to free themselves from their condition, the slaves chose moments for their revolts which depended on crises incomprehensible to them—on revolutions in far away Spain or economical effects still more subtle. But these things would be perfectly understood or felt by liberal agitators among the whites who did not fail to take advantage of the opportunity offered by aid from the

con quienes siempre se unen para la comun defensa contra los negros," p. 31-2.

slaves. Political agitators, therefore, were the instigators of the servile revolts. This conclusion is very much strengthened when it is considered that such revolts always involved whites and free coloured as well as creole and bozal negroes¹; another striking feature is that revolts and insurrections commonly took place in those districts lying between the East and West, such as Matanzas and the Cinco villas, regions which were also notable for receiving a large part of the foreign emigration. Fear of servile revolt, due to political unrest, was another element which came in to complicate the slave trade and other problems of Cuba.

Another series of striking coincidences should not lack notice—the revolt of the negroes in Haiti had been accompanied by similar incidents in Cuba; the emancipation of the blacks in the Spanish republics had its effect in negro revolts in Cuba; the emancipation of the slaves in Jamaica in 1833, and the emancipation of the slaves in French dominions in 1848 produced reactions

¹ *Colección de los Fallos de pronunciados por una Sección de la Comisión Militar establecida en la ciudad de Matanzas para conocer de la causa de conspiración de la gente de color, 1844.* Out of 4039 individuals involved, 2166 are given as free coloured, 972 as slaves, and 74 as whites, with 827 not specified. Of the free coloured, 388 were natives of Africa, and 646 of the slaves, and 9 of the whites.

Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 534, "The Cuban publishers of the United States . . . insisted repeatedly upon the union of all the inhabitants of the island, flattering even the slaves and the free coloured, with the concession of the rights which they craved, and adducing in support of their writings the speeches in the Congress at Washington by some

in Cuba. Abolition by the French in 1848 had a marked effect on the movement for annexation.¹

It is clear, therefore, that the institution of slavery was the great obstacle to the establishment of a liberal government in Cuba; the same is true of the slave trade. In Spain itself the government had shaken off its absolutist character and had become liberal and constitutional. This could not take place in Cuba where the first duty of the captains-general was to preserve law and order, which meant in the end to maintain the sovereignty of Spain. This brings out the existence, as opposed to the liberal and conservative parties among the whites, of the third great element in Cuban society, the *mestizos*, mulattoes or half-breeds. This was the most dangerous of all.² They stood inalterably opposed to the whites and forced the latter to combine against their own interests. The coffee industry employed, comparatively, a much smaller number of slaves and a higher percentage of free coloured and whites than sugar. It was the older industry and thus would claim the interest of creole planters

extravagant representations; . . . scattered alarm and anxiety in the minds of many proprietors. . . ."

¹ Valiente, *Réformes dans les Iles de Cuba et de Porto Rico* p. 155.

² MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 81, Caj. 3, Leg. 38. *Carta del Conde de Alcoy al Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de la Gob. del Reino*, Junio 7 de 1849.—"Esta raza . . . , siempre enemigo capital de la blanca, y dispuesta á alzarse para esterminarla."

Queipo, *Informe*, p. 33; Saco, *Papeles sobre Cuba*, vol. iii., p. 207, takes some exceptions to the proposition that the mixing of races is altogether bad; Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 506.

rather than the new planter element which was composed of foreigners and Spaniards, as well as creoles. Its decadence at this time throws a strong light upon the revolutionary movement.

The Espartero government, which represented the liberal party then ascendant in Spain, sent out General Valdés who had taken a leading part in the war against the Carlists, as captain-general, in 1841. Upon his arrival he made it known that he would enforce the treaties to the full extent of his power.¹ He took counsel with the representative bodies of Habana and gave due warning that he should take measures to enforce the treaties. In 1842 occurred the first seizures of bozales by the Spanish authorities²; and vessels were forbidden to engage in the traffic.³ A most gratifying decrease in the trade was observed to take place and this was ascribed to the firmness and determination of the captain-general⁴; in 1840 the number of sailings from Cuba had been 56, and 41 arrivals, while the estimated introduction was 14,470; in 1841 the figures were given as 31 sailings of slavers, 27

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxx., p. 731; *Slave Trade Correspondence*, 1844, Class A, p. 98; *Accounts and Papers*, 1844, vol. xiii., Class B, p. 18; *Jamaica Movement*, p. 144; Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, p. 112; Pezuela, *Necesidades de Cuba*, p. 106.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., p. 437; Valdés to the British commissioner, *Slave Trade Correspondence*, 1844, Class A, p. 95.

³ *Accounts and Papers*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 424; *ibid.*, 1845, vol. x., Class A, p. 107.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. xiii., Class B, p. 18; *Slave Trade Correspondence*, 1844, Class A, p. 98.

arrivals, and 11,800 imported; in 1842, there were 3 sailings, 9 arrivals, and 3100 estimated introduction. It must be remarked, however, that a steady decline of the trade had been in progress since 1837, and that up to 1841 there had been no change in the price of slaves.¹ The process of setting at liberty the emancipados, or negroes rescued from slavery through the Mixed Commission Court, was begun.

General Valdés, deeming the trade at an end, turned his attention to the problem of supplying its place; on November 14, 1842, he promulgated the Reglamento de esclavos.² This really was a reissue of the laws of 1789 regulating slavery, but with more stringent provisions for their enforcement. A discussion of these laws is hardly proper in this place, but the aim of the governor was to better the condition of the negro and render the domestic development of the race more certain, thus assuring a supply of indispensable negro labour; but unfortunately the majority of the proprietors interpreted it as an effort of the government to weaken their dominical control over the slaves, and this brought on a general opposition to it by the hacendados.³ The regulations were such as were universally observed by the best class of owners, and promoted the supply of slaves, provided for gradual manumission, and lessened

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxx., p. 123.

² *Libro de los Síndicos*, 1875, pp. 20-32. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., p. 393 ff.

³ Pezuela, *Necesidades de Cuba*, pp. 108, 110, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 295.

the trade. The only entirely new provision was article forty-eight, which made the lieutenant-governor, justices, and *pedáneos* responsible for the observance of the reglamento. This modification came at a time when the negroes were particularly uneasy, and it seemed certain to the proprietors that continual visits by the authorities to the plantations would certainly reduce the prestige of the overseers in the eyes of the slaves. The law caused very great dissatisfaction,¹ and the captain-general at once issued a circular stating that the article did not empower the authorities to enter into estates nor make any kind of search direct or indirect, but only to report to the superior government of the island any infractions, the reports of whose notoriety should reach them. It remained then for the government to take steps to make the provided penalties effective, if the proper legal basis existed.²

The government then had not been able to fully achieve its end, but another step had been taken. Illicitly introduced slaves might now be taken, after having been landed in Cuba, and considerable numbers were taken from this time forward, but if once placed within an estate they were beyond the reach of the law.

The most important part of the laws of Valdés was that contained in the decree promulgating

¹ Wurdiman, *Notes on Cuba*, p. 260; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., p. 392.

² Circular of Nov. 14, 1842, on the bando of even date. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., p. 399 *et seq.*

the bando.¹ Very little seems to have been said about them at the time, probably because, as is usual in such cases, most people wished to befog the real issue by creating a diversion in some other quarter. These laws were the direct results of previous bandos published in 1792, 1819, and 1828, designed for the strict regulation of the people of colour, both slave and free. No master could receive upon his estate any labourer of colour, unless he produced his free papers or license from his master, if a slave, countersigned in each case by the local authorities.² Slaves found more than three leagues from haciendas de criar (ranches), or a league and a half from other fincas, were to be seized, unless they carried written licenses.³ All persons of colour, free or slave, brought from abroad, were to be immediately seized and locked up, or kept on board, until they could be sent away⁴; and no unlicensed labourers whatever were to be allowed on any country estate.⁵

A strict application of these laws would have produced the result that had been contemplated by the propositions of Great Britain. They would have led to an examination of the *status* of a great number of slaves upon estates in all parts

¹ *Libro de los Sindicos*, p. 163 ff. Decreto del Gobierno capitanía general dictando el bando de buen gobierno, Nov. 14, 1842. Over 260 articles.

² Article 17.

³ Article 21.

⁴ Article 23.

⁵ Article 30.

of the island, would have questioned recognised property, brought on numberless lawsuits, and placed the domestic security of the island in imminent danger. This method of getting at the problem was impracticable. It shows how nearly impossible it was for Spain to take any action which would meet with the approval of any considerable part of the interests of the island¹; the same is true of the people in general.² From all reports the British government was satisfied that General Valdés had done his utmost during his two years to end the trade.³

The trade had certainly nearly ceased in 1842; it was due largely to the determined attitude of the captain-general. People did not care to venture in the trade with such a thick squall in sight. But it was only a lull, before the year 1843 was half over slaves were being brought in again.⁴ Steps were taken in 1842, both in Cuba and in Spain, to have Valdés removed.⁵

"It appears as if the captain-general's power was set at naught by the governors of the other parts of the island. It is, however, indubitable

¹ One third, perhaps, of the proprietors, wished the law carried out. Pezuela, *Diccionarios de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 295.

² Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 506.

³ *Sessional Papers*, 1844, vol. xiii., Class B, p. 15; *Accounts and Papers*, 1844, vol. xiii., p. 18.

⁴ *Accounts and Papers*, 1844, vol. xii., Class A, p. 137. *Ibid.*, 1845, vol. x., Class A, p. 107. Kennedy and Dalrymple report that not over 8000 were introduced in 1843, 19 arrivals and 23 sailings; most of them went into Matanzas province.

⁵ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxi., p. 438.

that an end is put to the trade as far as regards this port."¹

In the summer of 1843, the Espartero government in Spain fell; Valdés was recalled, and left the island September 14, 1843. On November 2d, General Leopoldo O'Donnel, one of the staunch supporters of the Conservative party, arrived as captain-general of Cuba. The events in Spain shortly brought to a close the civil war which had devastated the country for ten years, and left Spain in shape to carry out some sort of a definite policy.²

Before speaking of the next captaincy-general, a series of events which completely transformed conditions in the island must be detailed. The changes were going forward during about fifteen years and explain many things that have been described and make clear the character of the epoch of Cuban history which begins at this time. The era of prosperity which began in the last decade of the eighteenth century extended, roughly speaking, up to the year 1826, when a severe setback occurred, occasioned by a fall in the price of sugar and a rise in the cost of labour; the causes of these phenomena were the active competition of European sugar producers and the shortened

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1844, vol. xii., Class A, p. 137. Kennedy and Dalrymple, July 22, 1843.

² O'Donnel was the first of the long line of captains-general who were associated with the remarkable coterie of leaders in the Liberal-Conservative revolution in Spain; his successors were Roncali, Concha, Pezuela, Serrano, Dulce, Lerundi, and Caballero de Rodas.

labour market. The planters procured better machinery from Jamaica and Europe, introducing, from 1827 to 1831, horizontal rollers for crushing the cane and filters making use of animal charcoal. Although the price of sugar continued to go down the hacendados began to see a way open to escape from the threatened ruin. The price of Habana sugar, which stood at an average of forty shillings per hundredweight in 1826, steadily declined until it reached twenty-seven shillings in 1844. Led by the Real Junta de Fomento, the proprietors and merchants followed closely the development of new processes in Europe and were keenly alive to the opportunities thus presented.¹ In 1840, one of the greatest of all improvements ever made in sugar-making machinery, the modern multiple-effect boiling process, was introduced and in 1841 and 1842 the first harvests were worked with it. In 1843 the new system was in full swing. The more daring only of the proprietors equipped their plantations in this fashion.

As the good land along the coast was taken up and it became necessary to go farther inland, a great obstacle to further development was encountered in the lack of transportation facilities. In 1830, taking a *caja* of sugar from Güines, twelve leagues to Habana, cost four dollars, or about twenty per cent. of its value, and a pipe of *aguard-*

¹ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural de la Isla de Cuba*, suplemento, p. 81 ff.; *Memorias de la Real Sociedad Patriótica y Económica de la Habana*, 1833-1845.

iente cost sixty-seven per cent.¹ In 1835, the construction of the Güines and Habana railroad was begun by the Junta de Fomento and completed in 1838. From that time the building of railroads, cart roads, and bridges went on rapidly, thus throwing open the whole interior of the island, as well as giving a market to the by-products of sugar making.

Kennedy and Dalrymple, in their report of January, 1841, thus sum up the prospects of the island:

"Hardy Spaniards are greatly needed, and unless the immigration of free labour greatly increases, there will be no hope for a decrease in the slave trade. On every side we find proofs of astonishing prosperity, founded on bases too sound to admit a doubt of their continuance; Habana has increased from 94,000 to 130,000 in twelve years, and the development of such places as Cárdenas, Cienfuegos, Nuevitas, Villa Clara, and Puerto Príncipe is even more rapid; five railroads have been completed or are in progress, steamboat lines opened, and roads and streets improved. Rents have increased fifty per cent. in a few years."²

The scene of change and development included another industry. The continued decline of the price of coffee under the competition of Brazil led to the abandonment of many cafetales in this

¹ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural de la Isla de Cuba*, Pt. I., vol. i., p. 244.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxx., p. 724 ff.

period, and their stocks of slaves were transferred to ingenios.¹ This process of abandonment was concluded by the severe hurricanes of 1844 and 1846, which destroyed a great many cafetales. The transference of so many slaves from one industry to another was one of the causes of the cessation of the trade at this time; another cause was the economy of labour secured by the use of improved machinery.

Emigration was going on rapidly. In 1840, 2919 Spaniards and 2847 foreigners arrived in the island, and two thirds of these were thought to contribute to the permanent population.² In ten months of 1842, 5737 passengers arrived, exclusive of recruits for the army; of this number 2223 were peninsular Spaniards, 836 Canary Islanders, and 1524 were from the United States, the balance being made up of French, English, and persons from other parts of Europe and America.³ The Canary Islanders would naturally fall into the class of labourers, so also many of the Spaniards, who would also be commercial men and investors. The French and English would become planters and investors, and the persons

¹ Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 110. The reports of the British commissioner in 1848 stated that 30,000 slaves had been transferred to sugar estates. The government returns showed 38,000. *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, pp. 67 ff.; *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 115.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxx., p. 725 et seq.

³ *Memorias de la Sociedad Patriótica y Económica*, vols. xiii., xiv., xv.; other volumes show that this emigration was sustained. For ten months, 1843, the emigration was 4942, exclusive of recruits. In eight months, 1841, 4425.

from the United States would contribute engineers and mechanics and planters. A large number of English and American planters were coming to the island, or investing capital.¹

The change that was taking place is strikingly shown by a comparison of the number of negroes required for a profitable estate at different periods. In 1825, an estate producing 400 tons of sugar had a stock of 300 slaves.² An average of six estates of the old pattern in the vicinity of Habana, using cattle, water, and steam power, in 1838, gives an output of 243 tons, with an average stock of 161 slaves each. A calculation made by the Real Sociedad Económica in 1849, estimated that with a stock of 150 negroes, a production of 400 tons should be attained with the new machinery.³ In 1854, an estate of ordinary size, 800 tons, called for a stock of 300 slaves of all ages and sexes.⁴ The amount of capital required had increased enormously; in 1825, for a 400-ton estate, about \$100,000; in 1854, about \$320,000. In 1836, an hypothetical estate of 260 tons was used in a discussion of the problem of overcoming the lack of negroes; a stock was proposed consisting of 40 imported labourers and 30 slaves, the first cost to be \$60,000.⁵

¹ Madden, *Island of Cuba*, pp. 83-4; Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 133; Petin, *Les Etats-Unis et la doctrine de Monroe*, p. 242. Spanish capital flowed in freely, *House Executive Document*, 32d Cong., 1st Sess., No. 121, p. 50.

² Humboldt, *Ensayo político sobre la Isla de Cuba*, p. 179.

³ *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, p. 70.

⁴ *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 11.

⁵ *Memorias de la Sociedad Patriótica y Económica*, vol. ii., pp. 42-3. In 1871, an estate near Matanzas produced

Advance in production was going on very rapidly; the average annual production of sugar from 1821 to 1825 was 57,710 tons; from 1836 to 1840, 119,300; from 1846 to 1850, 279,400 tons.¹ In ten years the production had doubled. But it is not true to say that this great increase was due to the introduction of bozales.² The important point to note is that there was an enormous increase of production, accompanied by a decrease in the slave population. In 1841, the slave population was 436,495; in 1846, 323,759; and in 1849 it was 323,897.³ An average of cases at hand shows that estates between 1830 and 1840 were producing sugar at the rate of about one ton per head of negro slaves employed; an average of cases after 1845 gives four tons per head of negro slaves. After 1850, it became the practice to employ other labour than slave in greater or less proportion. Before 1845, a large estate produced 400 to 600 tons; from that time the industry tended to colossal estates producing 2000 and 4000 tons.

The number of slaves, according to the census of

1200 tons of sugar; long before in Jamaica it would have required 900 to 1000 slaves, yet the stock of this estate was only 250 slaves and coolies; it used the best and most expensive machinery. *Accounts and Papers*, 1872, vol. liv., Class A, p. 29.

¹ Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. i., pp. 62-3.

² As intimated by Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 119.

³ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*. Sup., p. 9. The decline had begun before 1841, however. Gen. Concha, *Memoria sobre Cuba*, Table, gives the slaves in 1850 as 322,519. From 1832 to 1854 the production of sugar had quadrupled, so that there should have been 1,050,000 slaves. *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 24.

1841, had increased by 149,553, or 52.1 per cent., during the fourteen years since 1827. Between 1841 and 1846 they decreased 25.8 per cent.¹; the free coloured decreased 2.3 per cent.; the whites increased 1.7 per cent.; the whole population decreasing 10.8 per cent. In the years 1846-9, the slaves increased 0.4 per cent., the free coloured 10.1 per cent., and the whites 7.3 per cent. From 1849 to 1860, the slaves increased 13.4 per cent.² In 1827, the birth rate among the slaves was 4.4 per cent.³; in 1866, it was 9.8 per cent.⁴ The policy begun in 1842 of creating a domestic supply of slaves was succeeding.

In 1841, the 240,263 slaves in agricultural employment were valued at 72,078,900 dollars⁵; the stocks of the ingenios represented 30,000,000 dollars of this amount.

The opening of the markets of Great Britain to Habana sugar by removal of the practically prohibitory duties created a new demand for white Habana sugar, and the price rose, in 1846, from 25 to 56 shillings.⁶ The effect of the British sugar

¹ The great decrease in the number of slaves in the five years 1841-6 has been remarked upon by several authorities, but no adequate explanation has been given. It was due in large measure to the cessation of the import slave trade. It has been thought also that the number given by the census was 50,000 too many.

² Sagra, *Historia física*, suplemento, p. 11.

³ Sagra, *Historia económica*, p. 20.

⁴ *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i., p. 87.

⁵ Sagra, *Historia física*, vol. i., p. 298.

⁶ Tooke, *History of Prices*, 1839-47, p. 432 ff.; Levi, *History of British Commerce*, p. 253 et seq. The Sugar Act, Aug. 18, 1846.

act was felt at once in Habana, where the price of sugar rose fifteen per cent. in a month.¹ The immense sugar estates laid out in the past few years were coming into production, and new ones were in progress of opening. The increased production soon restored prices to the old level, but the industry was now upon a new basis, and the market received further extension through the rapid development of the United States.

Shortly after his arrival, Captain-General O'Donnel received a petition from ninety-four hacendados of Matanzas,² praying for the suppression of the contraband slave traffic. After calling the attention of the captain-general to the great preponderance of the black population, the greater part of which were slaves, they go on to say that it is impossible to keep up the due proportion of whites.

This continued growth of the African population was threatening very seriously the security of the island by the natural tendency of the negroes to revolt, by the presence of agitators, and by the examples of Haiti and Jamaica. This condition kept away investors to the great detriment of the island. They admitted that it would not be easy to stop the trade, but a course of firm persecution, would end in totally suppressing it, and that such

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1847, vol. xvi., Class A, p. 166; *ibid.*, 1847-8, vol. xviii., Class A, p. 66.

² Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., pp. 277 ff., Nov. 29, 1843.

was the only way of saving the island.¹ It was not enough to provide means which would overcome any revolts among the slaves, some method of preventing all uprisings must be found; the revolts in the spring had caused the proprietors a direct property loss in three hundred slaves, not to mention the lives of whites, and other property. It was clear that no method of prevention was feasible until the trade should be stopped.

It was O'Donnel's first duty to take care of the threatened servile revolt, which broke out in the spring of 1844. It was put down and the conspiracy ferreted out in a very thorough manner. His whole attitude gave highest satisfaction; he was thought to be upright, firm, and cautious in the execution of the laws, and to have saved the country from the effects of the conspiracy,² and the petitioners asked that he be continued in command of the island.

¹ "A V. E. está reservada tan alta gloria. . . y V. E. asegurará para siempre á la corona de Castilla su más preciosa joya persiguiendo con tesón el tráfico clandestino de negros africanos, hasta conseguir su exterminio total y verdadero."

² *Accounts and Papers*, 1845, vol. xi., Class B, p. 35. Memorial of several hundred landowners, merchants, and citizens of Habana.

CHAPTER VI

SUPPRESSION OF THE TRADE

1845-1853

Captain-General O'Donnel Suppresses the Trade—Rise of Wages—Distress of the Sugar Planters—Annexation—The Proposed Tripartite Convention.

WE have seen that towards the end of the administration of Valdés the trade showed signs of renewed activity, due in some measure to the failure of the designs of that general. The British agents acted as if seized with panic, reports were sent home stating that the trade was being carried on with the open connivance of officials, and that officials were about to return to the conditions of 1830, and calling for the publication of the penal law provided for in the treaty of 1835. These representations were sent on to Madrid where they were responsible for very visible annoyance on the part of the government. It is not to be questioned that the traders seized the opportunity offered by the engrossment of the captain-general's attention in the formidable conspiracy then in progress, and he may perhaps be pardoned for relaxing a little in this direction,

but he did not admit that there had been any relaxation.

The agents began to continue their practice of sending to the captain-general the reports of every rumoured landing or stray bozal that reached them and calling upon him to cause the law to be executed upon the evil doers. The governor returned these letters saying that the agents had no right under the treaties to make such denunciations, and that the laws were never observed with greater vigour than at this time.¹ This led to a series of protests by the commissioners and replies by the governor, in the course of which Kennedy claimed that the treaties gave him the right to do everything which would aid in its enforcement. There is nothing in the treaty which clearly shows any such right, and if the clauses would receive the interpretation placed upon them by Kennedy he would have been justified in bringing in an army to aid him in his task. Since 1820 the governors had been in the habit of receiving such communications from the commissioners, even Tacón had done so, but they had plainly received them as a matter of courtesy and from a desire to make use of all means of stopping the trade, not as a matter of right. Upon what possible grounds the British consul could base his claims to the same privilege it is not easy to see. Gonzalez Brabo replied to Bulwer that Spain intended to stop the

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 376. O'Donnel to Kennedy, Nov. 19, 1844.

trade, that peremptory orders had been sent to the governor, and that new measures were then being prepared. He said that it was very painful to receive complaints about the Cuban authorities, and that the authorities entirely refuted them. The Spanish government could regard consuls as commercial agents only, whereas, the British consul in Cuba had transformed himself into a diplomatic agent and representative of Great Britain to enforce the treaty.¹

The Mixed Commissioners also went too far, and allowed their zeal to lead them into giving credit to vague rumours. The necessity of preserving the prestige of the government forced the captain-general to enjoin them from making charges against officials. The repeal of the authority, which was granted spontaneously in 1827 to enable the Mixed Commission to take part in the enforcement of the treaty, was indispensable, and the Spanish government felt that it must insist upon it. Great Britain should attend to its own end of the business with her cruisers, and Spain would second her properly.²

It seems unquestionable that the commissioners did oftentimes allow themselves to be stampered by false information, which was likely to be gathered from persons who wished to do everything possible to embarrass the government, and

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1845, vol. xi., Class B, pp. 19-20. April, 8, 1844.

² *Accounts and Papers*, 1845, vol. xi., Class B, p. 21.

which was no more to be trusted than the ordinary demagogic utterances of political parties. Bulwer told Aberdeen that Spain really intended to stop the trade, which was threatening its power in Cuba, but was afraid of losing the moral power on which her sway depended if she appeared to be acting under compulsion or insistence of foreigners.¹ Lord Aberdeen felt it incumbent to tell the consul, Crawford, that in future he should confine himself to his simple consular duties; to the commissioners he read a short lecture cautioning them not to be too free in the use of unflattering remarks.

The British commissioners made little more than a pretence of being fair in their attitude toward captures. Turnbull had made the proposition that a better practice would have been to settle the question of condemnation by a drawing of lots, because in his opinion the Spanish judges leaned to acquittal in doubtful cases.² The case of the *Numa* presents an instance in question. She was a trader out of Barcelona with colonists and wine. She was captured on the ground that she had the materials of a slave deck on board; although it had never been used, and it was shown that it was not a slave deck. The British commissioners admitted that the case was not strong, yet the British judge insisted vehemently upon condemnation. A disagreement was the result, the Spanish arbitrator chosen, and the ship re-

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, p. 19, April 27, 1844.

² *Jamaica Movement*, p. 27

leased. Palmerston gave it as his opinion that the release was correct.¹

Captain-General O'Donnel issued a proclamation² early in December, 1844, declaring that after the first of January all vessels arriving in Cuba with slaves on board would be confiscated. In the following February he consented to receive information from the Commissary Judge of an expedition landing at Santiago, and ordered the charge investigated.³ The ship was seized by order of the commandant of the port of Trinidad, without any slaves on board, but the Mixed Court discharged her, as being at anchor within the jurisdiction of the island the vessel could not be held.⁴ The commissioners thought the case was a blind designed to show the alertness of the authorities.

The law which under the treaty of 1835 should have provided a "severe penalty" for all Spanish subjects caught engaged in the trade, was ready for submission to the Cortes early in 1838, but the press of war business prevented its being taken up; and in the struggles of the civil war which followed the law was lost sight of and forgotten. When Great Britain renewed the demand for the law in 1843, the whole process was taken up again, and the Cuban officials were ordered to report a basis for such a law; what courts should apply the law, "without losing sight of the great interests of the

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1847, vol. xvi., Class A, p. 142 ff.

² *Niles' Register*, vol. lxvii., p. 224.

³ *Accounts and Papers*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 390.

⁴ *Accounts and Papers*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 400.

island"; what ought to be the responsibility of cruisers which injured commerce on unfounded suspicions. The commission appointed for this service consisted of five men: Joaquin Gomez, a former slave trader; Marqués de Esteva, the Spanish Judge of the Mixed Commission Court; Conde de Fernandina, Señor O'Farril, and Señor Arango, whose opinions were against the importation of bozales.¹ All of these men were also slave-owners.

The law as finally passed,² provided that the captains, supercargoes, pilots, and mates of slavers taken under treaty with bozales on board shall be condemned to six years in presidio, if taken without resistance, or eight if they resist capture. If any deaths or wounds occur from such resistance, the penalty is to be increased according to law. In like manner the sailors are to be punished with four and six years in presidio. If the ship is in the trade but is taken without slaves on board, the penalties are reduced to six years, if on the coast of Cuba, or four years if on the high seas, in each case. The owners of the vessels, outfitters, owners of cargo, or consignees, shall be condemned to

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1845, vol. xi., Class B, pp. 62-8. The Junta de Fomento, or Board of Public Works, was opposed to the trade, p. 63. The Fiscal recommended 5, 8, and 10 years in presidio in Africa for each offence; the Audiencia Pretorial recommended 8 and 12 years at hard labour. The Fiscal recommended the substitution of the words "slave trade" in the law of contraband.

² *Ley de 2 de Marzo de 1845*. Massa, *Diccionario juridico*, vol. ii., p. 523. Escriche, *Diccionario razonado*, vol. ii., p. 846.

banishment from their domiciles for such terms as provided in the case of captains, and be subjected to a fine of not less than one thousand pesos or more than ten thousand, according to the gravity of the circumstances; but they shall be exempted upon proof of innocence of the use made of their vessels by the captain. Fines were to be increased one third in case of repetition of the offence.

The authorities at any point where the disembarkation of bozales shall be proved to have taken place through connivance, bribery, or subornation, shall be punished according to law. Such as are negligent or omit to take all precautions shall lose their positions, or be suspended from six months to four years. Any *escribano*, or notary, who shall certify any document contrary to this law shall be suspended for two to four years; or suffer loss of office, if repeated.

The superior authorities, the tribunals, and the ordinary justices, and the fiscal or attorney-general, may and must proceed according to their respective functions against those who engage in the illicit traffic, either at their own instance or by denunciation or declaration made with the legal requisites, whenever it shall come to their notice that an expedition is being prepared or that a cargo has been run; "but in no case, nor at any time, shall it be possible to proceed against or disturb in their possession proprietors of slaves under pretext of their derivation." This last clause forbids the searching of estates for alleged illicitly intro-

duced bozales, that is, slaves in possession were not to be disturbed. Bozales could be seized at any time and anywhere beyond a certain distance from the estates. The law was to go into effect in Cuba and Puerto Rico three months after promulgation, and was published in Habana, April 26, 1845.

The law caused a great deal of excitement at the Habana; but it was thought that it would not be effective.¹ It is hard to see what effect the law could have, because it has been seen that this trade was largely carried on by foreigners against whom the law could not be applied, and it was an easy matter for a Spaniard or Cuban to get naturalisation papers in the United States, and many of them did have them. Besides, captures of slavers were rare. However, the law could be and actually was applied to captures of bozales in Cuba itself, upon the islands, on the roads, in the woods, and in the swamps; but this side of the law was not without its drawbacks. Upon the whole a great deal had been accomplished, and in August commissioners were able to write, "It is considered also here, that an effectual prohibition of the trade in slaves has been resolved on by this government, in consequence of which the dealers

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 399. *Niles' Register*, vol. lxviii. p. 192. "The ingenuity of man, stimulated by the constant view of the colossal fortunes made in this business, will evade any law that is not made by clearer sighted legislators, and executed by purer men than Spain yet possesses in her employ."

generally have discontinued their proceedings."¹ O'Donnel was not a man who could be defied with impunity.

During the rest of O'Donnel's administration the trade decreased nearly to the vanishing point. In 1845, it is probable that not a single cargo was run²; in 1846, not more than two, and not a single sailing from Africa was known.³ But even in the face of such facts the commissioners professed to disbelieve in the continuance of the efforts of the government. They stated that the captain general constantly avowed his disagreement with the orders from Spain, and only executed them perforce.⁴ A more certain measure of the position of the government is found in the general condition of the island. Houses that were known to have engaged in the slave trade went into other business. The price of bozales and other slaves rose steadily. In a few months of 1846, the price went up twenty-five per cent., and rates of hire doubled.⁵ The government and other parties were making vigorous efforts to get in colonists from Europe, Mexico, and other points, notwithstanding that the price of sugar was depressed until late in 1846. An attempt was made to force slaves out of the cities by means of a head tax so that they should become

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 430.

² *Ibid.*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 437.

³ *Ibid.*, 1847-8, vol. xviii., Class A, p. 65. Seizures were accomplished through information obtained by the Spanish authorities themselves. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1847-8, vol. xviii., Class A, p. 65 *et seq.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1846, vol. xv., A, p. 433; *ib.*, 1847, vol. xvi., Class A, p. 170.

available for agriculture,¹ but without definite result.

The profits of illicit slave trading always promised a large reward, variously estimated at one hundred to one hundred and eighty per cent.² on a single voyage; some vessels making two voyages in a year. Slaves could be landed in Cuba at a gross cost of about two hundred dollars per head.³ In 1840, bozales were selling at from three hundred to three hundred and fifty dollars a head; in 1845, the price touched two hundred and twelve dollars on an entire cargo.⁴ It had been customary to figure on a loss of one ship and cargo out of three; now they might incur the additional loss of one third to one half the cargo at the hands of the government. Business under the old methods had become impossible. By the year 1840 all insurance companies had ceased to take risks on slaves; it had been customary to give premiums of twenty-five to forty per cent.⁵ Men like Julian de Zulueta who were running and opening up immense estates, finding the necessity for certain kinds of labour imperative, might organise their own expeditions, take all the risk themselves, and get their slaves cheaper than by depending on the dealers. We shall find them doing this.⁶ There were a few

¹ Queipo, *Cuba*, p. 330.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xvii., p. 607; *Correspondence with Spain Relative to the Slave Trade*, p. 51; Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 369.

³ Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 424.

⁴ *Accounts and Papers*, 1845, vol. x., Class A, p. 100.

⁵ Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 141; Madden, *In Re Slave Trade*, p. 120.

⁶ *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, p. 67 ff.

advocates of a suppression of the trade and a few in favour of abolition; the great body of the people of Habana had no sense of any injustice in the trade.¹

During all this time the development of the island was going on rapidly. Planters were busy improving their estates, the government was aiding the process by favourable duties on machinery, coal, and tonnage; improvements of roads, harbours, and lighthouses; public instruction was fostered, especially in the study of languages; better municipal regulations were put into force; and the entire administration was being placed on a footing which promised in a few years to give the island the fullest means to develop all the advantages it possessed. If the slave trade was reopened the ruin of the British colonies "would be complete and immediate,"² said the British commissioner. We might, indeed, marvel if the trade had not reopened. The facts show a sincere purpose and attempt to stop the trade at this time on the part of Spanish and local governments, and likewise to find a means of supplying the labour that was wanting on the part of the proprietors, boards, and government. The pressure was too great to be withstood; the slave trade was still the readiest means for supplying a certain portion of the needed labour, although it never again attained to anything like its old proportions.

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, p. 67 ff. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xv., p. 227.

² *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, pp. 70-1. Kennedy, Jan. 1, 1849.

O'Donnel was succeeded, in 1848, by General Roncali, Conde de Alcoy; Kennedy called upon him at an early date, when the captain-general observed that there was very little business for the Mixed Court, which Kennedy explained by the fact that O'Donnel had been "lately very rigid in his measures to put an end to the slave trade in which he believed he had been very successful."¹ Roncali said that he was going to continue the same policy, but thought that it might be difficult to stop contraband here as elsewhere. The commissioners believed that Roncali was entirely sincere, but that he did not realise how active the trade was. Places where the trade was now carried on were nine hundred miles away, and some eleven vessels had sailed for the trade since his arrival; they were not willing to admit that the depression in the trade had been due to the efforts of the government, but rather to the smaller demand.² In fact, both forces were at work.

The successor of Roncali, General José de la Concha, an Argentine by birth, carried on his policy, and the trade on the whole appears to have risen above that in the times of O'Donnel and Roncali. This proceeded from no lack of determination to enforce the law on the part of Concha; the renewed activity of the trade brought into play the same difficulties which had been experienced before. Concha frankly told the British agent,

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, vol. xxxi., p. 67.

Crawford, that there were obstacles—the great tracts of deserted land and the easy access to it and individual interests—which defeated the efforts of the government.¹ Then he had to act in the midst of the filibustering attempts of the renegade López.

Concha was a popular governor in Cuba, his administration was one marked by very great prosperity in the island, and considerable discontent was manifested when he was removed by the reactionary government in Spain.² But this serves to show that the movement of affairs in Spain did not alter the policy of the government in the island, for the measures of his successors were far more radical than his had been.

Upon his return to Spain he wrote a *mémoire* on Cuba which shows the views of a liberal-minded man in close touch with its condition. He said that slavery was the basis of its agriculture and its principal industry, sugar. The obligation to keep the treaties was sacred; moreover, trouble with such a powerful country as Great Britain ought to be avoided. He pointed out that although it was claimed that the only way by which the supply of African labour could be maintained was through continued importation, yet the United States was doing so and many Cubans had lately tried to save their slaves. He believed that slavery must be preserved and that too vigorous attempts to inter-

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1851, vol. xiii., Class A, p. 37.

² Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, p. 117.

fere with it would produce serious disturbance, and he was convinced that the resistance of the proprietors to admitting the intervention of the local authorities in their estates was largely founded on this, because it would be followed by a very dangerous relaxation of discipline over the slaves, which is the prime necessity of the country.¹

The first measure to be taken in his judgment was the creation of a reorganised administration with well-paid agents who should be free from the temptation "of seeking the means of a decent living in the misuse of their offices." Concha had resolved, however, to do his best to enforce the law. The call for proper labour in the island could not be met, the wages of negroes which sugar men had to pay in the great crop season had more than doubled in a few years; but in the face of all this the introduction of Chinese labour only made matters worse by introducing a new race element.² It is well to remark that bad or inefficient officials were as bad for Spain as for Cuba.

The new captain-general, Cañedo, went beyond the limits marked by the treaties in his efforts to stop the trade. More than once recently landed bozales were taken out of the estates where they had been hidden.³ He dismissed the alcalde of San Diego Nuñez, and the lieutenant-governor of

¹ Concha, *Memoria sobre la Isla de Cuba*, p. 258 ff.

² *Memoria sobre Cuba*, pp. 293-4. "Aun prescindiendo de que la mas resuelta y constante represión del tráfico de esclavos es para el gobierno un deber internacional."

³ Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, p. 117.

Bahía Honda for allowing the landing of a small party of bozales at El Granadilla,¹ and other somewhat strenuous or unusual steps were taken.² But these things, together with his sweeping action in favour of the emancipados, did not satisfy the British commissioner, who thought that over five thousand bozales had been brought in in 1852, and was "almost certain that Cañedo was a protector of the slave traders."³ The captain-general again was forced to complain of the precipitate judgment, unfounded accusations, and lack of personal courtesy of the agent, and Lord Russell felt constrained to administer a very mild reprimand.

Whatever the British agents thought, they were not the ones who had true reason to complain. The captains-general were acting under orders from Spain to go even beyond the letter of the law in stopping the trade.⁴ An hacendado of Cuba, Cristóbal Madan, writing of these acts in 1854 says, that so fully have the English plans been carried out that the best minds in Spain have been brought to believe that slavery is a blot upon the national honour which should be wiped out at all costs: "With this lack of faith in the cause of the peo-

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlii., p. 327.

² *Ibid.*, p. 331.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. xlii., p. 286.

⁴ *London Times*, May 31, 1853, editorially extracts a speech of Clarendon, who "undertakes that nothing shall be wanting on our part to bring Spain to her duty . . . that the present captain-general has received stringent orders from Madrid, and is going beyond the letter of the law in the vindication of justice and the performance of treaties."

ple dependent upon their care, the peninsular press and government have been under all successive cabinets the true enemies of Cuban interests."¹

The acts of the officials in setting aside the law of 1845, which forbade entering estates in search of negroes, threw the island into confusion and terror. Possession and private domain no longer meant security; a man's house was no longer his castle. Slaves were seized and marched in triumph along the highways, destroying the moral power of the master over his slaves. Owners armed themselves against stealers of slaves. The very foundations of society were threatened.² Pressure brought to bear on the home government by island interests accomplished the early removal of Cañedo.³

The Marqués de la Pezuela was well known in his attitude for strict enforcement of the treaties. He had been captain-general of Puerto Rico, was well informed as to conditions in Cuba, and before going out as governor he was in close communication with the ministry, by which an exact policy was determined upon.⁴ Shortly after his arrival in December he issued a circular stating the difficulty of stopping the trade on such an extended coast, when hitherto in spite of the vigilance of English cruisers and incessant efforts, the Cuban authorities, notwithstanding calumny, had been

¹ *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 53.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 53-4.

³ Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, p. 118.

⁴ *Ibid.*

unable to accomplish it. He proposed now to do so, but recognising the scarcity of hands his first care should be to foster immigration.¹

The Real Decreto of March 22, 1854, was a provision for forcing all the slaves of the island into the country where their labour could be utilised in agriculture, where it was most needed.² For all male slaves not resident upon country estates, an annual head tax was to be paid; two dollars for the first, three for the second, and so on up to sixteen for the fifteenth, and all above fifteen were subject to a uniform assessment of eight dollars per head. Female slaves and children under twelve were not assessed. Married slaves whilst living with their wives and having living children paid an annual family tax of two dollars only, without regard to their number, and were not counted in determining the tax to be paid on other male slaves. If the father had four children who had reached twelve years, he was exempted. Sales of slaves in consequence of marriage were exempted from payment of the alcabala.

The product of the tax was converted into three equal annual prizes; one to go to the proprietor of fifty slaves or more who had shown the highest legitimate birth rate; one to the estate showing the lowest death rate; and one to the estate having the highest proportion of female to male slaves.

¹ A general order concerning colonists was issued Dec. 23, 1853. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol xliv., p. 1175 ff.

² Massa, *Diccionario jurídico*, vol. ii., p. 523 *et seq.*

This system of prizes replaced that which had been previously conducted by the Junta de Fomento. In addition, the sales of slaves from the towns into the country were exempted from the alcabala tax, and those made from the country into the towns were subjected to double alcabala. In like manner, slaves born on estates after this law were exempted from paying the alcabala when sold by their master for the first time.

This law was intended to carry out the process begun by Valdés and the Junta de Fomento of economising the slave population, and if possible to bring about a final equalisation of the proportion of males and females, so that a domestic supply of slaves might be insured and the institution preserved in its usefulness for some time. The object was to throw the whole supply of negro slave labour to the aid of the rapidly developing sugar industry and thus relieve the pressure which occasioned the slave trade. With the almost complete failure of coffee no other large industry demanded a large number of slaves, but a great many were used on small farms and ranches.¹

The reglamento accompanying the decreto provided for the registration of every slave on the books of the government in such a manner as to furnish complete means of identification and every

¹ In 1860, there were 311,245 slaves in *campos*, 194,223 males and 117,022 females; in *poblaciones*, 65,539 slaves, 29,853 males and 35,686 females. Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, suplemento, p. 14. In 1841, there were 240,263 slaves in *campos* and 196,232 in *poblaciones*. *Ibid.*, Part I., vol. i., p. 298.

change of condition, such as marriages, births, deaths, or transfer from one jurisdiction to another, was to be registered at once. The registers were in charge of the *tenedor*, or holder, appointed under bonds by the government upon recommendation of the captain-general. Any slave found unregistered was free and, if through fault of the *tenedor*, the assessed value of the slave must be made good by him.¹

The registering process displeased the hacendados partly on account of the expense and partly because it made it more difficult to get hands which were daily increasing in price; thus a large hostile element was created in the social world which had the widest influence upon public opinion, and by its passive resistance made Pezuela's task in every direction more difficult.²

Pezuela, a soldier, believed in strict enforcement of the law. He was sent out to better conditions which were known to be bad. The opening words of his circular of May 3, 1854, show how he looked at the slave trade:

The spectacle must end of the impotency of authority, whose efforts are mocked by the covetousness, corruption, and impunity of a few capitalists, who oppose their private interests to the national honour, which has been already highly compromised by them.³

¹ Massa, *Diccionario jurídico*, vol. ii., p. 526 ff.; *Libro de Sindicos*, p. 106 ff. Published in *Habana Gazette*, May 8.

² Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 656; Estorch, *Apuntes sobre Pezuela*, pp. 20-4.

³ *Exposición presentada al Senado sobre la reforma política*, p. 338.

The circular goes on to state that owing to changed circumstances due to the ordinances providing for the introduction of colonists it is no longer possible to continue in force and spirit the ninth article of the penal law of 1845. After August 1st, therefore, the proper officers are authorised for one full month, after a landing of bozales shall have been made, to enter all classes of suspected estates; shall call the roll of the slaves, and make such examination as shall be deemed necessary, but all show of force must be avoided unless resistance be made to them, and every act is forbidden which shall lower the prestige of the master and *administrador* in the eyes of the slave. In order to make proof of derivation of slaves certain and so comply with the mentioned ninth article of the penal law of 1845, the local authorities shall make a register every year at the end of the crop season of the stocks of the estate. Proprietors with unregistered slaves are fined, and if the negroes are bozales they are to be declared free.

Governors and lieutenant-governors must report all landings to the superior government within twenty-four hours under pain of dismissal. The order states that as landings would be impossible except for fraud or carelessness, the penalty for not seizing all shall be immediate dismissal. Finally, the penalty for engaging in the trade is expulsion from the island for two years.¹

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlv., p. 975 *et seq.* Annulled by decree, Nov. 17, 1854, p. 984.

This measure created dissatisfaction among the hacendados, who believed that it put them too much at the mercy of the petty local authorities.¹ This was the same obstacle that had been pointed out by Concha, and although Pezuela thought he was guarding against it sufficiently by requiring immediate reports of landings to him, yet the objection against placing this machinery in the hands of persons who were not only expected to be hostile to the interest, either as abolitionists or because they expected to reap pecuniary benefit from it, was in large measure valid.² The slave traders saw the roads to coveted wealth fairly closed, the hacendados who wanted hands very badly believed, many of them, that the expected supplies of *gallegos*, *isleños*, *chinos*, and *yucatecs* would fail to meet the demand, so a coalition was brought about. They accused Pezuela of being bent upon abolition, and with disregarding the laws already in force, and ended by securing his downfall.³

The storm aroused by these measures led Pezuela

¹ British Commissary Judge, report, *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol., xlv., p. 973. Several authorities were removed in 1854 and punished for connivance, and frequent seizures of cargoes were made. *Ib.*, p. 986.

² The practice of granting the local offices of Jueces Pedáneos or Capitanes de Partido begun in 1763 when the country was thinly peopled, to men of no property and but little knowledge still continued. They were in great part Peninsulares, "que van á buscar fortuna de la Isla, y que prefieren esos cargos á un trabajo de retribución menos cierto en la agricultura." Pezuela, *Necesidades de Cuba*, pp. 71-2.

³ Estorch, *Apuntes sobre Pezuela*, pp. 20-4.

to issue another circular on June 1st, in which he stated that the natives of the island had been used to claim for many years that the government had no right to make investigations into private wealth, but it was incontestably the practice of public administration in Spain and in all other nations. But "it is clear that the new system having been applied to-day to slavery, which is their constant alarm, and having been explained by the insurgentismo and judged by the distrust of stupidity, it must (*debe*) meet an opposition which would be an imprudence to encounter."¹ The registration will be followed with the utmost deference towards the proprietor. In cases where integrity is well known his sworn deposition shall be accepted in place of an examination.

This circular was followed by another on July 28th ordering the registration to go on as rapidly as possible: and, finally, there having come to my notice that the active prosecution of the trade at different points of the island gives occasion to the abandonment of many bozales who range the woods as fugitives, and that these unfortunates are turned away from ingenios whose honourable proprietors refuse to disobey the laws, it is ordered that every one who shall bring in such stray bozales, shall receive from the emancipado fund ten dollars for each man, six for each woman, and three for each child. And if those who make the captures are proprietors of known integrity, they may

¹ *Esposición sobre reformas*, p. 340.

be awarded to them in apprenticeship in the same manner as the emancipados or other captured bozales.¹

It is probable that a somewhat increased activity among the traders at this time was due to the expected closing of all channels of introduction. During the years 1853-4, 2311 bozales were captured and apprenticed out.²

A violent agitation went on in the island. The most absurd stories were circulated stating that Pezuela was about to abolish slavery, that he had legalised marriage between blacks and whites and was thus preparing the way for making it a black man's country and that he was about to complete this "Africanisation" by importing blacks from Africa as free labourers. All this was taken up and spread to the United States, where it was made an engine to aid the absorption plans then forming under Quitman's directions. The slavery party threatened to aid the plans of the annexationists, and the revolutionists found it a means to further their ends. The stories, although repeated in the United States with the greatest assurance, were fabrications employed for political ends.³

The Ostend Manifesto makes very interesting

¹ Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones*, vol. ii., p. 666 *et seq.*; Annulled, Nov. 17, 1854 by Concha.

² *Accounts and Papers*, vol. liv., Class A, p. 27; *Libro de los Sindicos*, pp. 325-8.

³ Estorch, *Apuntes sobre Pezuela*, pp. 29-33; Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, p. 118; cf. von Holst, *History of the United States*, vol. v., pp. 15-36.

reading in connection with these events, as it was occasioned by these acts of Pezuela:

Considerations exist which render delay in the acquisition of this island exceedingly dangerous to the United States. The system of immigration and labour lately organised within its limits, and the tyranny and oppression which characterise its immediate rulers, threaten an insurrection at every moment which may result in direful consequences to the American people. . . . As long as this system shall endure, humanity may in vain demand the suppression of the African slave trade in the island. This is rendered impossible whilst that infamous traffic remains an irresistible temptation and a source of immense profit to needy and avaricious officials, who, to attain their ends, scruple not to trample the most sacred principles under foot. The Spanish government at home may be well disposed, but experience has proved that it cannot control these remote depositaries of its power.¹

The system of labour referred to meant the setting at liberty of captured negroes, who were held as emancipados, and the suggestions which were being made by private persons that negroes should be imported from Africa as free labourers; the latter was not countenanced by the government. Tyranny and oppression were not practised by the rulers of Cuba any more than in any country which is threatened by invasion and in-

¹ Macdonald, *Select Documents Illustrative of the History of the United States*, pp. 407-8; *House Executive Documents*, No. 93, 33d Cong., 2d Sess; cf. von Holst, *History of the United States*, vol. v., pp. 37-50. The document is dated October 18, 1854.

surrection. The failure of measures to stop the slave trade was not due to the causes hinted at in the passage—they lay much deeper and the effort to carry the measures into effective operation lay at the root of many of the evils complained of here. Abuse of office was one of the obstacles encountered by the captains general while executing the laws, but this is a usual accompaniment to the enforcement of unpopular laws; it had not assumed remarkable proportions. These misrepresentations accord well with the audacity which prompted them.

That the internal situation of the island was very grave is shown by a petition to the captain-general by a large number of hacendados.¹

Your Excellency [they say], by making use of your supreme powers can suspend the operation of the reglamento; and if, as the petitioners hope, Your Excellency is disposed to do this, you will dispense the most signal favour on the country, the government of which Her Majesty has committed to the wisdom and discretion of Your Excellency. The Island of Cuba will be saved from the greatest danger which until now has occurred, and Your Excellency shall count among your glorious deeds that of having been its saviour.

¹ *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, Apéndice No. iii. Representación de los vecinos de la Habana impugnando el decreto de empadronamiento, Mayo de 1854. From the names of the petitioners it seems certain that this protest did not represent the trading interest.

Madden says, that "another insurrection like the last even though unsuccessful would involve the colony in inextricable ruin." *Island of Cuba*, p. xvi.

There was nothing in the reglamento which could possibly stop the trade; it could only interfere with the control of masters over their slaves, where it was equally dangerous to treat them too harshly or too kindly; the reglamento was nothing more than a set of embarrassments put upon slave holders,—slaves were recognised and legitimate property and it was unreasonable to burden one class of property with a special code of restrictions; if the decree was enforced the proprietors would have to sell out at once for what they could get in order to save a small part of their property.

The list gatherers were certain to be met with a cunning which they could not defeat,¹—

where the whole people combine against them, it will be impossible to close the slave trade. There are certain districts, which, from their conveniences, have been so addicted to the traffic, and have calculated upon it as their only means of subsistence—that all the interests of the people move them to the resistance of the law—such places were Trinidad, Cienfuegos, the vicinity of the Isle of Pines, Cortez, and other places.²

The great interest taken in the United States in the action of Great Britain in insisting upon the enforcement of the slave-trade treaties has already been remarked. An active propaganda was on foot in the United States to bring about an intervention. Webster was informed that Great Britain was resolved on the ruin of Cuba, and he

¹ *New York Herald*, correspondent, July 2, 1854.

² *Ibid.*, July 27th.

told Consul Campbell to be vigilant in reporting any suspicious movements; any attempt on the part of England to employ force in Cuba, for any purpose, would bring on a war, involving, possibly, all Europe, as well as the United States; the United States would never permit the occupation of Cuba by British agents or forces upon any pretext whatever. A copy of the letter to Campbell was sent to Madrid.¹ John Quincy Adams supposed the real fact to be that the British government was turning the screws upon the importation of slaves.² In continuation of this policy of "sleepless vigilance," Secretary Upshur directed Minister Irving

to obtain full and accurate information in regard to every reference to Cuba, whether designed to obtain a transfer of that island to herself, or to obtain a control over the policy of Spain, in regard to it, or to effect the institution of African slavery now existing there.³

The South had good reason to suspect the designs of Great Britain;⁴ but it is not surprising that Spain should become very doubtful of the good results of so much solicitude for her welfare. Great Britain undoubtedly wished to bring about an abolition of slavery in Cuba at the earliest possible moment; and in view of later history, abolition at that day would have resulted in

¹ *House Executive Document*, 32d Cong., 1st Sess., No. 121, p. 39. Jan'y 14, 1843.

² *Memoirs*, vol. xi., p. 353.

³ *House Executive Document*, No. 121, p. 41, Jan'y 9, 1844.

⁴ Cf. Claiborne, *Quitman*, vol. ii., p. 355.

ruin and almost complete loss of the benefit of the policy of racial amalgamation which Spain had been patiently following for centuries. The annexation party was far too weak to control the situation in Cuba; there is a distinct tone of disappointment to be detected in the accounts of the members of the López expeditions because of the lack of co-operation and a warmer welcome.

The López expeditions brought affairs to a crisis. The Spanish government asked the French and British governments to make with the United States "an abnegatory declaration" in regard to Cuba.¹ Accordingly they jointly proposed to the United States a tripartite convention in which they should

severally and collectively disclaim, both now and for hereafter, all intention to obtain possession of Cuba; and they respectively bind themselves to discountenance all attempts to that effect on the part of any power or individuals whatever, and they will not obtain any exclusive control over the island whatever.²

This would have been recognising formally the situation which had been in existence for many years, but the American government found means to evade the formal acknowledgment, hoping that the future would offer an opportunity of gaining possession of the island.

France and Great Britain, as free-labour and

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xliv., p. 114.

² *Senate Executive Document*, 32d Cong., 2d Sess., No. 13, p. 7; Wharton, *Digest of International Law*, § 60.

sugar-producing nations, did not propose that Cuba should pass under American dominion where hope of obtaining an abolition of slavery was apparently fatuous. The following communication was made known to the United States government by Great Britain and France.

The government of the United States has repeatedly declared that it would never see with indifference the Island of Cuba fall into the possession of any other European power than Spain. Her Majesty's government shares in the most unqualified manner, in the views thus put forth by the government of the United States, and could never see with indifference the Island of Cuba in the possession of any power whatever but Spain.¹

This inverted Monroe doctrine cleared the horizon wonderfully. Spain was now certain to be left in peace to deal with her own domestic difficulties.

Edward Everett's reply to the notes of the French and British governments on the proposal of the tripartite guarantee of Cuba to Spain was characteristic of the time-serving policy of the

¹ Earl of Malmesbury to J. F. Crampton, April 8, 1852 *Sen. Ex. Doc.*, No. 13, 32d Cong., 2d Sess., p. 6. The French instructions were in the same tenor; Turgot to the Count de Sartiges, March 31, 1852, p. 3. Great Britain sent Admiral Seymour to Habana with a fleet to see how things looked; the captain-general was expecting another expedition, but thought he could take care of it. *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlv., p. 114. A French fleet was sent into Cuban waters, to head off filibustering expeditions in like manner.

government toward Cuba which had prevailed since 1825:

The United States, on the other hand, would by the proposed convention disable themselves from making an acquisition which might take place without any disturbance of existing foreign relations and in the natural order of things. . . . The opinions of American statesmen, at different times and under varying circumstances, have differed as to the desirableness of the acquisition of Cuba by the United States. Territorially and commercially it would in our hands be an extremely valuable possession. Under certain contingencies it might be almost essential to our safety. Still for domestic reasons, on which in a communication of this kind it might not be proper to dwell, the President thinks that the incorporation of the island into the Union at the present time, although effected with the consent of Spain, would be a hazardous measure; and he would consider its acquisition by force, except in a just war with Spain, should an event so greatly to be deprecated take place, as a disgrace to the civilisation of the age.¹

Mr. Everett adduced various other reasons why the United States would not bind themselves to any action: a treaty of this nature could not bind the United States in the future; France and Great Britain might go to war with each other, and Cuba, as a result, might eventually fall to the share of either one. Cuba was of far more

¹ Wharton, *Digest of International Law*, §60, §72; December 1, 1852; *Sen. Ex. Doc.*, No. 13, 32d Cong., 2d Sess., p. 15 ff. Cf. Rhodes, *History of the United States*, vol. i., pp. 294-6.

importance to the United States than it could possibly be to France or Great Britain, therefore the United States was asked to make a greater sacrifice than either of them. This last argument is interesting because the act of the two European powers was in reality that of Spain which was asking to have its province spared from the desolation of war. Cherished tradition forbade the United States entering into any entangling alliance with foreign powers. Moreover, the Spanish government in Cuba was very bad, and the President might not always be able to display such exemplary control of temper towards it as he had done in the past. Finally, the secretary said that there appeared to be no hope of stopping the slave trade while Spain kept possession of Cuba.¹ The result of this exchange of communications, of course, was the tacit acknowledgment of the predominant force of the argument of France and Great Britain in the contemporary issue, but the United States wished it understood that they reserved the right to take the island, if they got an opportunity. The government proposed to await the ultimate action of the "gravitating force" which John Quincy Adams had said must sooner or later draw Cuba into the Union.²

In the South the agitation went on warmly. They were not willing to accept at once the decision

¹ Yet the slave trade was the crux of the whole matter!

² Benoist, *Espagne, Cuba et les États-Unis*, p. 118; J. Q. Adams to Nelson, April 28, 1823, Wharton, *Digest of International Law*, § 60.

of the administration. *De Bow's Review* shows by the number and purport of its articles on the subject of Cuba that the movement was strong. A meeting of "the friends of Cuba," in Houston, Texas, May 29, 1854, adopted a resolution that "the time is arrived when it has become the imperative duty of the United States to take effective and prompt measures for obtaining possession of the island of Cuba."¹ A method was worked out for avoiding the embargo of Great Britain and France. This was to surreptitiously aid and foment rebellions in the island, so that the government could not possibly be involved. It was represented that the population of the island was only prevented by the despotism of Spain from rushing into the fold of the American Union. This formidable propaganda was placed under the leadership of General Quitman; when the rebellion was ready to break out an expedition was to sail and, in an orderly, quiet, and friendly manner assist the rebels in driving out the Spaniards. It was not a pleasant prospect for Cuba.

Two things prevented the trial of this scheme. Firstly, the great leaders of the South refused to countenance it. Secondly, the visit of Gaspar Betancourt, to New Orleans, in 1854, dispelled the illusion that the revolutionists were in favour of being passed about like a parcel of goods.²

¹ *New York Herald*, June 17, 1854.

² *New York Herald*, Sept. 18, 1854. Speech at New Orleans. "We have already seen the government of the United States interfere on more than one occasion in favour

When it was clear that filibustering must be abandoned, the campaign was carried into Congress. It was fully understood that war for Cuba meant war with France and Great Britain, and it was even stated that war would mean certain loss of it and its slavery as well.¹ It was this aspect of the situation which caused the greatest alarm in some of the Northern leaders because by means of it the Southern leaders played upon the patriotic, or jingo, impulses of the country.² In a fiery speech, in 1856, Quitman said, "she (Great Britain) has used her strong influence with Spain to bring about the gradual abolition of negro slavery in Cuba."³

The suppression of the trade was the immediate, if not the ultimate cause of the agitation in the South;—the repression of the trade caused a great scarcity of labour in Cuba, which led to the consideration of plans to fill the deficiency, and one of the plans considered and adopted was that of

of Spain to make abortive the plans and projects for liberating Cuba."

Quitman to Reed, Aug. 24, 1854. Claiborne, *Quitman*, vol. ii., p. 207.

¹ Speech of Giddings, 1854. Julian, *Life of Giddings*, p. 315.

² Bancroft, *Seward*, vol. i., p. 475. *New York Herald*, May 31, 1854, editorially says: "How ridiculous, then, is the administration cry for war against Spain, France, and England combined, if they shall persist in the Africanisation of Cuba! How criminal to counsel war against such an alliance, without the slightest preparation for it." Cf. Von Holst, *History of the United States*, vol. v., p. 15.

³ Claiborne, *Quitman*, vol. ii., p. 354.

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bringing in negroes from Africa to be apprenticed for a number of years. This would have led ultimately to a system based on free coloured labour.¹

¹ Cf. Claiborne, *Quilman*, vol. ii., p. 380.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRANSITION PERIOD

1854-1868

Failure of Captain-General Concha to Suppress the Trade—Great Scarcity of Labour—Coolies—*Colonos*—Captures of Illicitly Introduced Negroes—Change of World Sentiment—Final Suppression—A Transition to Free Labour.

THE planters resented the persistent interference in their business affairs by outsiders. It had been a hard pull to get the industries of the island over the various crises, and it seemed to them preposterous that they should be threatened with financial ruin and the horrors of a racial struggle because there was a little slave trade going on and because a few emancipados were not being treated in a way that suited Great Britain.¹ The apparent impossibility of equalising the interests of Cuba and Spain added great strength to the annexation party which was in

¹ *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 51.—“Planteado apenas este nuevo género de empresa, á que han cooperado los propietarios sin considerar el abismo que abrian bajo sus pies, empeñóse una persecución á la esclavitud legal, emanada de los gabinetes de Londres y Madrid, de la autoridad local, y de la prensa de España y de la Habana.” “No eran Clarendon y San Luís, Pezuela y Crawford, los verdaderos revolucionarios en Cuba?” p. 99.

close touch with the Louisiana propaganda.¹ The fear or dread of insurrection was very great, as certain to bring ruin.² The particular industries of the eastern part of the island, stock raising, coffee, and small farming—potreros, cafetales, and sitios de labor—were in general decadence owing to the increased price of labour and were being abandoned or turned to cane raising.³ This, of course, added to the discontent and furnished fuel to the movement for independence.

The revolution of July, 1854, returned Espartero and O'Donnell to power in Spain in place of the reactionary government of San Luís, and on September 21, Concha replaced Pezuela as governor and captain-general. His coming had been looked forward to, and he was received with great festivity.⁴ If any hope had been entertained of his leniency toward slave trading, it was quickly dispelled, for one of his first acts was to fine a newspaper for slandering Pezuela, and his general

¹ "A los españoles europeos y americanos residentes en Cuba solo la anexión pacífica evitaria la lucha terrible, hoy tan inminente; porque al repudiar los derechos populares de la raza blanca, al estimular la preponderancia de la negra, al destruir el equilibrio de la esclavitud asociándola inconsideradamente con el trabajo libre, y al confirmar y robustecer con la tropa de color en 1854 el grito de 'española ó africana' dado en 1851, el Gobierno ha autorizado la rebelion, la independencia, la anexión, y cualquiera otra medida que salve las propiedades y vidas de la raza blanca, porque antes que la nacionalidad hay un Dios, una religion y una naturaleza que ordenan el cuidado de nuestra existencia y la de nuestros hijos." *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 222.

² Madden, *Island of Cuba*, p. xvi.

³ *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, pp. 17-18.

⁴ *New York Herald*, Sept. 18, and Oct. 2, 1854.

attitude was that of upholding the latter's actions. He inaugurated a conciliatory policy of consulting all parties and undertaking energetic improvements, and it was thought that the trade would nearly cease as under his former administration.¹

Concha in his decree of November 17, 1854,² for stopping the trade tried to avoid the objection raised by Pezuela's decree. Upon receiving notice of an approaching landing the officials were to give immediate notice to the superior government and to the coast-guard, and then take all necessary measures for capturing the expedition. If it should evade pursuit, the local authorities were to enter the suspected estates, "confining themselves to counting the number of negroes and to taking such declarations as may be proper, so that the discipline of the slaves may not suffer." In the meanwhile the police should surround the estate and prevent any escapes. The petty authorities could not declare which were illegally imported bozales ; and no further step could be taken without express authority from a competent tribunal. The judicial authorities must be present at such examinations as soon as possible. Every person is authorised to give information of projected landings, and suitable rewards are provided for the informer and persons making captures. Strict responsibility is to be exacted from subordinates, under reward or fine. The decree guarded

¹ *New York Herald*, Sept. 18, and Oct. 2, 1854.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlv., p. 981 ff.

against former abuses of entering estates and carrying off slaves in an unwarranted manner. Such a measure was necessary to guard the proprietor against over-zealous or corrupt officials, but it does not seem that it ought to have proved any less effective than that of Pezuela. To complete the process every slave must have a cedula, renewed every six months, containing his full description, and every one found away from his estate without it should be seized. The cedula for country slaves cost one eighth of a dollar, and that for the city one dollar. The cedulae were issued by the commissaries of police, the constables, and *capitanes de partido*, the latter also kept the registers and paid over the money for cedulae; governors and lieutenant-governors of departments inspected the books and made annual reports to the supreme government.¹

The difficulties in the way of executing this decree in the face of so many interests directly concerned in defeating it were very great. It was not easy to control the minor officials, who attended to it, scattered as they were over great tracts of thinly settled territory, where even with the best of will it would have been hard for them to enforce the law. The common population was of a very low order of intelligence and very untrustworthy at best and not at all anxious to help the government in any of its undertakings,

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlv., p. 999 ff., Dec. 19, 1854.

but rather interested in seeing it embarrassed as much as possible. The great majority of proprietors, even if opposed to the trade in theory, were likely to find themselves faced by the practical necessity of getting hands to work their estates at a profit, and were at least violently opposed to all measures which looked like coercion. The officials seem to have been very apt in interpreting the captain-general's orders in the most liberal way. Concha issued decree after decree to cover points of detail, which would seem to have been self-evident, but which left plenty of holes in the system if not covered up by a ready will, in order to reach the end in view of the central government. This is an obstacle which is met with by every government which undertakes to enforce a law which is contrary to the sentiment of the community, and it must be borne in mind that the application of these laws fell in that medial region of the island where the commercial spirit was predominant.

The best informed proprietors differed as to the advisability of continuing the importation of Chinese, owing to the great difficulty of combining free and slave labour, which added greatly to the difficulty of control. The cunning and superior intelligence of the Chinese led to conspiracies and resistance to the masters.¹ This feeling tended to reduce the supply of labour in that quarter. That there was a very great

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlvii., p. 929.

unsatisfied demand for negro labour is certain. In 1855, a project was submitted to the government in view "of the absolute lack of useful labourers" to import negroes from Africa as "colonos," or farmers, to be kept under state supervision. In order to ascertain how many subscribers to the scheme there would be, forms were sent out to be returned signed and the number of colonos filled in which the subscriber would take. Six hundred of these cedulas were returned calling for 41,073 colonos in numbers varying from three to five hundred. The larger subscribers were in Habana and Matanzas, while the smaller ones were sprinkled about the East.¹ These figures are startling and show that the industry of the island was suffering from severe repression.

Venality of officials was only one element in the problem. It was very hard to catch a slaver. For many years the British cruisers had been unable to take a slaver with slaves on board. Up to 1840, the British brigs and schooners had been fairly successful, but now the trade was in smaller vessels which ran in behind the cays in shallow water where the cruisers could not go and where they were out of sight. Cargoes were run at a preconcerted time and place, the bozales were put into rowboats, small sailing-vessels, even

¹ *Inmigración Africana*, 1856. The plan was not carried out owing to the opposition of political and other elements. The mover of the plan was José Suarez Argudín.

steamers and distributed along the coast at places far from the original landing and where they were least expected. The vessel which brought the cargo, usually a cheap old hulk picked up in the United States, was destroyed as soon as the cargo was landed.¹

Once on land and provided with cédulas they could be shipped along the coast to any point. There were an endless number of ways and means of evading the cédula system. For example, slaves might be sent from one district to another by means of travelling licenses, then when a body of slaves came into a district from a distant point the capitán de partido had no means of verifying the facts. Again, the system at best required an enormous amount of verifying and annotating in order to check up the movements of stock in different parts of the island,—substitutions were made in the case of death, and persons made application for cédulas who really had no slaves but passed the cédulas on. All these points Concha tried to remedy by decrees from time to time, but the physical difficulties were too great to be overcome.

As a final measure he determined to make use

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlvii., p. 851, p. 852; vol. xlviii., p. 1081. The British commissioners suggested that the number of cruisers must be large enough to watch the whole coast of Cuba, all vessels from foreign ports, and all coasters and island craft. An impossible task.

In 1858 Concha had to forbid British cruisers pursuing and persecuting craft behind the cays within Spanish jurisdiction. *Ibid.*, vol. liv., p. 1090.

of the extraordinary powers conferred on Vives, and made permanent in the time of Tacón. These allowed him to expel from the island any one whom he deemed dangerous to its tranquillity; as he expressed it, this did not require legal proof as it was merely a gubernative function. So the governors and lieutenant-governors when they became aware, by the usual signs, that a landing was expected, were to expel the parties believed to be conniving from the district; if the landing took place they should be sent to Habana to be expelled from the island by the captain-general.¹

Concha at last became convinced that it was impossible to make the cedula system fully effective, and on October 25, 1859, he decreed its suspension. The British commissioner declared that the trade had greatly increased under the system.² Concha was relieved in November, 1859, and had to face considerable adverse criticism in Spain because he had not stopped the trade. He had, however, kept the island in good order, and the number of negroes illicitly introduced during the years of his administration had fallen very low.³

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlviii., pp. 1082-4. This became an effectual weapon in the hands of later captains-general.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. 1., p. 961. Crawford and Lonsada, Sept. 29, 1857, thought that although the material difficulties were great on account of the extended coast, the numerous cays, and the natural desire of the planters to obtain a supply of labour, it was not impossible to stop it if the "minor authorities would only honestly do their duty." *Ib.*, vol. xlviii., p. 1085.

³ See Appendix II.

In a conversation with a British minister at San Ildefonso, General O'Donnel, the then dominant man in Spain, declared that he was determined to execute faithfully the slave trade treaties. His attitude was clearly reflected in the decree of Captain-General Serrano, September 4, 1860, stating that

the simple fact of the landing of a cargo of slaves will be deemed sufficient cause for suspending from office any public employé who does not use every exertion and every legal means in his power to prevent it, whether through negligence or otherwise, besides subjecting him to trial should there be reasons for doubting his honesty.¹

A more important act of Serrano was to provide for the admission of 100,000 Asiatics, which gave great relief to the burdened sugar industry.² The industry had greatly increased during the last ten or twelve years, and the increase had directly influenced the trade. The Asiatics were not comparable to the negroes in ease of control, strength, or good habits, but their superior intelligence and skill compensated largely for these deficiencies.

Serrano was succeeded in 1862 by Domingo

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. 1., p. 1061.

² Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, p. 123. The number of Asiatics from previous importations was about six thousand, "Desiring to provide for the agriculture of the island of Cuba the hands necessary to prevent a decline in its prosperity, and considering that the introduction of Chinese labourers is, among all the projects which have yet been tried in that province, that which presents the fewest objections." Decree July 6, 1860. *H. Ex. Doc.* 42d Cong., 2d Sess., No. 207, p. 2.

Dulce, one of the most determined opponents of the slave trade and slavery. He pledged himself to put all the laws against the trade into force and not to allow any private or social influences to interfere with the execution of them. A stronger feeling of confidence was established between the British commissary and the captain-general when the former promised not to make vexatious or false complaints; the captain-general remarked that "he was often deceived himself by false intelligence, in many cases designedly conveyed to him," but he asked that all news be sent to him, true or false, and he would try to sift it.¹

Pursuits and captures occurred constantly, usually on information procured by the Spanish authorities. Sometimes the authorities overstepped the bounds of the law, and the courts were forced to release negroes taken from estates. A greater difficulty was found in obtaining evidence for prosecutions.² Many officials lost their posts. The governor of Habana, Pedro Navascués, justly or unjustly, was banished for having permitted cédulas to issue to illegally imported bozales.³ In 1864 and 1865, only two landings certainly occurred, that in which Arguelles was concerned and another, both of which were captured⁴; six

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1866, vol. lxxv., Class A, p. 7.

² *Sen. Ex. Doc.*, No. 56, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 10 ff. *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 1864-5, Part II., p. 63 et seq; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. I., p. 1059.

³ Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 124.

⁴ *Accounts and Papers*, 1866, vol. lxxv., Class A, p. 12.

rumoured cases failed to stand the test of careful inquiry.

The case of Colonel José A. Arguelles was a remarkable one. He was an officer of the Spanish army and lieutenant-governor of the district of Colón, in the province of Matanzas. In 1863 he captured a cargo landed at Argüica. For this service, he received as his share of the prize money, \$15,000. He obtained leave of absence and went to New York for the ostensible purpose of purchasing the newspaper called *La Crónica*. During his absence it was discovered that he and some other officials of Colón had sold 141 negroes of the cargo which they had captured, at a price, it is said, ranging from seven hundred to seven hundred and fifty dollars each. Captain-General Dulce was very angry at this betrayal of trust. On the fifth of April, 1864, Tassara, the Spanish minister at Washington, asked Secretary Seward for the extradition of Arguelles on account of the outrage and the great interests at stake, and on the fourteenth of the month F. W. Seward wrote to Savage at Habana that if the captain-general would send his officers to New York, Arguelles would be handed over to them. He was accordingly taken to Habana, tried and condemned to the galleys.¹

Secretary Seward gave the following account of

¹ *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 1864-5, Part II., p. 60 ff.; Sedano, *Cuba*, p. 217 ff.; McPherson, *History of the Rebellion*, p. 354; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. lv., p. 1194.

this startling transaction to the Senate. There was no extradition treaty with Spain. The Act of Congress of May 15, 1820, declared the slave trade to be piracy. By the ninth article of the treaty of 1842 with Great Britain, the two governments agreed to unite in all becoming remonstrances with all powers within whose dominions slave markets are allowed to exist and urge upon them the duty of closing such markets at once. In the third place, the United States was not bound to give an asylum to an offender against the human race; and in the fourth place, Seward grounded his action on the law of nations and on the Constitution of the United States.¹

The 1100 bozales captured by Arguelles were landed from the large steamer *Cicerón*. There were, perhaps, three of these steamers engaged in the trade, and they serve to mark the change that was taking place. The trade was becoming much more expensive; the small traders and the large sailing vessels which carried cargoes of five hundred or six hundred were being captured. In 1859 and 1860, twelve large slavers were captured. The large proprietors found the steamer a profitable means to run cargoes of twelve hundred to sixteen hundred bozales. Only the big producers could or would go into it.²

¹ *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 1864-5, Part II., p. 60 ff.

² *Accounts and Papers*, 1845, vol. lvi., Class A, p. 40. These steamers were said to be owned by Zulueta ($\frac{1}{2}$), Carreras ($\frac{1}{2}$), Barro ($\frac{1}{4}$), Rousel ($\frac{1}{4}$); *Diplomatic Correspondence* 1864-5, Part II., pp. 57; 70; 163; 182.

The great lack of effectiveness of the movement to stop the trade in Cuba, which has been pointed out many times in this discussion, lay in the weakness or lack of a true sentiment against it. A few of the best minds had seen its evils from the beginning and had not failed to speak of them, but the mass of the people were either indifferent or looked upon it as a just means of avoiding the consequences of outside interference. The movement was re-enforced by the proprietors who found that they could not keep up with the industrial changes and depressions which were, in part, due to the necessity of meeting the changed conditions caused by the restriction of the trade. The element which gave final coherence to movement was the constantly growing anti-slavery sentiment.¹

The growing feeling that the trade must be made unprofitable before it would be stopped found expression in the formation of anti-slave trade societies in the island whose members were to bind themselves not to acquire directly or indirectly any bozal introduced after November 19, 1865, and to contribute by all possible means to the duty of suppressing the traffic.² The project

¹ "There have been captains-general highly severe, captains general who have truly wished to end the traffic; but they have not overtaken a single proprietor of expedition in order to apply to him punishment of any kind, and not because there have not been occasions to apply them but because he has not been able to justify himself. . . ." Señor Riquelme, in Cortes, June 6, 1866. *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i., p. 100. Cf. Armas y Céspedes, *De la esclavitud en Cuba*, p. 300.

² Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 384 ff.

Four of the movers of the Habana project were expelled

started in Habana with the approval of the captain-general, but like many another reform movement, it was taken up with far too great alacrity by certain political elements in the eastern part. One of the movers of the Habana project was Juan Poey, one of the powerful new planters and an active agent in the reform movements.

The energetic and successful methods of Dulce gave great satisfaction to many different classes of men. Twenty-one men of Habana joined in a memorial to the queen in 1865,¹ praising his conduct and energy in putting down the trade. Among them appear the names of old and distinguished creole families, O'Farril, Sedano, de la Luz Hernandez, and the names of no less than ten counts and marquises, representatives of the families of "Sugar Nobles" of the old days, Marqués Duquesne, Conde O'Reilly, Marqués de la Real Proclamación, Conde de la Reunión, etc. These men were heavy losers by the competition of the new planters, at the same time having a sincere wish to better the social and political condition of the island, but all except the Conde de Pozos Dulces and José S. Jorrín keeping clear of any entanglement with revolutionary or other dangerous intrigues.

In 1866, nine owners of ingenios with slaves, proprietors in Spain and Cuba, living in Spain, from the island after the outbreak of the rebellion. The reason for such expulsion was that they were disturbers of the peace.

¹ Sedano, *Cuba*, p. 274 ff.

addressed a memorial to the Senate.¹ They declared their entire satisfaction with the proceedings of the government in putting an end to the slave trade, and acquiescence in the new measures then under discussion. In their opinion the severest measures would be found to be necessary "to offset the incorrigible cupidity of all interested in this traffic"; pursuit into the interior was necessary in order to make sales impossible as in the time of Pezuela.

In the opinion of these proprietors, agriculture in Cuba did not depend upon the Africans, who served only to increase the great fortunes, "because these are the only ones who can buy slaves at the great price which they command to-day." The ingenios were not increasing in number, but merely in extent and production,² The trade is the fountain of all the evils which afflict the island—immorality, injustice, corruption, subornation. The certain consequence of ending the trade "will be a reduction of the fabulous profits which the colossal ingenios return; at the same time that these fortunes are increased, the small industries, worthy of the most efficacious protection, are impoverished and killed."³

It was entirely true to say that the big estates

¹ Exposición presentada al Senado por varios dueños de ingenios con esclavos en la Isla de Cuba, in *Apuntes sobre la cuestión de la Reforma Política en la I. de C. y P. R.*, p. 336 ff., 20 Marzo de 1866.

² *Apuntes sobre la cuestión de la reforma*, p. 343.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 343.

were more profitable. The profitableness depended upon the number of labourers, the skill with which they were handled, and the efficiency of the equipment of the estate.¹ An ingenio with 150 hands should have produced 300 tons of sugar, one of 250 hands, 600 tons, and one of 500 hands 2000 tons.² A short-handed estate might be very badly handicapped in getting in the crop, and it often happened that much of it was lost. The colossal estate was the most economical method of production. If all the estates in the island had adopted modern machinery, the annual output would have been increased 159,000 tons.³ The average return from a *caballería* of cane using the older methods was about 27 tons; with improved machinery the return was about 36 tons.⁴

In 1860, there were six or eight ingenios of the largest size. Three or four of them belonged to Julian de Zulueta and one to Juan Poey. Upon these ingenios the production for each head of the stock ranged from about six to eight tons.⁵ Smaller estates turned out from two to four tons

¹ The same relation existed at a later day. Cf. Porter, *Industrial Cuba*, p. 82 ff. The small ingenio was unable to endure competition.

² Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, suplemento, p. 126.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 106. The total output of ingenios under the old systems in 1860 was 506,800 tons; those using improved methods made 66,250 tons.

Returns from even the best estates were not fabulous. Juan Poey calculated that out of 1500 ingenios, 1200 returned 4 per cent., 300 returned 6 per cent. to 8½ per cent. Gallenga, *Pearl of the Antilles*, p. 125.

⁵ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, sup. p. 126.

per head. Not one of the giant ingenios composed their stock entirely of negroes. The "Las Cañas" ingenio of Poey had 480 negro slaves and 55 coolies; the "San Martín," 436 negroes and 348 coolies; the "Pontifex," 289 negroes and 379 coolies.

Julian de Zulueta was a fine example of the strong men whom the world has come to call the captains of industry. Born in the Basque Provinces, of humble parents, he came to Cuba with the ambition of gathering together a small sum and returning to his native province. In 1847, he started the "Alava," ingenio in Cárdenas, a 2000-ton estate employing 380 slaves, 35 coolies, and a reserve stock of 200 children, the latter probably contraband. This was one of the first estates fully equipped with thoroughly modern machinery.¹ In 1873, this estate was valued at \$1,500,000, and Zulueta owned, or controlled, three others of similar extent and value. Besides these he had other large interests as merchant and banker. A man like this could not fail to be a force in society and politics, and this influence was effectuated through his connection with the "Casino Español," that organisation which the so-called Spanish party adopted as a measure of union and self-protection. He was probably the most influential man in the island outside of the captain-general.² He was a worker by instinct and for pleasure.

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, p. 70.

² Gallenga, *Pearl of the Antilles*, p. 100.

Juan Poey was the son of a Frenchman and a Creole Spaniard. While, perhaps, not so strikingly successful in business as Zulueta, he was regarded as being the man most familiar with the difficult problem of replacing negro labour by some other forms. His bent of mind was scientific and logical and he was seeking a way which would occasion the least derangement and loss. Zulueta sought to preserve slavery as long as possible.

It was far from the truth, therefore, to say that the big ingenios were killing off the small producers. The industries of Cuba were in an evolutionary stage between slave labour and free labour, and in this change the great ingenios were taking the lead. Their first contribution was in the economy of labour effected through better organisation and improved machinery, and their second, in replacing half of the slaves by coolies. The day of the small ingenios was passing, not because it was crowded out by the big ones, but because they were no longer able to meet the demands of the times.¹ The full accomplishment of this process was secured when the abolition of slavery made further evolution necessary and the sugar industry came to depend almost wholly on the great ingenio or "central," as the centre to which the cane of small growers was

¹ There is a very interesting article on "Sugar Making in Cuba," by H. B. Auchincloss, in *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, vol. xxx., p. 440 ff., March, 1865.

brought for conversion. The usefulness of the small ingenio was passing, and its place being filled by the larger which met the demands for cheaper production in the pressure of a high price for labour in the island, and the competition of beet sugar in Europe. This change was caused directly by the repression of the slave trade, and the evolution was completed by the suppression of the trade and the abolition of slavery.

These changes undoubtedly bore most heavily upon the small producers, but it is hardly just to say that the great producers were the cause of the distress. It is true that the latter bought or even imported bozales, but they were not the only proprietors that did so. The fact that they could afford to do so longer than the others does not affect the question; they could pay a higher price than the small producer, and they could do so because their estates were more efficient. The real condition was that labour was scarce, owing to the suspension of the trade, the price of labour was thereby increased and with it the cost of production, which made the margin of profit smaller unless there was an increase of efficiency somewhere. This increase of efficiency the old planters failed to supply. If any change was to be made, therefore, the large producers were in a better position to bear it than the small ones. We find, therefore, that they were the leaders both nominally and actually in this necessary transi-

tion, yet the complaints came from the other direction.

For many years suppression of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery had been regarded as certain to produce the same result, and it is clear that by 1865, at the latest, every one admitted that abolition was unavoidable within a comparatively short time.¹ But upon this point, likewise, the great leaders were determined that no precipitate action should be taken. They were certain that anything "immediate" would be ruin to the sugar industry, and so to the island and its white civilisation.² With the cessation of the trade the negro population had begun to decrease rapidly all over the island.³ The introduction of Chinese had never been satisfactory. If it was bad to have two alien races in Cuba, it was still worse to have three; besides, it was expensive.

Behind all the problems of the island stands the black man. To the Spaniard the island must be either white or negro, and in this view he was supported by the majority of Creole Spaniards and the Annexationist party. If, for example, the trade had been suppressed in 1840, there is no reason to suppose that the fate of the industries

¹ The issue of the Civil War in the United States was an important factor in deciding the slavery question in Cuba.

² Saco strongly opposed hasty action, as advised by the abolitionists, on the ground that it would injure the white race more than it would benefit the black. *L'esclavage et la révolution en Espagne*, pp. 11-12.

³ *Accounts and Papers*, 1872, vol. liv., Class A, p. 29 ff.

of Cuba would have differed essentially from that in Jamaica or Haiti where the negro population was predominant in numbers. At that time the negro population very much exceeded the white. But it must be remembered that among the number of slaves and free coloured are set down only one or two degrees of mixed blood, and that the ramification of negro blood was in reality far more extensive than the figures at any time show. If any great shock had at that time stopped the development of the sugar industry, the great increase of the white population, which went on since that time, would have been impossible. The island would have been left with a predominant negro element in the presence of a white population whose vigour would have progressively declined with the material prosperity of the island. Since 1840, the negro population had declined, except for a temporary reaction about 1855.¹ Those, therefore, who had resisted the efforts to suppress at all hazards the trade, believed that they stood for a conservative policy which represented the cause of material prosperity, European civilisation, and the time-honoured policy of Spain which had for its end the assimilation of the blacks into the white race. The reason why emigrants came to Cuba was that they expected to make money; they could not do this by working beside the slaves, coolies, or negroes on sugar estates. The

¹ In 1841, the slaves numbered 436, 495; in 1860, 367,350 Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, suplemento p. 9.

latter lived too cheaply for the emigrant to compete with him and the work was too hard. The white emigrant became a worker about the towns or set up farms of his own where he could soon become independent.

But if the process of change which was going on in the island was to be one of evolution instead of revolution, many changes or reforms in the government would have to be made. This had been realised by many of the captains-general, who had at different times been able to effect many improvements, but most of their efforts had been checked by political and other influences. The home government under O'Donnel and Cánovas del Castillo in the Real Decreto of November 5, 1865, ordered the sitting of a commission consisting of Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and Spaniards to consider the reforms necessary in the government of the islands and report what special laws were best fitted for placing the government and fiscal system upon a more practical and liberal basis.

The fundamental reforms needed are well summed up in the *informe* of Captain-General Dulce before the commission: measures leading to the extinction of slavery, as the surest means of ending the slave trade; a change in the revenue system which at present depended wholly on customs duties; a reorganisation of the government which would do away with the over-centralised administration; promotion of white immigration;

and provision for the assimilation of the black by the white race.¹

The suggestion for reforming the revenue was the most important. A revenue system which is based entirely upon customs duties was recognised as being very bad, not only because of its uncertainty and expensiveness, but because of its inequality. The whole burden of taxation rested upon agriculture and made it harder for sugar planters who were struggling to keep up in the face of other difficulties. The committee on economic questions reported that "Cuban agriculture and territorial property will pay much less by the direct system of contribution than they contribute to-day indirectly."² In the second place, a direct property tax would help in the problem of immigration because immense tracts of land were held by people who would not develop them nor sell them, because it cost nothing to hold unproductive property, and there seemed to be a difficulty in getting the land into the hands of small owners. A direct tax was ordered by Real Decreto, February 12, 1867, and the collection of this tax in the eastern part of the island directly caused the war of 1868.³

The British agents in Cuba were sure that no landings were made between 1865 and 1872, in spite of every inducement offering in the shape

¹ *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i., p. 219.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 241.

³ Pezuela, *Crónica de las Antillas*, 126; Betancourt, *Las dos banderas*, p. 10; Macias, *Cuba in Revolution*, p. 24.

of high prices for labour.¹ They thought that the disorders occasioned by the war gave opportunities for running cargoes, but it seems that no departures of cargoes from Africa were taking place at that time.² It seems certain that the trade had entirely ceased before the end of 1865; an examination of many files of New York and London newspapers discloses no reports or rumours of landings up to 1876. The disasters of the war ruined many slave owners, and their stocks, as well as those of "embargoes" (rebel sympathisers), went to supply the demand for labour of the proprietors in the western part of the island.³

Captain-General Dulce said that the slave traders were well known in Cuba, and that the government had data relative to all the most prominent ones sufficient to make their guilt morally certain. Many thought that it was possible to deter these men only by declaring the trade piracy, but in his opinion, the best way was to expel them from the island by summary act of the government.⁴

That it was impossible to deal with the problem by ordinary legal process, in which exact data and proof must always be presented, is shown by the case of the Las Pozas expedition of 1860. A steamer landed a cargo on one of the many

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1867, vol. lxxiii., Class A, p. 10; 1870, vol. lxi., p. 78; *Ibid.*, 1872, vol. liv., Class A, p. 39.

² *Ibid.*, 1870, Class C, p. 30.

³ *Ibid.*, 1872, vol. liv., Class A, p. 39.

⁴ *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i., 221.

cays along the coast, whence the 921 negroes were carried by launches to different points. Three launches carrying 500 negroes were surprised and captured in the act of landing by a boat's crew belonging to a Spanish war vessel in the vicinity and delivered up to the authorities at Habana. The court declared the negroes to be slaves because of lack of sufficient evidence to the contrary in the papers before it.¹

The acts of the Cortes of 1866 and 1867 provided for laws which made evasions of any kind impossible. Henceforth—every slave must be registered, and every free coloured person must have a certificate which must likewise be registered. A special committee of seizures (*junta de presas*) was constituted, consisting of ninety proprietors who were to be Spaniards, that is white, over twenty-five years old, residing in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Upon the apprehension of an expedition, the Junta must be called upon at once to give an opinion whether the negroes are free or the property of a certain person. Every negro, or coloured person, must be declared free, if not enrolled. No proof to the contrary, and no acts or contracts relating to dominion over a slave should be admitted unless the slave be registered.² Finally the punishment of death was decreed

¹ Sedano, *Cuba*, p. 230 ff.

² *Libro de los Síndicos*, p. 257 ff.; Escriche, *Diccionario razonado*, vol. ii., p. 847; *Accounts and Papers*, 1867-8, vol. lxiv., Class A, p. 6.

against any one concerned in an expedition who should resist capture.

The British commissioners thought that these laws were sufficiently explicit and that they would be effective. They seem to have removed the last remaining difficulty in the way of effective legal proceedings for, under them, it was no longer necessary to prove that the captured negroes were illicitly introduced bozales, the *sine qua non* of which had been that they had been brought from Africa and did not belong to the stock of somebody in the island. Under the new code it must be proved that they had not come from Africa and that they did belong to the stock on some certain estate, if this could not be done the negroes were free. General Dulce, however, did not believe that these laws would fulfil their object.¹

¹ "Porque destinada á estirpir abusos, de antiguo arraigados en ciertos círculos, y á imposibilitar especulaciones de mala ley, hasta hoy en extremo productivas para los armadores y sus cómplices, habrá de luchar contra amañíos y subterfugios que la desvirtuarán en muchos casos." *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i. p. 219.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Disposal of the Captured Negroes—Bribery and its Relation to the Captain-General—Number of Illegally Imported Negroes—Conclusion.

THE provision in the treaty of 1817 for the disposal of the negroes of condemned slavers directed that they should receive certificates of emancipation from the Mixed Commission Court and be delivered over to the government within whose jurisdiction the court was established, whereupon they were to be employed as servants or free labourers. Each government agreed to guarantee the liberty of the negroes consigned to its charge.

The first cargo disposed of under this provision was that of the schooner *Relámpago*, consisting of 159 bozales. The commissioners adopted the best means they could devise to ensure their identity; each negro was given a number and a certificate containing his African name, the Christian name given him by the court, the name of his tribe and the vessel that he came in, and the name of the interpreter employed. The descrip-

tion of the negro was recorded in the books of the court and inserted in the certificates. Finally, a piece of tin with his number upon it was hung around the neck of each negro, and copies of the certificates in Spanish and English were given to the captain-general for safe keeping.¹ They were then turned over to the captain-general for further disposal. After this they formed a new class in the population of Cuba, known as emancipados or negroes liberated under the treaties with Great Britain.

The captain-general promulgated regulations to govern the treatment and distribution of these negroes.² Those receiving them had to maintain them in food, clothing, and shoes according to the custom of the country in regard to servants, instruct them in the doctrines of the Christian religion, provide medical care, see that they were baptised as soon as possible, and pay the expenses of burial if they died while in their charge. Every negro had to be taught some employment or mechanical art. Care was taken that births of children should be reported at once so that their freedom should be specified in the certificates of baptism. Twice a year they had to be presented for inspection so that the captain-general could satisfy himself what progress was being made in their civilisation. In case of

¹ Kilbee to the captain-general, Dec. 20, 1824; *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, vol. xxvii., Class A, p. 135.

² *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, vol. xxvii., Class A, pp. 137-8.

bad usage the holder was deprived of the negro and had to give him up clothed to another. Persons could not hold an emancipado unless they owned land and gave a bond of \$500 for each negro. The penalty for selling an emancipado into slavery, for making away with him in any way, or falsely reporting him dead or runaway, was \$500 in addition to the general penalty for selling a free person. Half of the fines was given to the informer and half placed in the fund for sick emancipados. The expenses of maintaining the emancipados up to the time of distribution was paid by the holders. Ill treatment of all kinds was forbidden, but the holders were made responsible for their good behaviour under the laws covering the relation of parent and child; if the negro was incorrigible, he was turned over to the government. The *commissarios de barrio*, or justices of the peace, made monthly inspections and reports of their condition and progress, and whether the emancipados were satisfied in their lot.

The emancipados were placed with public establishments such as hospitals, infirmaries, or the botanical garden, with municipal corporations and religious bodies, all within the municipality of Habana. The term of service was for five years in the case of adult men, and seven for women and children; and, if at the end of that time they were still unable to earn their own living, the term might be prolonged by three

years; but they were not to be returned to the same holder unless it appeared that the lack of progress was due to their own fault, the facts to be ascertained by common report in the neighbourhood. A fine of fifty to one hundred dollars was provided for any slight breach of the rules by the holder, and for a serious one the negro was taken away.

The emancipados were given to responsible corporations and families who enjoyed their service in return for teaching them to be useful members of society.¹ The greatest danger to be guarded against was that they might be made away with and reduced to slavery, but the commissioner said that every precaution had been taken against this. The larger part were given to private parties by lot for domestic servants, to officers' widows, poor government clerks, and others whose fortunes would not admit of the purchase of slaves. People of moderate means used what influence they had to secure the privileges of selecting negroes before the general distribution by ballot²; in the memorials the use to which it was intended to put the negroes had always to

¹ Couto, *Los negros*, p. 82.

"Para adoctrinarlos en el trabajo y en la civilización cristiana los entrega repartidos como á patronos, entre vecinos honnados y laboriosos, los cuales aprovechándose de los frutos de su enseñanza por un periodo que no excede de ocho años, que escuardo el negro emancipado se declara libre, satisfacen una cuota mensual á los fondos de tesoro, por los beneficios que obtienen proporcionalmente con el trabajo de sus patrocinados."

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xx., p. 160.

be specified, and the greatest care was exercised in scrutinising the character of the recipients, and to be sure that the connection should benefit the future of the emancipado.¹

It was fortunate for the negroes that they thus fell generally to the share of persons not possessing slaves, for, singular as it may appear, the emancipated negroes are detested by the negro population whether slave or free; and the name of emancipado, or "inglés," is, among the negroes of the Habana, a term of opprobrium and derision.²

It was practically impossible to prevent abuses of one kind or another in the treatment and management of the emancipados. A very interesting incident was related by the commissioners. At the semi-annual examinations the negroes were asked whether they were well treated and satisfied, and, if the reply was negative, they were given to another person. A case was known to the commissioners where

a person holding a government office had two negroes granted him. They remained in his family for more than a year, until they became noted by his acquaintances as most valuable servants. They appeared to be most humanely treated and well fed; yet, at one of

¹ Statement of the captain-general, July 17, 1832. *Ibid.* *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xx., p. 164.

² Report of British Commissioners, Mar. 29, 1832. *Ibid.*, p. 160. "Several Spanish families having emancipated negroes for servants are known to H. M. Commissary Judge, and in these he has been gratified to observe them invariably well treated." *Ibid.*, p. 161.

the half yearly presentations, on being asked whether they were satisfied with their master they answered no, and they were immediately given away to another person. There could be no doubt that they had been tampered with, on account of their known value as servants, and thus a poor family lost the reward of all their trouble, and as may be expected, have never applied for any more of the emancipated negroes.¹

The demand for domestic servants was soon supplied. The number of emancipados which could be used on the public works was limited, and new methods of disposal had to be found. Manufacturers and proprietors were glad to take them and pay a fair premium for their services, and they came into demand as street porters, water-carriers, volante drivers, wharf hands, labourers on the railways, and in sweet-meat and tobacco manufactories.²

There were many very serious obstacles in the way of successful handling of the emancipados. The least of these was the danger that they might be carried off, induced to run away, or substituted for a dead slave; some cases of this nature did occur, and it was impossible to prevent them or afford a remedy. The most serious aspect of the whole question was the effect of their presence on the community as a whole. Some employment for them had to be provided, and the way

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xx., p. 162.

² Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 293. In 1834, a premium of 102 pesos fuertes was paid per head; *Jamaica Movement*, p. 147.

adopted was the best that could be done under the circumstances; they might have been placed on a reservation in the interior, but according to Spanish practice, the best way of educating savage people in European civilisation was to keep them in close touch with it, and protect the savage as far as possible, from the worst evils which were certain to beset him. It was impossible to set them at complete liberty because they were entirely ignorant of means of gaining a living, they would have become aimless vagrants, they would have become dispersed in the wild lands of the interior and reduced to savagery—in all cases to become public charges and sources of disorder and danger. When they were employed side by side with slaves, it was impracticable to treat one negro differently than another—it at once started questionings in the mind of the slave which would inevitably end in impairing the control of the overseer, interfere with discipline, and destroy the efficiency of the gang or plantation. The slave system was an exceedingly delicate organisation, at its best. It required great skill in management, —treatment must be just, neither too harsh nor too mild. The difference between emancipado and slave would be incomprehensible to the African black. A good manager of a plantation is as essential as a good manager of a railway, and both have to deal with the conditions before them. When it became no longer possible to keep all the emancipados in the care of individual

corporations in Habana, they had to be given to some persons who placed them among slaves where their identity sooner or later disappeared. It became more and more difficult to protect them as their number increased.

The final difficulty came with the question of setting them at liberty when the end of apprenticeship was reached. Very few, if any, could justly have been said to be ready to take their place in an organised society of European type; eight years was far too short a time to accomplish such a great result even if the Africans themselves had furthered the object with all their power, but they did not further it in many cases, because they could not understand it. The Spanish laws were such that a slave could free himself at any time by fulfilling certain conditions; the conditions were not hard, and a large number freed themselves every year, but this process was nothing more than proving his fitness to take his place in society. There was no reason in law or in fact why negroes should be set at liberty in the arbitrary period of eight years.

At the very outset the setting free of captured slaves excited sensation and protest in Habana. The captain-general was petitioned by the Ayuntamiento to suspend the sentences of the Mixed Court, but he replied to this and other petitions, that if it had been a matter of Spanish law alone, he might have felt inclined to attend to it, but in the present case there was a solemn treaty which the Spanish

government could not itself order to be suspended, without the consent of his Britannic Majesty.¹

As the number of condemned negroes kept growing, the uneasiness increased, and it was very much added to by the attempts of the British commissioners to make personal examinations into the condition of the emancipados. The captain-general found himself facing a very serious situation. He could not stop the slave trade, because it was beyond his reach, therefore he was threatened with foreign interference in the unsettled internal affairs of the island, and with having the island inundated by a larger number of emancipated negroes than it could absorb. In 1829 he determined to ship the additional emancipados to Ceuta or other Spanish colonies to be employed on public works there. The commissioners objected to this, and it was finally agreed that they should be sent to the island of Trinidad and apprenticed out. This condition was inserted in the treaty of 1835, so that all negroes captured by the British cruisers should be turned over to the care of that government; very few slaves were taken by the British on the coast of Cuba after that time, however. Up to 1845, 1207 negroes were sent to Trinidad and Grenada,² of which number 978 were emancipados delivered

¹ *Parliamentary Papers*, 1825, vol. xxvii., Class A, pp. 140-1. Kilbee to Canning, Dec. 30, 1824.

² *Accounts and Papers*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 441.

over by the captain-general,¹ and the balance were those condemned by the Court after the treaty of 1835; from 1845 to 1851, 474 were so disposed of.²

From the very nature of the case, it was impossible to prevent all abuses; the government could not watch every individual, and much experiment with different modes of treatment would be necessary before a satisfactory result could be obtained. Tacón, finding the system in confusion, set a commission at work to improve matters. The old system consigned the emancipados for five years on payments ranging from fifty-one to one hundred and seventy dollars, and some were given free. The fund thus created was devoted to public and charitable work, and to a benefit fund for the emancipados themselves. But because of the great demand for labour some holders made a fine speculation out of the arrangement, as it was possible to get a large return by renting them out as labourers.³ But this system had its bad features. If the emancipado fell to a good owner, he was well taken care of; the number of such owners was unquestionably large, but the making of donations to even charitable

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlv., p. 1378.

² *Accounts and Papers*, 1850, vol. xvii., Class A, p. 61.

³ *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xiv., Class A, p. 49. The commissioners found one case, where Gavino, a water carrier, had earned a profit of \$5228 in sixteen years for his mistress, who had paid \$612 for him. He had been let out four times, at five years each, under the system. Letters of Secretary of State, Gonzalez, 28 and 31 Aug. 1841, on conditions of emancipados, *Jamaica Movement*, p. 139, p. 141.

institutions left a way open for entrance of abuse. The lot of the emancipados was unfortunate because they had no one to look out for them. The captain general could not do it himself, so the duty devolved on a large number of persons within whose jurisdiction one emancipado or several might be located, and these persons might not always feel it incumbent to make a close examination into their condition.

These defects were in part remedied by Generals Pezuela and Concha in 1854, by limiting the number which one person could hold and by providing for the payment of monthly wages for the benefit of the emancipado and public works and charities,¹ and measures were taken to prevent speculation. Persons of responsibility who could give a guarantee of good treatment were the only ones allowed to take them. Free papers were given at the end of the time of service—five years—and if they had good records they were allowed to remain on the island.

Estorch, the historian and defender of General Pezuela, gives a rather black picture of the 2090 emancipados called in in his administration, tending, in his opinion, to show that the holders had not had the fulfilment of the rules at heart. They

¹ Concha, *Memoria sobre el estado de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 161 ff.; Estorch, *Apuntes sobre Pezuela*, p. 16 ff.; Cuevas, *La Administración*, p. 555.

In 1864, U. S. Consul Riddle wrote Sec'y Seward that the old abuses had entirely disappeared, and that the government looked closely after their well being. *Sen. Ex. Doc.*, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., No. 56, p. 22.

were as ignorant of religion and the language as on the day of landing, they were not baptised, the terms of service had been continued so as to make them virtually slaves, and they were sold and resold by means of all sorts of certificates which had been made out in such a manner that the articles to be transferred could not be clearly distinguished.¹ Probably in most cases the emancipados were treated in the same manner as the slaves.² The question is, how much of these things could a raw African negro be reasonably expected to learn even in ten or fifteen years—granted that he must spend most of his time at work?

From 1830 to 1840 the British agents complained constantly and bitterly about the condition of the emancipados, and their activity threatened to end in the subversion of Spanish authority in Cuba and involve Europe and America in war. They made demands on the captain-general that he must give them an account of the condition of the emancipados and finally to allow them to make visits and inspections themselves independently. At first they were granted some latitude, but as their activity increased the captains-general declined to give away information or allow any examinations whatever. There was absolutely no other course for him to pursue. As a result, the commissioners were left without any informa-

¹ Estorch, *Apuntes sobre Peseuela*, p. 16 ff.

² Valiente, *Réformes dans les îles de Cuba et Porto Rico*, p. 17; Merlin, "Les esclaves dans les îles espagnoles," *Revue, des deux Mondes*, 2 ser., vol. xxvi., p. 746.

tion concerning the emancipados, and had to depend entirely upon rumours and the captain-general's word from time to time that their condition was satisfactory to him. It is needless to say that the rumours differed from the language of the captain-general.

The limit of the patience of the captain-general and the Spanish government was reached when the violent abolitionists Turnbull and Madden were sent to Cuba as British Consul and Commissary Judge. They insisted upon being allowed to make researches among the slaves for lost emancipados, and made an attack on the official character of the captain-general and his officials, all of which became the subject of negotiations between London and Madrid. The Spanish government made a calm statement that the regulations concerning the emancipados were being carried out in a proper and satisfactory manner, and declined to accede to the demands of Great Britain to set up an alien court in Cuba with powers equal or superior to those of the Spanish authorities, and ended by demanding the recall of the British agents, which was finally done. Turnbull was specifically charged by the Spanish authorities with being the direct instigator of the awful revolt at Matanzas in 1843 and 1844; after he left Habana he made a surreptitious journey into the eastern part of the island from Nassau, for the purpose of discovering whether certain negroes in that part were free or not. He was

taken into custody and sent out of the country with orders not to return again. According to the customary practice when dealing with men who tampered with slaves at a time of revolt, he would have been shot. There is no room for wonder that the people of Cuba questioned the good intentions of Great Britain when she sent out such men for agents.

Under the treaty of 1835, the British government was allowed to moor a hulk in the harbour of Habana for the reception of captured negroes turned over to it by the Mixed Court. This hulk, the *Romney*, as events occurred was little used. She was provided with a guard of negro soldiers, and it shortly became understood amongst the slaves and emancipados that this ship was a refuge provided for them, and that if they could succeed in getting aboard it they would be free. It created uselessly a very bad state of mind amongst the coloured people, but it was with the greatest difficulty that the government succeeded in securing its abandonment. The abolitionist agents thought the hulk was a very proper adjunct because of its "moral effect" in stopping the slave trade.¹

A royal order in 1848 stated that the business of the Mixed Court was the adjudication of cap-

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1846, vol. xv., Class A, p. 445; Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 510; Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 73; Andueza, *Isla de Cuba*, p. 144; Beauvallon, *L'île de Cuba*, vol. i., pp. 91-3; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxvi., p. 362; *Parliamentary Papers*, 1839-40, Class A, p. 139; *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 36.

tured slaves solely, any other exercises on their part were abuses, and such was the practice introduced by the British agents during the civil war of attempting to constitute themselves examiners and accusers under a forced construction of the treaty; the captain-general was ordered not to permit foreign functionaries to commit these abuses, and to stop the trade by Spanish subjects.¹ The British government ordered its agents in 1845 not to meddle with affairs not strictly within their duties, and made an agreement with Spain whereby they might make reports of circumstances to the captain-general, but could not hold discussions or indicate any directions to him.

From 1824 to 1854 there had been 11,243 emancipados under the charge of authorities of Cuba, of these 8764 were captured by British cruisers, and 2479 by the authorities.² Up to January 1, 1840, 147 were set at liberty; from that date to November 30, 1853, 2063 were liberated; 5957 were dead, lunatic, or disappeared; 978 sent to the British West India Islands; and the remainder, 2095, were hired out as labourers. The ordinances of January 1, 1854, gave the emancipados the choice of remaining in Cuba or being sent to the British Islands. After 1854, the ma-

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1865, vol. lvi., A, p. 55.

² Report of the Secretary of the Junta Protectora de los Emancipados, Feb. 6, 1854; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xliv., p. 1378.

jority of the emancipados were employed on the sugar plantations.¹

In the years 1854-66, 14,417 illegally imported bozales were seized by the authorities,² making a total of 25,660 emancipados during forty-two years. In 1869 any remaining emancipados from the captured expeditions of 1824-42 were set at liberty by decree of the captain-general, the next year those of 1842-53, and the rest in December 1870. In July, 1871, the British commissary judge estimated that there should be about 5000 left to take advantage of these decrees. Many in the revolted districts would never be heard from. These final decrees were all republished in the collection of laws still in force, in 1876.

A large amount of money was received into the emancipado fund beginning with the administration of the Príncipe de Anglona in 1838, and extending to 1852—a sum of \$792,823.³ Here are some of the ways in which the fund was disbursed,—in improving the buildings and grounds of the government house and the Quinta de los Molinos, \$20,234; for repairs to the engineering school, \$13,208; to the convent of San Felipe, \$3655; to the correctional workhouse, \$1600; to expenses of emancipados, \$63,536; to restitution of dona-

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlv., p. 989.

² *Libro de Sindicos*, pp. 325-36; *Accounts and Papers*, 1871, vol. lxii., Class C, p. 63; *ibid.*, 1872, vol. liv., Class A, p. 27.

³ Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones*, vol. i., p. 783; Concha, *Memorias sobre el estado de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 161 ff.

tions for emancipados who died, \$101,914; to a church in Cienfuegos, \$500. In 1852, \$32,562 remained in the fund for disposal.¹ After 1854, monthly wages were paid for the emancipado, of which the emancipado received three fourths on being set at liberty.² Wages were about ten dollars per month.³

The emancipados who were liberated by the decrees of 1870 were transformed into contract labourers under which the negro was bound for six years to work for his master in all customary tasks in town and country, subject to the order and discipline of the establishment, shop, or estate, in regard to working hours, rest, feast days and so on, and to all the orders and regulations for persons of his character. The master paid him ten dollars per month wages, gave him daily eight ounces of salt meat, two and one half pounds of sweet potatoes or other nutritious food, provided an infirmary and medicine; no deduction could be made in wages for the first week of sickness, and two changes of clothes, a woollen shirt, and a blanket had to be given each year.⁴

A few words must be said relating to charges of bribery in connection with the illicit slave trade. That bribery was practised to some ex-

¹ Concha, *Memorias sobre el estado de la Isla de Cuba*, p. 161 ff.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol., xliv., p. 187 ff.

³ Valiente, *Reformes dans Cuba et Porto Rico*, pp. 12-13; *Accounts and Papers*, 1873, vol. lxi., Class A, p. 59.

⁴ *Accounts and Papers*, 1872, vol. liv., Class A, p. 38.

tent among the minor officials of the government, even extending occasionally to persons as high as governors of districts, there can be no doubt; just how much of this was done can not be determined, but it seems clear that bribery was sometimes resorted to in order to avoid persecution as well as prosecution. The only question needing discussion here is whether bribery reached as far as the captain-general, and it may be accepted as certain that without exception it did not.

The captains-general sent out by Spain were in all cases men of the highest character and ability; while it can not be said, perhaps, that many of these captains-general were brilliant men, yet they were representative of the best men Spain could produce, and were such that no nation would need to blush for, if compared with a similar group of men anywhere else in the world. There are weak spots in this succession—at the hold-over periods—when the supply stepped up to fill the interval between the departure of the old and arrival of the succeeding captain-general. These periods were always very brief. Those who have thought it proper to make or repeat charges of bribery have shown a lack of discrimination, so singular and so great that it destroys all faith in their conjectures. If they had pointed out some captain-general who took bribes, some unpopular man under whom the trade seemed to thrive unduly, some credence might be placed in them; but they charge Tacón, an unpopular

governor,—Anglona, an obscure governor,—Valdés, who was popular and a firm repressor of the traffic,—Concha, a liberal governor and an energetic prosecutor of the laws.

The beginning of these charges is to be found in the books of the abolitionists, Madden and Turnbull,¹ where it is stated that the captains-general receive a regular head tax on the slaves brought in. The evidence which they produce is mere hearsay and absurd in its details, and they attempt to place the odium upon Tacón, the predecessor of the governor at the time in which they were writing. The agent Macleay, in December, 1834, was positive that no suspicion of dishonest practice could exist against Tacón.² The character of these charges is that they always relate to some previous governor, and contemporary report is never sure that the present one can be justly charged. Nearly every traveller who visited the island after that time thought it proper to say something about the bribing of the captain-general—they repeat the story that he receives regularly a doubloon, or seventeen dollars, for every negro landed.³ The Anti-Slavery Society

¹ Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 155; Madden, *Island of Cuba*, pp. 31-2 *In re Slave Trade*, p. 121.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxiv., pp. 39, 49. In 1848, Kennedy, Brit. Com. Judge, stated that Tacón, who left office ten years before, had taken bribes. *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, p. 61.

³ Wurdiman, *Notes on Cuba*, p. 255; Kimball, "Letters from Cuba," *Knickerbocker Magazine*, vol. xxv., p. 157; *Cuba and the Cubans*, p. 185. Kimball was one of the popular writers of the day, he went to Cuba, 1844, and his

thought seventeen dollars per head rather a small douceur, so they put the amount at fifty dollars.¹

In 1857, it was clear that corruption was a serious obstacle in the way of complete suppression, but it was also clear that there was no thought of laying the captain-general open to any such charge.² This condition of affairs did not prevent a well-known author from stating in his book in 1873 that until very recent times the captains-general had received seventeen dollars per head for illegally imported slaves.³ This general statement about very recent times would appear to include Concha, Serrano, and Dulce, who were the least compromising of all the captains-general. And it did not prevent the use of the tale by the revolutionary propaganda as a bait for the people of the United States, in order to increase their faith in the reported iniquities practised in Cuba.⁴

The nature of the emancipado fund was not generally understood, and the captains-general refused to give any information about it to the commissioners, so that it easily gave rise to rumours and indications which would not be understood by strangers; the mystery surrounding

letters are largely copies of Turnbull's book; Ballou, *History of Cuba*, p. 189; Ampère, *Promenade en Amérique*, vol. ii., p. 200; Phillippo, *United States and Cuba*, p. 409.

¹ *Amer. and For. Anti-Slavery Soc. An. Report*, May 6, 1851, p. 102.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xlviii., p. 1082-3. Crawford and Lonsada's report, July 13, 1857.

³ Gallenga, *Pearl of the Antilles*, p. 79.

⁴ Aguilara and Céspedes, *Notes about Cuba*, p. 5.

the fund probably gave rise to the rumours of bribery. It was said that each captain-general took away with him a large sum of money out of this fund.¹

The making of an exact statement of the number of slaves unlawfully introduced after 1820 presents many difficulties. In the first place, those persons who have made it their business to record these details have in far the larger number of cases been abolitionists or persons interested in presenting the worst aspect of the situation. In the cases of the British commissioners, many of whom were men honestly anxious to give true reports, and who had the best means of knowing what actually took place, it is found that their statements do not agree in important particulars, and that they are often deceived in actual conditions and by their methods of collecting information.²

¹ *Slave Trade Correspondence*, 1844, Class A, p. 149.

² Pezuela, *Diccionario de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. ii., p. 286, 1821-30, 300 expeditions landed cargoes; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxiii., p. 61, 183 landings 1822-32, made up from reports of the British commissioners, or 70,000 negroes; a compilation from the reports of the commissioners themselves gives 221 landings; Saco, *Papeles sobre Cuba*, vol. i., p. 165, says an annual average of 10,000 negroes were landed 1821-30; Sagra, *Historia física*, vol. i., p. 146, gives 30,000 annually landed, 1818-42; Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 581, 11,000 annually, 1821-54; Bandinel, *Slave Trade*, p. 286, thought 28,000 per year a small estimate; Buxton's estimate of 60,000 per year was shown to be far from the truth by Kennedy, British commissioner in 1839, who gave his opinion that 25,000 was large enough to cover the importation in any year, *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxviii., p. 516; *Llamamiento de la Isla de Cuba* says over 25,000 annually, 1832-1854, p. 25.

The difficulty is greatly increased because of the lack of complete census reports, showing the exact birth and death rate among the slaves. The census does sometimes give the birth rate, but it has been pointed out that what is really given is the number of baptisms, which would include many adult negroes. The death rate among the slaves is given in the census of 1817 as 2.4 per cent¹; but upon this point the testimony is much at variance. Some writers say that the deaths among the newly imported negroes rose to ten and to fifteen per cent.² The losses on sugar estates were probably the heaviest, and on badly conducted estates may have risen to eight or ten per cent. at unfavourable times, the death rate was much less on coffee estates, farms, and in the towns; many writers agree on three to seven per cent. among the field negroes.³ But the great weight of evidence goes to show that as a rule the negroes were remarkably healthy, and furthermore that the annual death rate did not exceed two and one half per cent.⁴ The death

¹ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural de la Isla de Cuba*, vol. i., p. 161.

² Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 150; Abbot, *Letters*, p. 41; Alexander, *Trans-Atlantic Sketches*, p. 203.

³ Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 295; *British and Foreign State Papers*; vol. xlv., p. 993; Saco, *Papeles sobre Cuba*, vol. i., p. 166; Humboldt, *Ensayo sobre Cuba*, p. 110; Madden, *In Re Slave Trade*, p. 118.

⁴ An average of five sugar estates visited by Madden and Turnbull in 1838 gives 2 per cent: Wurdiman, *Notes on Cuba*, p. 153; Murray *Travels*, vol. ii., p. 178; the Commission of 1866 took 2½ per cent., *Información sobre reformas*, vol. ii., p. 302; *Accounts and Papers*, 1868-9, vol. lvi., A, p. 4; Queipo, *Cuba*, p. 21.

rate was unquestionably reduced by the introduction of the steam engine. The births were comparatively small in number and confined chiefly to the creole negroes, and to the *ladinos*, or acclimated negroes. Bozales were wanted for the rough and hard field labour; here the number of women was small and births few. It is at this point that the reason for the large importation of bozales appears, for they died natural deaths without being replenished; more bozales had constantly to be imported to take their places and provide enough labour for an increased output of produce.

In checking the reports of the British Commissioners on the amount of the slave trade at different times, the scale of prices has been referred to in order to see whether an unusually large import was to be looked for in any year.¹ If the price remained stationary, usually the case until 1846, it was assumed that the demands caused by losses through deaths, manumissions, and increased production were being supplied; if the price fell a smaller import than usual was to be expected, and vice versa, if the price rose. The addition which might be expected to be made to the population by births among the slaves has been somewhat arbitrarily assumed at 1800 to 2000 per annum. The difference in the number of the slaves in two consecutive censuses gave a clue as to how much importation beyond the number

¹ Cf. Table of prices, Appendix 1.

necessary to make good losses was to be expected. The amount of substitution of other forms of alien labour furnished another means of checking results after 1846. An average cargo contained 250 to 300 negroes.

Following this method, it appears that from 1821 to 1827, inclusive, about 30,000 negroes were introduced, or from 4000 to 5000 per annum. From 1828 to 1841, the slave population increased 149,000, and about 125,000 bozales were imported during the fourteen years, or between 8000 and 10,000 per annum.¹ During this period almost the entire increase of production depended upon the increase of labour, the advance of the arts being slight. The development of railroads, by bringing into production new lands in the interior, caused a large demand for raw labour.

It is certain that Cuba was the centre of a considerable trade in negroes to the United States and Texas throughout this period, and the rather sudden increase of alleged importation in 1835 suggests an increased demand more than to be expected from conditions in Cuba itself. Slaves were re-exported from Cuba to the States, but in what numbers it is not possible to say.²

¹ Figures compiled from the *Diario de la Habana*, chief newspaper of Habana, and the books of the Lonja Mercantil, by Saco, show 63,053 imported, in the five years 1835-9, *Historia de la esclavitud* vol. vi., Ap., p. 175; carefully prepared figures by the British Consul at Habana, in 1839, give 107,000 introduced, 1830-8. *Parliamentary Papers*, 1839-40, Class B, p. 55; *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxxi., p. 380.

² *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xxiv., p. 82, an

Between 1841 and 1846, the census shows a decrease in the slave population of 112,736; the price of bozales fell to \$212 at the Habana in 1843, and a large number of slaves were transferred to field work or the sugar estates. The importation in these five years was about 10,000.¹ The slave population was practically stationary between 1846 and 1849, the increase being only 138 according to the census. After 1845, the price of slaves rose until 1860, showing that the trade was constantly failing to supply the demand for bozales. The trade did not flourish after 1838. In that year seventy vessels sailed from Cuba in the slave trade; in 1846, the British commissioner was not able to discover the sailing of a single vessel. In 1838, the trade was carried on openly, and records were publicly kept in Habana of cargoes landed; in 1849, it was very difficult to get information about cargoes. There were no agents in the other ports of the island, and the commis-

agent bought 250 bozales at Habana at \$270 each for shipment to Texas; *ib.*, pp. 25, 86. Maillard, *Texas*, p. 260; Du Bois, *Suppression of the Slave Trade*, p. 165, p. 142; Buxton's estimate of 15,000 per year taken to Texas, based on the statement of the Dutch Consul General, is very much exaggerated, *Slave Trade*, p. 44; Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 148; the *Galveston Gazette* stated the number of slaves in Texas, in 1841 at 11,323, Maillard, *Texas*, p. 509; in 1843, a schooner, the *Conchita*, which landed many cargoes in Cuba, was reported in Texas, *Accounts and Papers*, 1845, vol. xiii., Class C, p. 221; the head of a large Habana slave trading house is reported to have said, in 1854, that the United States was a good customer for slaves through Cuba and Texas. Collins, *Domestic Slave Trade*, p. 17.

¹ Wurdiman thought that about 2000 annually were imported, 1841-3, *Notes on Cuba*, p. 254.

sioners in Habana were unable to give exact news of landings, so they reported all the rumours which came to them.¹ This practice undoubtedly led them into many errors, for in a list of supposed landings made in 1849 it seems certain, from the similarity of some of the conditions, that about one third of the cargoes were duplicated. The custom of adding one third to the number of known cargoes landed was continued, in order to cover all introductions that might have been made in the eastern and less known parts. This would lead to still greater error, because reports of all landings could hardly fail to reach the ears of the commissioners; such importation was small at most. Not over 7000 were introduced in these three years.

The period of eleven years, 1850-60, presents many contradictory features. The number of slaves reported landed in Cuba in this time is as high as 176,145²; In addition to this supposed introduction, there was an importation of 56,000 Chinese coolies³; about 2000 Yucatec Indians, and more than 8000 bozales were captured by the government and apprenticed out. Besides all these, at least 25,000 labourers had arrived from Europe, without mentioning the natural increase of the population. If all these additions were made, we have to face the condition that

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1849, vol. xix., Class A, p. 31.

² *Jour. Stat. Soc.*, vol. xxxi., p. 43

³ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural de la Isla de Cuba*, suplemento, p. 42.

the planters were constantly complaining of scarcity of labour, and that the price of slaves rose threefold in 1855 and remained up until after 1860, when further supplies of coolies were brought in. The increase of the slave population from 1849 to 1860 was only 43,470. The increase in sugar production up to 1859, was small.¹ It is certain, therefore, that Cuba could not have absorbed such a large number of bozales. Moreover, between 1849 and 1860, the number of slaves in the Occidental decreased about 30,000, in the Centro the increase was about 50,000, in the Oriental the increase was very slight; on the other hand, the increase in the whole number of slaves is confined to the years 1849-1858 at the outside; from 1858 to 1862 the number remained stationary. Nearly all the cargoes landed after 1856 were captured. Not enough slaves were smuggled to offset the losses by death. It is fair to estimate the number imported during the period as between 30,000 and 40,000. The reports stating the number of slaves exported from Africa during this time represent the whole number sent to America, as going to Cuba, but it is known that the trade to the United States at this time had reached large proportions²; the trade to Brazil ceased in 1853, and did not revive.

From 1860 to 1867 not more than 5000 or 6000 were introduced.

¹ *Census of Cuba*, p. 527.

² Du Bois, *Suppression of the Slave Trade*, p. 142.

From the many details of the slave trade which have been brought out above it is clear that negro slaves were brought to Cuba in order to meet the demand for labour, and that the trade was afterwards permitted and continued for the same purpose. Throughout the seventeenth century, Cuba was little more than a great pasture land calling for slight remark from the visitor.¹ It was not until the eighteenth century that it began to attract notice on account of its great fertility and as a source for sugar and other colonial products,² and this attention was followed, in 1741, by an attempt on the part of the English to conquer the island, a sure sign of its growing value. The increasing commercial importance of her American possessions made Spain meet the calls for a better trade system, and the movement culminated in what Arango aptly called the "epoch of the resurrection of Habana,"³ which was due to the modification of the restrictions on trade, one of which was allowing a free introduction of slaves which ended in complete freedom, so that in 1794 Habana was importing more slaves than it required and exported the surplus.⁴

The independence of the United States was a very important incident in the development of

¹ Champlain, *Œuvres*, vol. i., p. 45.

² Atkins, *Voyage*, p. 223.

³ *Obras*, vol. i., p. 57.

⁴ MS., Arch. de Ind., *Don Juan de Salazar, administrador de rentas*, Habana, 2 Enero de 1795, Est. 84, Caj. 7, Leg. 28.

the island, because their large trade with the British West India colonies was lost through their rebellion and it came to the Spanish colonies. Its importance is shown by the large number of American ships which came to Cuba in 1789. This commercial connection with the United States was strengthened by the great trade which came to neutral American shipping as a result of European complications and lasted until the days of the embargo.

After the restoration of 1814, further modifications were made in the system by the decree of 1818, which recognised the fact that the wealth and commerce of Cuba had grown too large to be confined any longer within restricted channels. The full significance of this change was evidenced when the constitutional government of 1820 attempted to restore the old restrictive régime. The result was that Cuba was allowed in large measure to regulate her customs duties independently; as a matter of fact the island occupied an anomalous position. The colonial productions had increased far beyond the amount which Spain could absorb, and the surplus flowed in new directions. The protective system, or the effort to give a preference to the goods of the mother country by the maintenance of differential duties, was still adhered to; that is, Cuba could sell her products in the best market offering, but her return purchases were preferentially made in Spain. So, Cuba occupied a position which

was partly in and partly out of the protective system. This lame-duck arrangement could not fail to make trouble in the course of time. Its main effect was to accentuate the production of the chief staple, sugar, at the expense of other industries, and, in equal proportion, it accentuated the necessity for slaves.

Throughout all the changes which the island experienced, there was a large amount of elasticity in the relations subsisting between Cuba and the metropolis, or mother country; there was always a desire on the part of Spain to meet the wishes of the inhabitants of the island. Changes were made slowly, but it was the reserve of conservatism occasioned by the desire to see clearly just what was wanted and what the result was to be. The Spanish system was far more flexible than it has been represented, but it was often a very difficult matter to find out what was wanted at any particular time or place. For example the island of Cuba was divided into two distinct parts which may be called the east and the west; what suited one did not suit the other. The people of the country were hostile to the cities, races were opposed to each other, classes clashed violently¹; the island was at various times threatened by revolt and invasion. One has only to

¹ A scholarly exposition of the social complications in which the island was involved may be found in Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 160 ff.; *passim*. Cf. Pezuela, *Necesidades de Cuba*, p. 82 ff.; Montluc, preface to Saco, *L'esclavage à Cuba et la Révolution d'Espagne*, p. 6; *et cetera*.

recall the cases of the *Black Warrior* and the *Virginius*, and the horrors of the two Cuban rebellions to realise the delicateness of the situation and the magnitude of Spain's responsibility.

The government was forced to pursue a nicely balanced policy. It was in the captaincies-general of Valdés and O'Donnell only that this course was departed from, to result in the disaster experienced by Pezuela; it was nearly twenty-five years before the government again felt strong enough to take an uncompromising stand on the slave question.

A conflict of policy between the Habana interest and the Council of the Indies occurred in 1816 over the question of the slave trade. The Habaneros claimed that the improvement of the island was the effect of the slave trade; the council maintained, "that the same beneficial results would, probably, have been obtained without it, and perhaps greater."¹ In support of this position, the council pointed to the unquestionable benefits which Cuba had received at the hands of the Haiti and Santo Domingo emigrants, as well as to the aid which had been given by the wise measures of the government in removing obstacles to progress, and the improvements in machinery by which the cultivation of plantations would have been effected as well by native free men and have brought the island to the same

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. iv., pp. 532-3.

flourishing state. "To say that the latter are unfit for such purposes, can be nothing less than prejudice." ¹

The Council of the Indies was mistaken in this position. The coffee and sugar industries were dependent on the slave trade. There can be no question that the people of Cuba would have been glad and ready to go on without slavery,² but in order to carry on the great industries of the island they had to have labourers, and labourers could only be obtained in Africa.³ White emigrants would not take up field work in an organised plantation because better rewards for their energy were to be had in other places, and the native whites and free negroes would not do it for the same reasons; there was plenty of good land on which they could make a living in a far easier manner. If the planters could have gotten wage labourers, they would have done so, because they would have been far easier to take care of than slaves. It was not a question of slavery for slavery's sake.

It has been asserted by a writer on slavery that the slave trade prevented the emigration of free labourers to Cuba and that the ratio of increase of free whites was in an inverse ratio to the

¹ *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. iv., pp. 532-3.

² *Memoria de Varela*, 1822, quoted in Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. vi., p. 159; *Minutes of Report of Select Committee*, §2573, §2655.

³ Saco, *Historia de la esclavitud*, vol. i. p. 161, *Memoria de Varela*.

increase of the negroes.¹ Such a conclusion is undoubtedly in error. Whites emigrated to Cuba, as elsewhere, for the sake of gain; negroes were brought in to add to the island's prosperity. By carefully plotting the numbers of the white, free coloured, and slave populations in each census a diagram may be obtained which will show the relative position of these bodies at any time. The increase of both white and slave population is steady, and it may be said that they go hand in hand. Even after importation was checked in 1841, the whites did not increase faster, and the increase of slaves between 1850 and 1860 was accompanied by a still more rapid increase of the whites.

The Cubans were unable to build up a native supply of slaves. They saw this apparently being successfully done in the United States and sought to do the same, but the cases were very different. In the first place, the United States started with half a million acclimated slaves living under conditions where they had little to do, and they increased very rapidly. In the second place, the slaves in the United States were engaged chiefly in the healthy employment of

¹ Peytraud, *L'esclavage aux antilles françaises*, pp. 23-4. He quotes Domingo de Goicuria to this effect. See also, *Memorias de la Sociedad Patriótica y Económica*, vol. i., p. 405; Macias, *Cuba in Revolution*, p. 25; the Cuban declaration of independence accused the Spanish government with artfully keeping white emigration from the shores of Cuba; Queipo, *Cuba*, pp. 12, 416, sums up the obstacles in the way of increased emigration.

cotton and tobacco raising, *et cetera*; in Cuba they were required for the comparatively onerous work of the sugar plantation. Again, and more decisive still, the Cuban sugar planter had to face a serious competition with foreign grown sugar; he was, therefore, less able to adopt measures which would tend to increase the domestic supply, because such measures entailed extra expense; he was being constantly crowded to meet increased competition, and in renewing his stock of slaves, which from the beginning had contained more men than women, he naturally bought those best suited to his purpose, and the slave smuggler, in turn, imported those which commanded the highest prices; namely, men. In the cotton fields of the South, where the work was light, women could be used nearly as advantageously as men, on the sugar plantations the work was far harder, and women could not be used to any great extent. One obstacle to the natural increase of the slave population lay in the facility with which the slaves acquired their freedom; once free they were no longer available for plantation work. Further than this, as has been already indicated, religion and race prejudice made it impossible to import negroes. An economic system once well started is not easily stopped, particularly when it contains artificial elements; every change is liable to bring disaster to many of those concerned. The Cuban plantation system depended upon an artificial

supply of labour; the sugar planters found themselves face to face with ruin when the trade was suppressed.

In 1840, it was clear that the supply of slaves from the trade was certain to fail, and efforts were made to devise plans for bringing in a supply of white labour to fill the demand, but without success. Experiments with white labour on sugar estates proved definitely that it was too expensive.¹ Some attempts were made to increase the emigration of Canary Islanders and the Spanish labourers, but the supply was too small to produce marked effect. In 1846, the Junta de Fomento endorsed the plan of Domingo de Goicurria, which proposed to introduce families from Scotland and Germany, which were lands of diversified agriculture, by giving them inducements in the way of lands and franchises. In this way it was hoped to bring about a complete substitution of labourers and so put an end to the cause of the slave trade.² The Bishop of Habana in reporting on the plan said that the greatest difficulty in the way of its success was the climate in which Europeans could not stand field work, besides, it was not safe to admit thousands of foreigners with different customs

¹ *Memorias de la Sociedad Patriótica y Económica de la Habana*, vol. v., p. 475; Queipo, *Cuba*, pp. 50-56; *Informe Fiscal*, pp. 19-23; Saco, *Papeles sobre Cuba*, vol. iii., p. 203; Estorch, *Apuntes sobre Pezuela*, p. 161 ff.; MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 3, Leg. 38.

² *Memoria de Domingo de Goicurria al Reina*, 25 setiembre de 1846. MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 3, Leg. 38.

and aspirations.¹ The reports of other officials on this proposal were completely discouraging. The fiscales said that in spite of all efforts the white population continued to diminish; of the whites who came to Cuba, many died and many returned to Europe.

They thought that it was utterly impossible to repair the deficiency of labour caused by the suppression of the slave trade by means of the expensive immigration from Europe; to insist upon it would mean certain ruin for all sugar planters and all those dependent on them, and cause a social revolution which would make Cuba the most miserable country on earth.² In 1840, the steerage rate from England to Habana was about sixty dollars, so that there was sufficient ground for the opinion of the fiscales. In 1854, regulations covering the introduction of Spanish colonists, Chinese, and Yucatec Indians were put into force and gave some measure of relief.³ In 1879, there were 25,211 "colonos" and 22,184 Asiatics in Cuba⁴; of the colonos, 29 were women, and of the Asiatics, 59. It is obvious that this method could not produce a domestic supply of labourers.

¹ MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 84, Caj. 3, Leg. 38. 22 setiembre de 1847.

² MS., Arch. de Ind., Est. 81, Caj. 3, Leg. 38. *Dictámen de los Fiscales de S. M. y voto consultivo de esta Real Audiencia Pretorial*. Habana, 3 diciembre de 1847.

³ Massa, *Diccionario jurídico*, vol. ii., p. 524 ff.

⁴ Salvi, *Anunciador general de Habana*. The "colonos" are emancipated, now in charge of the state; see *Yale Review*, May, 1906.

The most practicable labourers and the only ones that were wanted for Cuba were African negroes, whether slaves or not. This is made certain by the overwhelming response to the project of 1856 for importing them, as contract labourers. The case was not different in 1866, when José S. Argudin told the commission that Cuba wanted more than anything else the fine negro labourer.¹ But no one wanted to open the sluices for an inundation of negroes.²

The same difficulty in procuring labourers for the sugar estates was experienced after the trade ceased and after the slaves were emancipated.³ In the present day the negroes are the labourers upon whom the sugar industry depends. It was the muscle of the negro plus the capital and intelligence of the Spanish and other white emigrants that turned to profitable account the rich plains and slopes of Cuba. Without the negro very little could have been accomplished. When

¹ *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i., p. 161. "Clamarán ambas provincias (Cuba and Puerto Rico) por el Africano fuerte, trabajador, humilde, pacífico y sin aspiraciones turbulentas, en cuyas condiciones lo evidencian la prueba de tres siglos y la opulancia que Cuba debe á esa misma raza." Zaragoza, *Insurrecciones en Cuba*, vol. i., p. 604. *Accounts and Papers*, 1867-8, vol. lxiv., Class A, 7: "Negro labour here cannot be superseded by either European or American emigration, and the general idea prevails that this deficiency must be made up by the importation of coolies from China." J. V. Crawford, Sept. 30, 1867. Cf. Voto de Argudin, *Información sobre reformas*, vol. ii., pp. 159-164.

² *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i., p. 180.

³ *Ho. Ex. Doc.*, 48th Cong., 2d Sess., No. 54, pp. 252-3; *Census of Cuba*, pp. 527, 530. Cf. Porter, *Industrial Cuba*, pp. 79, 100, 105.

it is recalled how much obvious depression the industries of Cuba were suffering, it will be difficult to avoid the conclusion that the island suffered a misfortune by having its supply of labourers arbitrarily interfered with in 1820. It is true that there was an objection raised that an unlimited trade would build up a negro population and not a white one; but, on the other hand, it is equally clear that the more the negroes increased, the more whites came, an obvious result of the increase of wealth. The Spanish colonies never presented the aspect of Haiti and Jamaica. It was absurd for a country with the resources of Cuba to have been in a state of collapse like that of 1884, largely for lack of labourers¹; or to have reached a state such as that in 1887-1900, when it suffered a continuous decline in population.²

It seems reasonable to suppose that with an unhampered supply of African labourers Cuba would have reached, probably by 1860, a point where all the arable land would have been under improvement, and when there would have been a self-sustaining supply of labourers. The vagrancy difficulties would have been disposed of by the mere process of the filling up of the land, because that would have removed the cause of vagrancy, which lay in the opportunity to live a hand-to-mouth existence. One of the great

¹ *Ho. Ex. Doc.*, 48th Cong., 2d Sess., No. 54, p. 250 ff.

² *Census of Cuba*, pp. 73, 81, 715, 718.

obstacles to Cuba's tranquillity was that the settled parts of the island adjoined a great backwoods; consequently, society did not react against itself. The great open interior caused a constant evaporation of the labourer class, without labourers development was impossible; the great staples, coffee and sugar, were handicapped.

Vagrancy was one of the greatest of the problems of Cuban society. It was the object of frequent police regulation. The free negroes and the lower classes of whites and mestizos would not work steadily. Accounts of this class of people by travellers and visitors are extremely unfavourable. Mellet tells about the mulattoes and quarteroons who composed the majority of the inhabitants near Manzanillo in 1819, describing them as living on the roots and bananas of the country and as generally of a bad character, wicked and vicious, devoting their time to thieving, smoking, drinking, and gaming. These people preferred the easy livelihood to be gained in the tobacco fields or on small farms. The wages of eight or ten days sufficed for a month. The problem was taken up by the best minds in Cuba, and was generally discussed in the *Sociedad Económica*.¹ Ramón de la Sagra in the introduction to his excellent history of Cuba says,

The tendency of the negroes in favour of small cultivation was prejudicial to the interests of the old colonists, who thus saw their plantations (*fincas*)

¹ See an article by the writer in *Yale Review*, May, 1906.

completely deprived of a cultivating force. Moreover, the irregularity of the work of the day labourer, the lack of exactness in fulfilling their agreements, the same uncertainty in getting them to help at times when it was urgent and indispensable, compromised the lot of the proprietors and the success of cultivation on a large scale. Their individual interest compelled them, then, to correct this evil of emancipation, with which it appeared they had not counted.¹

The territory actually devoted to organised, intensive agriculture was always very small, being confined to the region reaching from Santa Clara to a short distance west of Habana. There was, therefore, always a great plenty of very fertile lands on which an easy living could be obtained. This kind of a life was far more attractive to the ordinary negro, mulatto, and low white than hard steady work in sugar ingenios, and they worked in them enough to get a small amount only of wages, with which to buy a few articles which they could not produce themselves. The active class of Spanish emigrants was attracted by the mercantile and commercial opportunities of the island. Opinion in Cuba had always been very much divided as to the necessity or advisability of the slave trade. One party maintained that Cuba could not be cultivated without it, and the other opposed it on ethnical and political grounds.²

¹ Sagra, *Historia física, política y natural*, vol. i., p. xli.

² Many instances of this difference have already been cited, but cf. testimony of Admiral Fleming, *Minutes of the Report of the Select Committee of the Slave Trade*, § 2573.

It is a notable fact that throughout the discussions of the slavery question in Cuba there have run along side by side two views of the labour situation. One was that because of slavery honest labour was shunned by the free man.

Without involving myself in the rude question of slavery and confining myself solely to the relation which the distinction of colour and conditions has with the object which occupies me, it will be certain always that the free man will look not only with repugnance, but also with horror upon that kind of labour which habit commonly associates with slaves: that the whites will scorn the employments common to people of colour; and the latter in their turn will not devote themselves readily to those which are peculiar to the negroes. In this way opinion concentrating in each class in a limited sphere of labour deprives it of the extent or amplitude necessary to comprise a great number of objects, and from which it results by necessity that many men, not finding occupation in those branches of industry to which they can devote themselves, see themselves reduced to an enforced idleness; and if to this fruitful cause we join the simultaneous crowd of causes which have been enumerated, it will be necessary to confess that the path which leads to vagrancy is determined and many times inevitable.¹

The other view which has been reported is that creoles could not get employment.² This

¹ Reyes, *Memoria sobre vagancia*, pp. 30-1. Similar expressions of opinion may be found in *Lettres sur la Havane*, Huber, p. 218; Turnbull, *Cuba*, p. 266.

² Ampère, *Promenade en Amérique*, vol. ii., p. 178.

means of course that a large class of creole whites desired "employment" rather than "work." That is, they wished to hold political or government offices, or "positions" in mercantile and commercial life. But in this quest they entered into direct competition with the more vigorous and intelligent Spaniards. This explains why so many creoles were without employment. They were too proud or weak, perhaps too lazy, to do the hard work which was to be done on all sides.

The creole whites and free negroes did not so much object to work as to working so hard. There is abundant evidence showing that whites, free negroes, and slaves did the same labour, even in the same gangs.

In the fields of Villa Clara, I have seen everywhere upon my passage the whites working the soil, between the man of colour and the black, and not one of them saw in the work the proof of an inferior condition, or in the American hoe the degrading emblem of slavery. . . . I can . . . affirm that I have seen them.¹

The idea that whites and free negroes could not work in Cuba or thought that it was degrading is absurd. They did not want to work.

The free negro or mulatto was generally a parasite. They refused to apply themselves any more than was absolutely necessary to gain

¹ Beauvallon, *Ile de Cuba*, vol. i., pp. 291-2; cf. Saco, *La supresión de la trata*, Obras, vol. i., p. 177; *Información sobre reformas*, vol. ii., p. 163.

sufficient to live on. "They were predisposed to vice and vagrancy."¹

That the conclusion which we have stated is not without strong probability to support it may be seen by examining the number of male and female slaves at different periods. While the trade was under entire control of Spain, the number of the sexes tended to become equal; in 1792, females composed 44 per cent. of the slave population. The lowest point was reached in 1841 when the females represented 35.5 per cent. of the slaves; in 1860, they were 39.6 per cent. The actual numbers show the situation much better; in 1774 there were 15,562 females, in 1817, 74,821, and in 1860, 145,593. As the unpaired males died off without leaving representatives, it follows that a time must have arrived when the number of females would equal the number of males. So long as the trade was open, it was possible to regulate it intelligently. The important points are, that the Spanish did regulate the trade in this way, and that the development of the island in the end was very much retarded. Both Tacón and O'Donnel took the ground openly that the repression of the trade

¹ *Información sobre reformas*, vol. i., p. 58; Pezuela, *Necesidades de Cuba*, pp. 112-116; Saco, *Obras*, vol. i., p. 75; vol. i., p. 171; Moreno, *El País del chocolate; Cuba y su Gente*; Masse, *Cuba et la Havane*, pp. 233-4; Abbot, *Letters*, p. 159 ff.; Petin, *Les États-Unis et la Doctrine de Monroe*, p. 286; Beauvallon, *L'île de Cuba*, vol. i., pp. 291-2; Gallenga, *Pearl of the Antilles*, p. 77; *Memorias de la Sociedad Patriótica y Económica de la Habana*, vol. i., p. 388 ff.; Mellet, *Voyage dans l'Amérique méridionale*, p. 277.

was ruining the island, and they executed the laws perforce only.

The Cuban proprietors and slave owners profess to be actuated, not by personal interests but by considerations of patriotism. Thanks to their intelligence, industry, and energy, they say, this western part of the island has been raised to a state of prosperity unexampled in the West Indies.¹

The proprietors were able to do this only by employing labourers to do the work. The period of great prosperity in Cuba ended in 1868. This may be seen in the abrupt ending of public improvements which had gone on rapidly up to that time.

While the economic development and prosperity of Cuba would have been facilitated by the continuance of the open slave trade, it is also true that many moral evils of slavery itself would have been lessened. Probably the actual number of negroes in the final population would not have been very much larger; but it is immaterial whether this would have been the case or not, so long as the negro did his work. Logically, the negro had as much right in America as the white man; if he did his work better he had a better right. The laws against the slave trade were for a long time ineffective, and the result of having a large clandestine traffic going on was exceedingly baneful. The effort to enforce the unpopular slave-trade laws contributed

¹ Gallenga, *Pearl of the Antilles*, p. 104.

very essentially to the growth of the over-centralised government which was one of the greatest of Cuba's complaints. The laws checked the supply of labourers at the time of greatest development and prosperity, so that the number of slaves in the island was too small to accomplish the necessary work. The result was that the slaves were overworked, for a part of the year at least. The hardships of the negroes on the ocean passage and on landing were very much increased in the clandestine phase of the traffic. One of the characteristics of slavery in Cuba about which most complaint was made by writers and contemporaries was the small proportion or almost lack of women on the plantations. This evil was greatly emphasised under the clandestine trade. In this case, too, the cause of humanity would have been distinctly served by an open trade.

APPENDIX I

PRICES OF SLAVES IN CUBA

1528,	Bozal,	55 to 60 pesos.
1535,	"	47 "
1713,	"	300 "
1741,	"	144 "
1754,	"	210 to 225 for muleques; 250 to 270 for mulecones; 280 to 300 for piezas; the landing cost for piezas about 150.
1768,	"	225, muleque; 240, mulecon; 260, pieza; the tax being 20, 26, and 40 respectively.
1788,	"	230, 250, 260,—Tax 9 pesos.
1792,	"	200; ladinos, 300; creoles, 400.
1797-1800,	Bozal,	375. All taxes removed.
1801,	Bozal,	Law fixes price at which purchases for freedom should be made; between 8 and 14 years of age, 50 to 290; 15 and 40, 300; 41 to 64, 295 to 5; for bozales, ladinos, and creoles.
1802-3,	"	300 to 350.
1807,	"	225 to 265.
1818,	"	300 to 450. Entered at Co. Ho. at 150.
1819,	"	380 to 500.
1821,	"	500 to 600.
1824,	"	370 to 400 at Habana, 225 at Santiago; ladinos 450 to 500; creoles, 600, 800, 1000.
1827,	"	300.
1829,	"	300.
1831,	"	200 to 250.
1835,	"	Creoles 800, at 38 yrs.
1836,	"	306 by cargo, 500 for selections.
1838,	"	300 to 320.
1839,	"	350 to 400 for males, 290 to 350 for females; by cargo, 300 to 320; ladinos, 500.
1841,	"	300.
1843,	"	212. Cargo at 267, cash and credit; picked 408.
1844,	"	300. Picked lot of 40 sold for 440 each.

1845,	Bozal,	300 to 350.	Creoles, domestics, males and females, 20 to 26 years, 350 to 500 according to trade.
1846,	"	375 to 420.	
1849,	"	394 for inferior, to 496 for best.	
1854,	"	400 to 500.	Average of all slaves, 600.
1855,	"	500.	
1855-60,	"	1250 to 1500.	Average of all sexes, ages, sick or well, \$1000.
1861,	"	1000.	
1862,	"	600.	
1864,	"	700 to 750.	Ladinos, 1000.
1865,	.	.	For sales for freedom, 600.
1866,	.	.	Ladinos, 1000.
1867,	.	.	Ladinos, 700.
1869,	.	.	Ladinos, 450 to 550; creoles 550 to 650.
1872,	.	.	Ladinos, 2000.
1873,	.	.	Ladinos, 1500 to 2000.
1875,	.	.	Ladinos, 1600.

APPENDIX II

SLAVES IMPORTED INTO CUBA

1512-		1821	6,415	1850	2,500
1763	60,000	1822	2,500	1851	3,600
1763-		1823	3,000	1852	4,500
1789	30,875	1824	3,000	1853	2,000
	<hr/>	1825	7,000	1854	6,000
	90,875	1826	3,500	1856	
		1827	3,500	1856	
			<hr/>	1857	9,000
1790	2,534		28,915	1858	
1791	8,498			1859	
1792	8,528			1860	3,000
1793	3,777	1828	4,500		
1794	4,164	1829	7,500		30,600
1795	5,832	1830	9,000		
1796	5,711	1831	9,000		
1797	4,552	1832	6,750	1861	2,000
1798	2,001	1833	6,750	1862	600
1799	4,919	1834	8,250	1863	1,000
1800	4,145	1835	9,500	1864	1,000
1801	1,659	1836	10,750	1865	400
1802	13,832	1837	12,240		
1803	9,671	1838	10,495		5,000
1804	8,923	1839	9,350		
1805	4,999	1840	10,104		
1806	4,395	1841	6,300		
1807	2,565		<hr/>		
1808	1,607		120,489	1512-	
1809	1,162			1865	527,828
1810	6,672	1842	2,500		
1811	6,349	1843	1,500		
1812	6,081	1844	3,000		
1813	4,770	1845	950		
1814	4,321	1846	500		
1815	9,111		<hr/>		
1816	17,737		8,450		
1817	25,841				
1818	19,902	1847	1,450		
1819	15,147	1848	1,950		
1820	17,194	1849	3,500		
	<hr/>		<hr/>		
	236,599		6,900		

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