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### THE RELATIONS OF SPAIN WITH CUBA AND MANILA DOWN TO THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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*"I think that he, while Military Governor, committed an egregious error and did great injustice to the Chinese by introducing into the Philippines the Chinese Exclusion Act, which has stirred up race prejudice and done harm to those Islands."*—Letter of WU TING FANG, Chinese Minister to Washington, February, 1901, referring to the American Governor at Manila, General Otis.

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The Effect of Freebooting on the Development of Colonial Trade in the Sixteenth Century—English Occupation of Havana and Manila—Treatment of Chinese

SPAIN enjoyed the use of Cuba for three hundred and eighty-seven years before she finally withdrew (1898) in favor of the United States. Yet as soon as the United States became a nation (1783), she commenced to weaken the hold of Spain on Cuba. Yankee traders were no less keen than those of London or Amsterdam and they had the added advantage of a nearer market. All trade with the Spanish colonies had to be more or less contraband; and the swift coasting schooners of Baltimore and Salem soon became familiar off the Cuban coast. They were smugglers in the eyes of the authorities, benefactors in the eyes of the people, and a source of profit to both. It

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was Spain's hatred for England which led her, in 1777, to join with France in creating the American Republic, a neighbor that soon drove her flag from Florida and California, supplanted her language by that of England, and paved the way for such an ascendancy in the Western World that one by one her colonies became independent, with constitutions modelled on that of the United States.

History affords scarcely another example of fatuity so glaring as that of Spain, governing her own colonies despotically and yet assisting in the creation of an Anglo-Saxon democracy at her gates. She recognized her blunder almost as soon as it was committed, for, in 1783, Count Aranda, the Prime Minister of Charles III., elaborated a scheme intended to protect Spain against a revolutionary movement such as had torn the American Colonies from England. He proposed the creation of three kingdoms; one in Mexico, another in Peru, and the third to consist of all the rest of the territory not already occupied, to be called *Costa Firme*. These territories were to be ruled by princes of the royal house, who should be bound to the mother country by strong treaties, involving trade reciprocity and common action in war, trade with France, but none with England. This scheme, which was long and seriously discussed, proves that Spain herself recognized in a shadowy way that her great empire could not much longer be held together unless the colonies were given some measure of self-government, however small.

The American Revolution was a shock to colonial Spain no less violent than was the Protestant Refor-

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mation to the Roman Church in 1519. The rumblings of the French Revolution were already audible in Europe, and there were statesmen even in Spain who thought it better to offer their subjects something, rather than expose themselves to losing all.

But, with strange blindness, the Spanish Government postponed the matter until it was too late.

Cuba was a much neglected colony in her earlier years. It is only in our lifetime that Spain has been given to speaking affectionately of her "Pearl of the Antilles." Indeed, Spanish affection for Cuba suggests the analogy afforded by the love of France for Alsace-Lorraine—a love which was not conspicuous until the German flag waved over Metz and Strasburg. Fifty years after the first voyage of Columbus Cuba had only 1,000 white settlers—and at this time Mexico and Peru were already coveted prizes of Court favorites.\* Freebooters constantly harassed her shores, and in 1555 Havana was burned by pirates. Drake and his compeers blockaded the island successfully for many years, and intercourse with the mother country was throughout the sixteenth century almost entirely cut off. In 1569 the island was bankrupt and applied to the Viceroy of Mexico for an advance of money to be used in erecting the most necessary defences. The money was advanced, and from that time on Cuba's annual deficit was made up by Mexico, as long as the latter remained tied to Spain.

After a hundred years of Spanish government, and in spite of the high price of sugar in Europe, Cuba

\* In 1540 Cuba contained 600 African negroes and 2,000 native Indian slaves.

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shipped scarcely any of that commodity abroad, owing to bad economic and political administration.

Most of the Indians had died out. African labor was inadequate, and the little trade that existed was due to the enterprise of pirates, smugglers, and contraband slavers.

Spain's chief colonial blessings, though she did not at the time recognize them as such, came from England, whose freebooters neutralized the bad effects of Spanish legislation and saved the colonists from the disastrous results of commercial isolation. In 1655 Oliver Cromwell did Spain a favor by depriving her of Jamaica, from which island freebooters of all nations operated successfully in educating Spanish sentiment in regard to the value of sea-power as an element in commercial prosperity.

England, from this time on, undertook police duty in the West Indies and upheld Spain's commercial treaties. The Peace of Utrecht, in 1713, forms another epoch in Spanish colonial history, for by that instrument England acquired the legal right of bringing slaves to Spanish America.\* This did not amount to much on the surface, because contraband trade in Africans had been carried on for nearly two centuries by enterprising seamen of all nations; but England now acquired the privilege of entering Spanish-American ports openly and there disposing of cargoes. She was limited, it is true, to negroes, but under the pretext of landing negroes, English ships landed almost any-

\* Sir John Hawkins brought cargoes of slaves to the Spanish colonies in 1562, 1564, and 1567. This gallant freebooter died at sea off Porto Rico in 1595, after sixty-two years of life, most of which was spent in fighting Spain.

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thing else they saw fit. England soon had the bulk of the American trade, while Spain's share was only twenty-two per cent. It has been Spain's fortune, from the time of Elizabeth to the present day, to have been chronically at war with England and the descendants of England, and, while in those wars she has been uniformly unsuccessful, it has been only through these enemies that she has enjoyed the little commercial prosperity which has fallen to her lot.

Throughout the seventeenth century Spain's intercourse with her colonies almost ceased because of pirates. Vera Cruz was for three days plundered by these highwaymen of the water, and, when they finally disappeared with their booty, the Spaniards, instead of rushing to arms, crowded into the churches and gave thanks for deliverance!

When at last Spain made concessions to England, it was not in any hope of mutual benefit, but merely to escape a piracy which had nearly destroyed what little shipping she possessed. In 1654 Mexico sent her "record" cargo of precious metals to Spain—afterward the buccaneers ruled too strongly. San Domingo at that time contained 10,000 pirates. The word "pirate," indeed, had become synonymous with navigation, and even our Puritan forefathers showed scant scruple in undertaking commercial enterprises which nowadays would end in penal servitude, if not the gallows.

English blood seems to be happier on board ship than does that of the Spaniard or even the Frenchman; and this may explain why, although Providence thrust islands in the course of her ships, Spain neglected these

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watery possessions in favor of the continent, where she felt more secure. At no time in her history was she able to protect her islands from depredation, and their inhabitants had to abandon the coasts and take refuge in the interior if they wished to escape the raids of the enemy. The English, on the other hand, looked upon the sea as their best friend, and the colonies that attracted them most were those with salt water about them. The landmarks of England's colonial progress bear the names of Barbados, Jamaica, Hong-Kong and Singapore, Bermuda, Mauritius, St. Helena. Hardly had England set foot in the West Indies than her colonial produce began to outstrip that of Spain, England accomplishing more in ten years than Spain in a century.

The treaty with England (of 1713) was beginning to bear fruits in Cuba, when Spain, in 1717, passed a law compelling all tobacco-planters to sell their produce to Government agents at Government prices. This caused the first riot in the island. Havana refused obedience and shipped the obnoxious officials back to the mother country. Spain yielded for the moment, but in 1739 gave the monopoly of the tobacco trade to a company—a heavy blow to Cuban trade. The shareholders in 1746 divided thirty per cent. profit, but that did not comfort those at whose expense this profit was made. In 1760, a century and a half after its first settlement, Cuba had only 140,000 settlers, while French Hayti had 400,000, scattered over five hundred plantations. At the same time San Domingo (Spanish), representing four-fifths of the whole area, had only 40,000 population. While the French colony

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exported 6,000,000 francs' worth, San Domingo had to receive an annual subsidy from Mexico. Jamaica in the same year was a large exporter of sugar, rum, and coffee.

In such a discouraging state of Spanish-American trade Cuba sighed for a change. It came in 1762, when there appeared before Havana fifty-three British men-of-war escorting two hundred transports, the whole representing a force of twenty British regiments, who soon captured Havana, secured a booty of £736,000, and proceeded to give the country a better administration than it had ever enjoyed before, or has since, with the possible exception of General Ludlow's brief term of office immediately after the Spanish-American War.

The port was immediately thrown open to English trade, and from having only half a dozen ships in a year, Havana now, in the ten months of English occupation, had a thousand ships visit her port. In this short time she imported 3,000 negroes, as many as during twenty years of Spanish monopoly. The island commenced to flourish again; in fact, she has flourished under every event which has mortified Spain.

Within three months of the capture of Cuba, another British fleet (under Admiral Cornish) appeared before Manila, landed 3,700 men, and captured it. It would have astonished the England of that day to be told that one of her colonies would, in less than a century and a half, be strong enough to attack both these islands and *hold them!*

England kept them until the peace of 1763. Short as her occupation was, she gave the Spanish colonists a taste for better administration and more liberty.

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Let us note that the Cuban accepted cheerfully the rule of the Anglo-Saxon in 1762, as he did in 1898 as well—for a time. In the Philippines, however, the natives would have none of the new *régime*, and England found herself engaged in guerrilla warfare, which promised to drag itself out indefinitely.

It seems a long jump from Manila to Cuba, but in that day the Pope chose to regard the Philippines not as a part of the East Indies, but as a dependency of Mexico! Manila merchants were not allowed to trade with China, only six hundred miles away, because that would give offence to the Portuguese at Macao, who, by the same Pope, had been presented with all the eastern hemisphere—or at least with as much of it as they saw fit to appropriate.

So Manila was ordered to trade exclusively with the port of Acapulco in Mexico, whence her produce was carried across the Isthmus, ultimately reaching Seville or Cadiz as part of a Mexican consignment.

The history of the Philippines is not very interesting reading—it is mostly a repetition of the same sort of thing, insurrections put down—execution and torture of native rebels—quarrels between the Archbishop and the Governor—plagues and epidemics—piratical raids—friction between slave-owners and abolitionists—between merchants and officials.

The first picturesque event in the history of the island was in 1574, when an enterprising Chinese admiral, with sixty-two junks, sailed up to the mouth of the Pasig River and demanded the surrender of the town. His proposition was declined, whereupon the Chinese landed, drove the Spaniards before them, penetrated



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to the fort and set fire to it. Ultimately the Celestial invaders were ejected, but they left behind them a reputation for bravery and enterprise that made Spanish officials feel uncomfortable whenever rumor of Chinese pirates was in the air.

In the history of Manila the only people who have ever penetrated that fort as enemies have been Anglo-Saxon and Chinese. The Chinese, from time immemorial, have regarded the Philippines as within their "sphere," although they have never formulated a Monroe doctrine which the rest of the world has felt compelled to respect.

When the British took Manila, in 1762, they received much assistance from the Chinese population, for, owing to England's generous treatment of natives in India, the Chinese had already learned to respect British justice no less than the power of her guns. With this in mind, I was not surprised, in 1898, to find the victory of Admiral Dewey and the United States troops celebrated by English flags hung out from every Chinese house in Manila. In some way they associated England with America, partly because of the common language, partly from the good relations existing between the English warships and our own, largely, perhaps, because English and American merchants formed one club for social purposes. It may be, too, that the Chinese sought to protect themselves against possible pillage by claiming the rights of alleged British subjects; for at one time it was not quite clear as to whether Americans, Spaniards, or Filipinos would control the situation. Pillaging had been allowed after the conquest of 1762, although for only three hours.

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But as the English had at that time native Indian troops in the expedition, I have no doubt that three hours proved fairly adequate to all reasonable requirements. In 1762 the Chinese had particular reason for not loving the Spaniards, for they were then compelled to choose between leaving the island and joining the Church of Rome. To those of us who know the Chinaman, the inference is reasonable that the larger proportion found no difficulty in reconciling ancestral worship and "Joss pidgen" with transubstantiation and the immaculate conception.

John Chinaman accommodates himself to every possible contingency. In one corner of his Joss house he glorifies St. Francis with candles and holy water, in another he squares himself with his native demons. The shrine of a converted Chinaman was about as puzzling to a Grand Inquisitor, as are to the average Protestant an altar and reredos in a ritualistic Anglican church.

As in Cuba, so in the Philippines, the first and the greatest question that agitated the Spanish Court was the treatment of natives. One-half of the Church maintained that slavery was contrary to Christian ethics; the other half insisted, with equal parade of scholarship and vastly more vehemence, that slavery was an essentially elevating institution, particularly when it was a heathen who was made to work and a Spaniard or Christian who profited thereby. With this question was entangled its corollary whether the Filipinos should be made Christians by violence, or whether they should be persuaded by reason. Evidently the Bishop of Manila had achieved scant suc-

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cess by the exercise of the gentle methods, for he stoutly maintained toward the end of the sixteenth century that it was the duty of the Church to convert every native or put him to death.

The Church held that heresy was a capital offence, and we cannot see how a well-brought-up bishop of that day could be pardoned for allowing mere human sentimentality to stand between heretical or heathen natives and the enforcement of "Christian" law. The quarrel grew so fierce that finally the Crown interfered and drew up regulations for the government of the island which practically delivered the natives into the hands of bishops and governors, with no protection save that implied in a "recommendation to mercy."

Henceforth each native was to pay a poll-tax of eight Reals (one dollar) annually. Of this poll-tax ninety per cent. went to the Spanish Crown, the clergy, and the military establishment. The remaining one Real was nominally used for the benefit of the colony. But the evidence on that point is not satisfactory.

As Spain then had only a very small proportion of the natives under her dominion, and for that matter never succeeded in completely colonizing Luzon after four hundred years of effort, this poll-tax proved a very unsatisfactory one, at least to those who counted all Filipinos as subject to its provisions.

A German official who had been stationed in Africa, once described to me the panic created among his colleagues when regulations and forms were received from Berlin, calling for detailed information regarding the native capacity for bearing taxation. Column after column was to be filled in with certificates of birth,

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character of occupation, nature of dwelling, and the many sources of income known to a Prussian policeman. The panic in the Government Bureau was as nothing compared with the blank amazement of a naked Kaffir whose worldly inventory comprised a war-club and a hut of reeds.

Imagine this arboreal savage at his breakfast in the top of a cocoanut tree suddenly challenged by a Prussian gendarme with an order to come down and pay his income tax!

Governments that play with colonies perform strange freaks!

Spain would have lost her colonies much earlier but for the fact that her officials on the spot treated the law of Madrid to a great extent as a dead letter. The King abolished tithes, abolished slavery, gave land only to those who were bona-fide settlers, and even forbade missionary or military expeditions unless the bishop gave his consent. But these provisions are hardly worth enumerating, because, practically, through the parish priest and the local governor, the Church squeezed out of the native all that could be squeezed, and the treasury of Madrid received whatever balance there was when all the white officials in Manila had been satisfied. Cuba and Manila are two of the richest islands in the world; yet, as in the case of Cuba, so with Manila, as long as she was isolated from all but Spanish influence she was a drag upon the mother country.

Even so late as the beginning of the seventeenth century Philippine affairs were submitted by the King to a special committee, and it was determined to abandon

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them. That this was not done was owing to the Friar Moraga, a man of burning zeal in missionary work, who threw himself at the feet of Philip III. and begged passionately that the "most Christian monarch" might not abandon all these heathen souls to damnation! The King yielded for reasons wholly theological, and Mexico was once more ordered to saddle herself with the deficits in the Philippines.

Of course freebooting in Eastern waters contributed to Philippine distress, almost as much as it did in the West Indies—the Dutch and English frequently intercepting the Mexican fleet, to say nothing of occasionally plundering towns on the coast. At the beginning of the eighteenth century Philippine trade was so crippled by the regulations of the mother country that Manila could not even fill the three annual galleons permitted by law. Her merchants were not allowed to send Chinese goods to Mexico (and thus on to Spain), although at the same time Portugal had direct communication with Macao. The Mexican lady who wanted a dress of Chinese silk had to order it from Spain after a journey more than half way round the world. That very piece of silk had probably passed her own door on the way to Spain. But even this proved insufficient "protection," for, in 1718, in consequence of petitions from such silk manufacturing towns as Toledo, Valencia, and Granada, trade in Chinese silk was absolutely forbidden to the Philippines. This law was thought so cruel by the Mexican colonists, as well as by those in the Philippines, that the Viceroy of Mexico made representations at home, in hope of having it rescinded. But, on the contrary,

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this drastic measure was made even more sweeping, and no Chinese silk was permitted either in Spain or any of her colonies. The most inveterate "protectionism" of modern times seems enlightened after this. The result of this "high protection" was, that the Chinese market which Spain renounced was amply exploited by the enterprising seamen of England and Holland; and the American-Spaniards, no less than those at home, found that contraband silk was quite as becoming and no dearer than any other. So Spanish trade suffered, colonial progress was checked, and the only ones that flourished were the smugglers and officials. In 1734 the effect of this policy showed itself so clearly, particularly in the falling off of receipts from Manila, that the law was modified and the far Eastern colony was allowed to send annually to Acapulco, Asiatic goods worth 500,000 pesos (dollars), and to take in return goods from Mexico worth up to 1,000,000 pesos.

The effect of this slight liberality was immediate and refreshing. Business improved all around. There was a "boom" in Manila Bay. Everybody who had a dollar or could borrow one helped to load the limited number of ships permitted by Government. Soldiers, officials, priests, widows—all rushed to share in the profits of the newly opened trade. The rich monasteries advanced money at rates fluctuating between twenty-five and fifty per cent. The Crown officials connived at the ships carrying double or treble what was allowed by law. The captain of a merchantman received 40,000 pesos as his share of the venture, the navigator got 20,000, the supercargo got nine per cent.

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—everybody, excepting the natives, made money rapidly. Those were golden days in the Philippines, but they were of short duration; for the home government soon commenced once more to legislate—this time in favor of expelling the Chinese (1755). Immediately the receipts from the Philippines fell off 30,000 pesos a year, in spite of the large numbers of Chinamen who permitted themselves to be baptized. The Government sought to replace the Chinese by a joint stock company, but this institution soon went into bankruptcy.

When England handed back the Philippines in 1763, the Spaniards put to death 6,000 Chinamen by way of a warning, and tried to revive trade in the old way; but it was like flogging a horse that has fallen from overwork. In 1783 Carlos III. took 4,000 shares in a joint-stock company that was to monopolize Philippine trade and secure vast profits to the shareholders. The royal Court of Spain stood in regard to the exploitation of the Philippines much as the British aristocracy stood toward the Chartered Company which developed Rhodesia and sent Dr. Jameson to Johannesburg. This company ultimately collapsed, but for a time it served a good purpose, for the Crown, in its greed for money, permitted reforms which indirectly benefited both the islands and the mother-country. This company was permitted henceforth to trade directly with Spain, without having to pass through Acapulco as formerly. Ships might be bought anywhere, for the space of two years; ship material might enter Spain free of duty, likewise the wares of the Philippines. Spaniards were now permitted to bring

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Chinese and Japanese products from Manila direct to Spain. Four per cent. of the profits were dedicated to the agricultural development of the colony, but this, as well as the other provisions of this comparatively liberal character, was neutralized by the favoritism shown in the selection of officials.

However, from now on in the history of the Philippines, large consignments of pepper, sugar, cotton, tobacco, and indigo figure. The company was saved from bankruptcy in 1825 by advances made by the King, but finally disappeared in 1834.

The nineteenth century opened a new era for the Philippines, as well as for Cuba. The two revolutions, in France and the United States, had found an echo throughout the world—even in the colonies of Spain. The Jesuits, who might have directed, if not stemmed, this current, had been expelled, and public sentiment sought its leaders among men whose dominant passion was hatred of Spain—hatred of her ignorant friars—hatred of her corrupt officials. Little by little Spain had revealed to her own children that she was not merely cruel and rapacious, but worse than that—she was weak.