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Cuba vs. Spain.

BY

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War is a dire necessity. But when a people has exhausted all human means of persuasion to obtain from an unjust oppressor a remedy for its ills, if it appeals as a last resource to force in order to repel the persistent aggression which constitutes tyranny, this people is justified before its own conscience and before the tribunal of nations.

Such is the case of Cuba in its wars against Spain. No metropolis has ever been harsher or more obstinately harassing; none has ever exploited a colony with more greediness and less foresight than Spain. No colony has ever been more prudent, more long-suffering, more cautious, more persevering than Cuba in its purpose of asking for its rights by appealing to the lessons of experience and political wisdom. Only driven by desperation has the people of Cuba taken up arms, and having done so, it displays as much heroism in the hour of danger as it had shown good judgment in the hour of deliberation.

The history of Cuba during the present century is a long series of rebellions; but every one of these was preceded by a peaceful struggle for its rights—a fruitless struggle because of the obstinate blindness of Spain.

There were patriots in Cuba from the beginning of this century, such as Presbyter Caballero and Don Francisco Arango, who called the metropolitan government's attention to the evils of the Colony, and pointed to the remedy by pleading for the commercial franchises required by its economical organization, and for the intervention of the natives in its government, not only as a right, but also for political expediency, in view of the long distance between the Colony and the Home Government, and the grave difficulties with which it had to contend. The requirements of the war with the continental colonies, which were tired of Spanish tyranny, compelled the Metropolitan Government to grant a certain measure of commercial liberty to the Island of Cuba; a temporary concession which spread prosperity throughout its territory, but which was not sufficient to open the eyes of the Spanish statesmen. On the contrary, prompted by suspicion and mistrust of the Americans, they began by curtailing, and shortly after abrogated the limited administrative powers then possessed by some of the corporations in Cuba, such as the "Junta de Fomento,"—(a board for the encouragement of internal improvements).

As if this were not enough, the Cubans were deprived of the little show of political intervention they had in public affairs. By a simple Royal Decree in 1837 the small representation of Cuba in the Spanish Cortes was suppressed, and all the powers of the government were concentrated in the hands of the Capitan General, on whom authority was conferred to act as the governor of a city in a state of siege. This implied that the Capitan General, residing in Havana, was master of the life and property of every inhabitant of the Island of Cuba. This meant that Spain declared a permanent state of war against a peaceful and defenceless people.

Cuba saw its most illustrious sons, such as Heredia and Saco, wander in exile throughout the free American Continent. Cuba saw as many of the Cubans as dared to love liberty and declare it by act or word, die on the scaffold, such as Joaquin de Agüero and Plácido. Cuba saw the product of its people's labor confiscated by iniquitous fiscal laws imposed by its masters from afar. Cuba saw the administration of justice in the hands of foreign magistrates, who acted at the will or the whim of its rulers. Cuba suffered all the outrages that can humiliate a conquered people, in the name and by the work of a government that sarcastically calls itself paternal. Is it to be wondered then that an uninterrupted era of conspiracies and uprisings should have been inaugurated? Cuba in its despair took up arms in 1850 and 1851, conspired again in 1855, waged war in 1868, in 1879, in 1885, and is fighting now, since the 24th of February of the present year.

But at the same time Cuba has never ceased to ask for justice and redress. Its people, before shouldering the rifle, pleaded for their rights. Before the pronunciamiento of Agüero and the invasions of Lopez, Saco, in exile, exposed the dangers of Cuba to the Spanish statesmen, and pointed to the remedy. Other far sighted men seconded him in the Colony. They denounced the cancer of slavery, the horrors of the traffic in slaves, the corruption of the office holders, the abuses of the government, the discontent of the people with their forced state of political tutelage. No attention was given to them, and this brought on the first armed conflicts.

Before the formidable insurrection of 1868, which lasted ten years, the reform party, which included the most enlightened, wealthy and influential Cubans, exhausted all the resources within their reach to induce Spain to initiate a healthy change in her Cuban policy. The party started the publication of periodicals in Madrid and in the Island, addressed petitions, maintained a great agitation throughout the country, and having succeeded in leading the Spanish Government to make an inquiry into the economical, political and social condition of Cuba, they presented a complete plan of government which satisfied public requirements as well as the aspirations of the people. The Spanish Government disdainfully cast aside the proposition as useless, increased taxation, and proceeded to its exaction with extreme severity.

It was then that the ten-year war broke out. Cuba, almost a pigmy compared with Spain, fought like a giant. Blood ran in torrents. Public wealth disappeared in a bottomless abyss. Spain lost 200,000 men. Whole districts of Cuba were left almost entirely without their male population. Seven hundred millions were spent to feed that conflagration—a conflagration that tested Cuban heroism, but which could not touch the hardened heart of Spain. The latter could not subdue the bleeding Colony, which had no longer strength to prolong the struggle with any prospect of success. Spain proposed a compact, which was a snare and a deceit. She granted to Cuba the liberties of Puerto Rico, which enjoyed none.

On this deceitful ground was laid the new situation, throughout which has run a current of falsehood and hypocrisy. Spain, whose mind had not changed, hastened to change the name of things. The Capitan General was called Governor General. The royal decrees took the name of authorizations. The commercial monopoly of Spain was named coasting trade. The right of banishment was transformed into the law of vagrancy. The brutal attacks of defenceless citizens were called “componte.” The abolition of constitutional guarantees became the law of public order. Taxation without the consent or knowledge of the Cuban people was changed into the law of estimates (budget) voted by the representatives of Spain, that is, of European Spain.

The painful lesson of the ten-year war had been entirely lost on Spain. Instead of inaugurating a redeeming policy that would heal the recent wounds, allay public anxiety, and quench the thirst for justice felt by the people, who were desirous to enjoy their natural rights, the Metropolis, while lavish in promises of reform, persisted in carrying on unchanged its old and crafty system, the groundwork of which continues to be the same, namely: To exclude every native Cuban from every office that could give him any effective influence and intervention in public affairs; the ungovernable exploitation of the colonists' labor for the benefit of Spanish commerce and Spanish bureaucracy, both civil and military. To carry out the latter purpose it was necessary to maintain the former at any cost.

I.

In order to render the native Cuban powerless in his own country, Spain, legislating for Cuba without restriction, as it does, had only to give him an electoral law so artfully framed as to accomplish two objects: First, to reduce the number of voters; second, to give always a majority to the Spaniards, that is, to the European colonists, notwithstanding that the latter represent only 9.3 per cent. of the total population of Cuba. To this effect it made the electoral right dependent on the payment of a very high poll tax, which proved the more burdensome as the war had ruined the larger number of Cuban proprietors. In this way it succeeded in restricting the right

of suffrage to only 53,000 inhabitants in an island which has a population of 1,600,000; that is to say, to the derisive proportion of 3 per cent. of the total number of inhabitants.

In order to give a decided preponderance to the Spanish European element, the electoral law has ignored the practice generally observed in those countries where the right to vote depends on the payment of a poll tax, and has afforded all the facilities to acquire the electoral privilege to industry, commerce and public officials, to the detriment of the territorial property (the ownership of real estate). To accomplish this, while the rate of the territorial tax is reduced to 2 per cent., an indispensable measure, in view of the ruinous condition of the land-owners, the exorbitant contribution of \$25 is required from those who would be electors as free-holders. The law has, moreover, thrown the doors wide open for the perpetration of fraud by providing that the simple declaration of the head of a commercial house is sufficient to consider all its employees as partners, having, therefore, the right to vote. This has given us firms with thirty or more partners. By this simple scheme almost all the Spaniards residing in Cuba are turned into electors, despite the explicit provisions of the law. Thus it comes to pass that the municipal district of Guines, with a population of 13,000 inhabitants, only 500 of which are Spaniards and Canary Islanders, shows on its electoral list the names of 32 native Cubans and of 400 Spaniards—only 0.25 per cent. of the Cuban to 80 per cent. of the Spanish population!

But, as if this were not enough, a so-called Permanent Commission of Provincial Deputations decides every controversy that may arise as to who is to be included in or excluded from the list of electors, and the members of this Commission are appointed by the Governor General. It is unnecessary to say that its majority has always been devoted to the government. In case any elector considers himself wronged by the decision of the Permanent Commission, he can appeal to the "Audiencia" (higher court) of the district; but the "Audiencias" are almost entirely made up of European magistrates; they are subject to the authority of the Governor General, being mere political tools in his hands. As a conclusive instance of the manner in which those tribunals do justice to the claims of the Cuban electors, it will be sufficient to cite a case which occurred in Santa Clara in 1892, where one thousand fully qualified liberal electors were excluded at one time, for the simple omission to state their names at the end of the act presented by the elector who headed the claim. In more than one case has the same "Audiencia" applied two different criterions to identical cases. The "Audiencia" of Havana, in 1887, ignoring the explicit provisions of the law, excused the employees from the condition of residence, a condition that the same tribunal exacted before. The same "Audiencia" in 1885 declared that the contributions to the State and to the Municipality were accumulative, and in 1887 decided

the opposite. This inconsistency had for its object to sponge from the lists hundreds of Cuban electors. In this way the Spanish Government and tribunals have endeavored to teach respect for the law and for the practice of wholesome electoral customs to the Cuban colonists!

It will be easily understood now why on some occasions the Cuban representation in the Spanish Parliament has been made up of only three deputies, and in the most favorable epochs the number of Cuban representatives has not exceeded six. Three deputies in a body of four hundred and thirty members! The genuine representation of Cuba has not reached sometimes 0.96 per cent. of the total number of members of the Spanish Congress. The great majority of the Cuban deputation has always consisted of Spanish Peninsulars. In this manner, the ministers of "Ultramar" (ministers of the Colonies), whenever they have thought necessary to give an honest or decent appearance to their legislative acts by an alleged majority of Cuban votes, could always command the latter, that is, the Peninsulars.

As regards the representation in the Senate, the operation has been more simple still. The qualifications required to be a Senator have proved to be an almost absolute prohibition to the Cubans. In fact, to take a seat in the higher house, it is necessary to have been president of that body or of Congress, or a minister of the crown, or a bishop, or a grandee of Spain, a lieutenant general, a vice admiral, ambassador, minister plenipotentiary, counsellor of State, judge or attorney general of the Supreme Court, of the Court of Accounts, &c. No Cuban has ever filled any of the above positions, and scarcely two or three are grandees. The only natives of Cuba who can be Senators are those who have been deputies in three different Congresses, or who are professors and have held for four years a university chair, provided that they have an income of \$1,500; or those who have a title of nobility, or have been deputies, provincial deputies, or mayors in towns of over 20,000 inhabitants, if they have in addition an income of \$4,000, or pay a direct contribution of \$800 to the Treasury. This will increase in one or two dozen the number of Cubans qualified to be Senators.

In this manner has legislative work, as far as Cuba is concerned, turned out to be a farce. The various governments have legislated for the Island as they pleased. The representatives of the peninsular provinces did not even take the trouble of attending the sessions of the Cortes when Cuban affairs were to be dealt with; and there was an instance when the estimates (budget) for the Great Antille were discussed in the presence of less than thirty deputies, and a single one of the ministers, the minister of "Ultramar," (session of April 3, 1880).

Through the contrivance of the law, as well as through the irregularities committed and consented in its application, have the

Cubans been deprived also of representation in the local corporations to which they were entitled, and in many cases they have been entirely excluded from them. When, despite the legalized obstacles and the partiality of those in power, they have obtained some temporary majority, the government has always endeavored and succeeded in making their triumph null and void. Only once did the home-rule party obtain a majority in the Provincial deputation of Havana, and then the Governor General appointed from among the Spaniards a majority of the members of the Permanent Commission. Until that time this Commission had been of the same political complexion as the majority of the Deputation. By such proceedings have the Cubans been gradually expelled, even from the municipal bodies. Suffice it to say that the law provides that the *derramas* (assessments) be excluded from the computation of the tributary quotas, notwithstanding that they constitute the heaviest burden upon the municipal tax-payer. And the majorities, consisting of Spaniards, take good care to make this burden fall with heavier weight upon the Cuban proprietor. Thus the latter has to bear a heavier taxation with less representation.

This is the reason why the scandalous case has occurred lately of not a single Cuban having a seat in the "Ayuntamiento" (Board of Aldermen) of Havana. In 1891 the Spaniards predominated in thirty-one out of thirty-seven "Ayuntamientos" in the province of Havana. In that of Güines, with a population of 12,500 Cuban inhabitants, not a single one of the latter was found among its councillors. In the same epoch there were only three Cuban deputies in the Provincial Deputation of Havana; two in that of Matanzas, and three in that of Santa Clara. And these are the most populous regions in the Island of Cuba.

As, on the other hand, the government of the Metropolis appoints the officials of the Colony, all the lucrative, influential and representative offices are secured to the Spaniards from Europe. The Governor General, the regional and provincial governors, the "intendentes", comptrollers, auditors, treasurers, chiefs of communications, chiefs of the custom houses, chiefs of administration, presidents and vice presidents of the Spanish Bank, secretaries of the government, presiding judges of the "Audiencia," presidents of tribunal, magistrates, attorneys general, archbishops, bishops, canons, pastors of rich parishes, all, with very rare exceptions, are Spaniards from Spain. The Cubans are found only as minor clerks in the government offices, doing all the work and receiving the smallest salaries.

From 1878 to this date there have been twenty governors in the province of Matanzas. Eighteen were Spaniards and two Cubans. But one of these, Brigadier General Acosta, was an army officer in the service of Spain, who had fought against his countrymen; and the other, Señor González Muñoz, is a bureaucrat. During the same period there has been only one native Cuban acting as governor in the province of Havana, Señor Rodríguez Batista, who spent all his

life in Spain, where he made his administrative career. In the other provinces there has never probably been a single governor born in the country.

In 1887 there was created a council or board of Ultramar under the Minister of the Colonies. Not a single Cuban has ever been found among its members. On the other hand, such men as Generals Armiñan and Pando have held positions in it.

The predominance of the government goes farther still. It weighs with all its might upon the local corporations. There are deputations in the provinces, and not only are their powers restricted and their resources scanty, but the Governor General appoints their presidents and all the members of the permanent commissions. There are "Ayuntamientos" elected in accordance with the reactionary law of 1877, restricted and curtailed as applied to Cuba by Señor Canovas. But the Governor General appoints the mayors, who may not belong to the corporation, and the governor of the province appoints the secretaries. The government reserves, moreover, the right to remove the mayors, of replacing them, and of suspending the councillors and the "Ayuntamientos," partly or in a body. It has frequently made use of this right, for electoral purposes, to the detriment always of the Cubans.

As may be seen, the crafty policy of Spain has closed every avenue through which redress might be obtained. All the powers are centered in the government of Madrid and its delegates in the Colony; and, in order to give her despotism a slight varnish of a representative regime, she has contrived with her laws to secure complaisant majorities in the pseudo-elective bodies. To accomplish this purpose she has relied upon the European immigrants, who have always supported the government of the Metropolis, in exchange for lasting privileges. The existence of a Spanish party, as that of an English party at one time in Canada, has been the foundation of Spanish rule in Cuba. Thus, through the instrumentality of the laws and the government a regime of castes has been enthroned there, with its outcome of monopolies, corruption, immorality and hatred. The political contest there, far from being the fruitful clash of opposite ideas, or the opposition of men representing different tendencies, but all seeking a social improvement, has been only a struggle between hostile factions, the conflict between infuriated foes, which precedes an open war. The Spanish resident has always seen a threat in the most timid protest of the Cuban,—an attack upon the privileged position on which his fortune, his influence and his power are grounded; and he is always willing to stifle it with insult and persecution.

II.

What use the Spanish government has made of this power is apparent in the threefold spoliation to which it has submitted the Island of Cuba. Spain has not, in fact, a colonial policy. In the distant lands she has subdued by force, Spain has sought nothing but immediate riches, and these it has wrung by might from the compulsory labor of the natives. For this reason Spain to-day in Cuba is only a parasite. Spain exploits the Island of Cuba through its fiscal regime, through its commercial regime and through its bureaucratic regime. These are the three forms of official spoliation; but they are not the only forms of spoliation.

When the war of 1878 came to an end, two thirds of the Island were completely ruined. The other third, the population of which had remained peaceful, was abundantly productive; but it had to face the great economical change involved in the impending abolition of slavery. Slavery had received its death blow at the hands of the insurrection, and Cuban insurrectionists succeeded at the close of the war in securing its eventual abolition. Evidently it would have been a wholesome and provident policy to lighten the fiscal burdens of a country in such a condition. Spain was only bent on making Cuba pay the cost of the war. The Metropolis overwhelmed the Colony with enormous budgets, reaching as high a figure as forty-six million dollars, and this only to cover the obligations of the State; or rather, to fill up the unfathomable gulf left by the wastefulness and plunder of the civil and military administration during the years of war, and to meet the expenses of the military occupation of the country. Here follow a few figures. The Budget for the fiscal year of 1878 to 1879 amounted to \$46,594,000; that of 1879 to 1880 to an equal sum; that of 1882 to 1883 to \$35,860,000; that of 1883 to 1884 to \$34,180,000; that of 1884 to 1885 to the same sum; that of 1885 to 1886 to \$34,169,000. For the remaining years, to the present time, the amount of the budget has been about \$26,000,000, this being the figure for 1893 to 1894, and to be the same by prorogation for the current fiscal year.

The gradual reduction that may be noted was not the result of a desire to reduce the overwhelming burdens that weigh upon the country; it was imposed by necessity, Cuba was not able by far to meet such a monstrous exaction. It was a continuous and threatening deficit that imposed these reductions. In the first of the above named years the revenue was \$8,000,000 short of the budget or appropriations. In the second year the deficit reached the sum of \$20,000,000. In 1883 it was nearly \$10,000,000. In the following years the deficits averaged nearly \$4,500,000. At present the accumulated amount of all these deficits reaches the sum of \$100,000,000.

As a consequence of such a reckless and senseless financial course, the debt of Cuba has been increased to a fabulous sum. In 1868 we owed \$25,000,000. When the present war broke out our debt, it was calculated, reached the net sum of \$190,000,000. On the 31st of July of the current year the Island of Cuba was reckoned to owe \$295,707,264 in bulk. Considering its population, the debt of Cuba exceeds that of all the other American countries, including the United States. The Interest on this debt imposes a barden of \$9.79 on each inhabitant. The French people, the most overburdened in this respect, owes only \$6.30 per inhabitant.

This enormous debt, contracted and saddled upon the country without its knowledge; this heavy load that grinds it and does not permit its people to capitalize their income, to foster its improvements, or even to entertain its industries, constitutes one of the most iniquitous forms of spoliation the Island has to bear. In it are included a debt of Spain to the United States; the expenses incurred by Spain when she occupied San Domingo; those for the invasion of Mexico in alliance with France and England; the expenditures for her hostilities against Peru; the money advanced to the Spanish Treasury during its recent Carlist wars; and all that Spain has spent to uphold its domination in Cuba and to cover the lavish expenditures of its administration since 1868. Not a cent of this enormous sum has been spent in Cuba to advance the work of improvement and civilization. It has not contributed to build a single kilometre of highway or of railroad, nor to erect a single light-house, or deepen a single port; it has not built one asylum or opened one public school. Such a heavy burden has been left to the future generations, without a single compensation or benefit.

But the naked figures of the Cuban budgets and of the Cuban debt tell very little in regard to their true importance and signification as machines to squeeze out the substance of a people's labor. It is necessary to examine closer the details of these accounts and expenditures.

Those of Cuba according to the last budgets or appropriations amount to \$26,411,314, distributed as follows:

General obligations, - - - - -	\$12,884,549.55
Department of Justice (courts, etc.), -	1,006,308.51
Department of War, - - - - -	5,918,598.16
Department of the Treasury, - - - -	727.892.45
Department of the Navy, - - - - -	1,091,969.65
Government, Administration, - - - -	4,035,071.43
Interior Improvements (Fomento), -	746,925.15

There are in Cuba 1,631,687 inhabitants, according to the last census, that of 1887. That is to say, that this budget burdens them in the proportion of \$16.18 for each inhabitant. The Spaniards in Spain pay only — 42.06 pesetas per head. Reducing the Cuban dollars to pesetas at the exchange rate of 95 dollars for 500 pesetas,

there results that the Cubans have to pay a tribute of 85.16 pesetas for each inhabitant; more than double the amount a Spaniard has to pay in his European country.

As shown above, most of this excessive burden is to cover entirely unproductive expenditures. The debt consumes 40.89 per cent. of the total amount. The defence of the country, against its own native inhabitants, the only enemies who threaten Spain, including the cost of the army, the navy, the civil guard, and the guardians of public order, takes 36.59 per cent. There remains for all the other expenditures required by civilized life 22.52 per cent. And of this percentage the State reserves to us, what a liberality! 2.75 per cent. to prepare for the future and develop the resources of the country!

Let us see now what Spain has done to permit at least the development of natural wealth and the industry of a country impoverished by this fiscal regime, the work of cupidity, incompetency and immorality. Let us see whether that nation has left at least some vitality to Cuba, in order to continue exploiting it with some profit.

The economical organization of Cuba is of the simplest kind. It produces to export, and imports almost everything it consumes. In view of this, it is evident that all that Cuba required from the State was that it should not hamper its work with excessive burdens, nor hinder its commercial relations; so that it could buy cheap where it suited her, and sell her products with profit. Spain has done all the contrary. She has treated the tobacco as an enemy; she has loaded the sugar with excessive imposts; she has shackled with excessive and abusive excise duties the cattle-raising industry; and with her legislative doings and undoings she has thrown obstacles in the way of the mining industry. And to cap the climax, she has tightly bound Cuba in the network of a monstrous tariff and a commercial legislation which subjects the Colony, at the end of the nineteenth century, to the ruinous monopoly of the producers and merchants of certain regions of Spain, as in the halcyon days of the colonial compact.

The district which produces the best tobacco in the world, the famous Vuelta Abajo, lacks every means of transportation afforded by civilization, to foster and increase the value of its products. No roads, no bridges or even ports are found there. The State in Cuba collects the taxes, but does not invest them for the benefit of any industry. On the other hand, those foreign countries, desirous of acquiring the rich tobacco-raising industry, have closed their markets to our privileged product, by imposing upon it excessive import duties, while the Spanish government burdens its exportation from our ports with a duty of \$1.80 on every thousand cigars. Is this not a stroke of actual insanity?

Everybody is aware of the tremendous crisis through which the sugar industry has been passing for some years, owing to the rapid development of the production of this article everywhere. Every government has hastened to protect its own by more or less em-

pirical measures. This is not the place to judge them. What is important is to recall the fact that they have endeavored to place the threatened industry, in the best condition to withstand the competition. What has Spain done in order, if not to maintain the strong position held before by Cuba, at least to enable the Colony to carry on the competition with its every day more formidable rivals? Spain pays bounties to the sugar produced within its own territory, and closes its markets to the Cuban sugar, by imposing upon it an import duty of \$6.20 per hundred kilograms. It has been calculated that a hundredweight of Cuban sugar is overburdened when reaching the Barcelona market with 143 per cent. of its value. The Spanish government oppresses the Cuban producer with every kind of exactions; taxes the introduction of the machinery that is indispensable for the production of sugar, obstructs its transportation by imposing heavy taxes on the railroads, and winds up the work by exacting another contribution called industrial duty, and still another for loading or shipping, which is equivalent to an export duty.

As a last stroke, Spain has reinforced the commercial laws of June 30 and July 20, 1882, virtually closing the ports of Cuba to foreign commerce, and establishing the monopoly of the Peninsular producers, without any compensation to the Colony. The apparent object of these laws was to establish the "cabotaje" (coasting trade) between Cuba and Spain. By the former all the Cuban products were admitted free of duty in the Spanish Peninsula, excepting, however, the tobacco, rum, sugar, cocoa and coffee, which remained *temporarily* burdened. By the latter the duties on the importations from Spain in Cuba were to be gradually reduced through a period of ten years, until, in 1892, they were entirely abolished. The result, however, has been that the *temporary* duties on the principal, almost the only, Cuban products have remained undisturbed until now, and the duties on the Spanish products have disappeared. The "cabotage" (coasting trade) is carried on from Spain to Cuba, but not from Cuba to Spain. The Spanish products pay no duties in Cuba; the Cuban products pay heavy duties in Spain. As at the same time the differential tariffs which overburdened with excessive duties the foreign products have been retained, the unavoidable consequence has been to give the Cuban market entirely to the Peninsular producers. In order to have an idea as to how far the monopoly of Spain goes, it will be sufficient to point to the fact that the burdens which many of the foreign articles have to bear exceed 2000 and even 2300 per cent., as compared with those borne by the Spanish products. One hundred kilograms of cotton prints pay a duty, if Spanish, of \$26.65; if foreign, \$47.26. One hundred kilograms of knitted goods pay, if from Spain, \$10.95; if from a foreign country, \$195. One thousand kilograms of bags for sugar, when they are or are represented to be Spanish, pay \$4.69; if from other country \$82.50. One hundred kilograms of cassimere, if it is a Spanish product, pay \$15.47; if foreign, \$300.

Still, if Spain was a flourishing industrial country, and produced the principal articles required by Cuba for the consumption of its people, or for developing and fostering its industries, the evil, although always great, would be a lesser one. But everybody knows the backwardness of the Spanish industries, and the inability of Spain to supply Cuba with the products she requires for her consumption and industries. The Cubans have to consume or use Spanish articles of inferior quality, or pay exorbitant prices for foreign goods. The Spanish merchants have found, moreover, a new source of fraud in the application of these antiquated and iniquitous laws; it consists in nationalizing foreign products for importation into Cuba.

As the mainspring of this senseless commercial policy is to support the monopoly of Spanish commerce, when Spain has been compelled to deviate from it to a certain extent by an international treaty, it has done so reluctantly, and in the anxious expectation of an opportunity to nullify its own promises. This explains the accidental history of the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States, which was received with joy by Cuba, obstructed by the Spanish administration, and prematurely abolished by the Spanish Government as soon as it saw an opportunity.

The injury done to Cuba, and the evil effects produced by this commercial legislation, are beyond calculation; its effects have been material losses which have engendered profound discontent. The "Circulo de Hacendados y Agricultores," the wealthiest corporation of the Island, last year passed judgment on these commercial laws in the following severe terms:

"It would be impossible to explain, should the attempt be made, what is the signification of the present commercial laws, as regards any economical or political plan or system; because, economically, they aim at the destruction of public wealth, and, politically, they are the cause of *inextinguishable discontent*, and contain *the germs of grave dissensions*."

But Spain has not taken heed of this; her only care has been to keep the producers and merchants of such rebellious provinces as Catalonia contented, and to satisfy its military men and bureaucrats.

For the latter is reserved the best part of the booty taken from Cuba. High salaries and the power of extortion for the office-holders sent to the Colony; regular tributes for the politicians who uphold them in the Metropolis. The Governor General is paid a salary of \$50,000, in addition to a palace, a country house as a summer resort, servants, coaches and a fund for secret expenses at his disposal. The Director General of the Treasury receives a salary of \$18,500. The Archbishop of Santiago and the Bishop of Havana, \$18,000 each. The Commander General of the "Apostadero" (naval station), \$16,392. The General Segundo Cabo (second in command of the

Island), and the President of the "Audiencia," \$15,000 each. The Governor of Havana and the Secretary of the General Government, \$8,000 each. The Postmaster General, \$5,000. The Collector of the Havana Custom House, \$4,000. The Manager of Lotteries, the same salary. The Chief Clerks of Administration of the first class receive \$5,000 each; those of the second class, \$4,000, and those of the third class \$3,000 each. The major Generals, are paid \$7,500; the brigadiers general, \$4,500, and when in command \$5,000; the colonels, \$3,450; and this salary is increased when they are in command of a regiment. The captains of "navío" (the largest men-of-war) receive \$6,300; the captains of frigate, \$4,560; the lieutenants of "navío" of the first class, \$3,370. All these functionaries are entitled to free lodgings and domestic servants. Then follows the numberless crowd of minor officials, all well provided for, and with great facilities better to provide for themselves.

At the office of the Minister of "Ultramar" (of the Colonies), who resides in Madrid, and to whom \$96,800 a year are assigned from the treasury of Cuba,—at that office begins the saturnalia in which the Spanish bureaucrats indulge with the riches of Cuba. Sometimes through incapacity, but more frequently for plunder, the money exacted from the Cuban taxpayers is unscrupulously and irresponsibly squandered. It has been demonstrated that the debt of Cuba has been increased in \$50,232,500 through Minister Fabié's incapacity. At the time this minister was in power the Spanish Bank disposed of twenty millions from the Cuban treasury, which were to be carried in account current at the disposal of the Minister for the famous operation of withdrawing the paper currency. Cuba paid the interest on these millions, and continued paying it all the time they were utilized by the Bank. Minister Romero Robledo took at one time (in 1892) one million dollars belonging to the treasury of Cuba from the vaults of the Bank of Spain, and lent it to the Transatlantic Company, of which he was a stockholder. This was done in defiance of law, and without any authorization whatever. The Minister was threatened with prosecution; but he haughtily replied that, if prosecuted, all his predecessors from every political party, would have to accompany him to the Court. That threat came to nothing.

In June of 1890 there was a scandalous debate in the Spanish Cortes, in which some of the frauds committed upon the Cuban treasury were, not for the first time, brought to light. It was then made public that \$6,500,000 had been abstracted from the "Caja de Depósitos," notwithstanding that the safe was locked with three keys, and each one was in the possession of a different functionary. Then it was known that, under the pretext of false vouchers for transportation and fictitious bills for provisions, during the previous war, defalcations had been found afterwards amounting to \$22,811,516. In the month of March of the same year General Pando

affirmed that the robberies committed through the issue of warrants by the "Junta de la Deuda (Board of the Public Debt) exceeded the sum of \$12,000,000.

These are only a few of the most salient facts. The large number of millions mentioned above represent only an insignificant part of what a venal administration, sure of impunity, exacts from Cuban labor. The network of artful schemes to cheat the Cuban tax-payer and defraud the State covers everything. Falsification of documents, embezzlement of revenues, bargains with delinquent debtors, exaction of higher dues from inexperienced peasants, delays in the despatch of judicial proceedings in order to obtain a more or less considerable gratuity; such are the artful means daily employed to empty the purse of the tax-payer and to divert the public funds into the pockets of the functionaries.

These disgraceful transactions have more than once been brought out to light; more than once have the prevaricators been pointed out. Is there any record of any of them having ever been punished?

In August of 1887 General Marin entered the Custom House of Havana at the head of a military force, besieged and occupied it; investigated the operations carried on there, and discharged every employee. The act caused a great stir; but not a single one of the officials was indicted, or suffered a further punishment. There were in 1891 three hundred and fifty officials indicted in Cuba for committing fraud; not one of them was punished.

But, how could they be punished? Every official who comes to Cuba has an influential patron in the Court of Madrid for whose protection he pays with regularity. This is a public secret. General Salamanca gave it out in plain words, and before and after General Salamanca all Spain knew and knows it. The political leaders are well known who draw the highest income from the office holders of Cuba, who are, as a matter of course, the most fervent advocates of the necessity of Spanish rule in Cuba. But Spanish bureaucracy is moreover so deep-rooted in Spain, that it has succeeded in shielding itself even against the action of the courts of justice. There is a royal decree (that of 1882) in force in Cuba, which provides that the ordinary courts cannot take cognizance of such offences as defalcation, abstraction or malversation of public funds, forgery, &c., committed by officials of the administration, if their guilt is not first established by an administrative investigation. The administration is, therefore, its own judge. What further security does the corrupt office holder need?

III.

We have shown that, notwithstanding the promises of Spain and the ostensible changes introduced in the government of Cuba since 1878, the Spaniards from Europe have governed and ruled exclusively in Cuba, and have continued exploiting it until they have ruined the country. Can this tyrannical system be justified by any kind of benefits that might compensate for the deprivation of actual power of which the natives of the colony complain? More than one despotic government has tried to justify itself with the material prosperity it has fostered, or with the safety it has secured to its citizens, or with the liberty it has given to certain manifestations of civilized life. Let us see whether the Cubans are indebted to the iron government of Spain for any of these compensating blessings.

Personal safety is a myth among us. Outlaws, as well as men of law, have disposed at will of the property, the peace and the life of the inhabitants of Cuba. The civil guard (armed police), far from being the guardians, have been the terror of the Cuban peasants. Wherever they pass they cause an alarm by the brutal ill-treatment to which they submit the inhabitants, who, in many cases, fly from their homes at their approach. Under the most trifling pretext they beat unmercifully the defenceless countrymen, and very frequently they have killed those they were conveying under arrest. These outrages became so notorious, that the commander-in-chief of the civil guard, Brigadier General Denis, had to issue a circular, in which he declared that his subordinates, "under pretext of obtaining confidential information, *resorted to violent measures,*" and that "the cases are very frequent in which individuals arrested by forces of the corps attempt to escape, and the keepers find themselves *in the necessity of making use of their weapons.*" What the above declarations signify is evident, notwithstanding the euphemisms of the official language. The object of this circular was to put a stop to these excesses; it bears the date of 1883. But the state of things continued the same. In 1886 the watering place of Madruga, one of the most frequented summer resorts in the island, witnessed the outrageous attacks of Lieutenant Sainz. In 1887 occurred the stirring trial of the "*componte,*" occasioned by the application of torture to the brothers Aruca, and within a few days were recorded in the neighborhood of Havana the cases of Señor Riveron, who was stabbed in Govea by individuals of the public force; of Don Manuel Martínez Moran and Don Francisco Galañena, who were beaten, the former in Calabazar, and the latter in Yaguajay; of Don José Felipe Canosa, who narrowly escaped being murdered in San Nicolas, and of a resident of Ceiba Mocha, whom the civil guard drove from his home.

This was far from the worst. In the very centre of Havana, in the Camp de Marte, a prisoner was killed by his guards, and the shooting at Amarillas and the murders at Puentes Grandes and Alquizar are deeds of woeful fame in the country. The administration of General Prendergast has left a sorrowful recollection for the frequency with which prisoners who *attempted to escape* were shot down.

While the armed police force were beating and murdering peaceful inhabitants, the highwaymen were allowed to escape unscathed to devastate the country at their pleasure. Although three millions are assigned in the budget to the service of public safety, there are districts, such as the Province of Puerto Príncipe, where its inhabitants have had to arm themselves and undertake the pursuit of the bandits. The case has occurred of an army of five or six thousand troops being sent to pursue a handful of highwaymen within a small territory, without succeeding in capturing them. Meanwhile a special bureau was established in Havana for the persecution of highwaymen, and fabulous sums were spent by it. The best the government succeeded in doing was to bargain with a bandit, and deceive and kill him afterwards on board the steamer Baldomero Iglesias in the bay of Havana.

Nevertheless, the existence of highwaymen has served as a pretext to curtail the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts, and submit the Cubans to the jurisdiction of the courts martial, contrary to the Constitution of the State, which had already been proclaimed. In fact, the Code of Military Laws (*Código de Justicia Militar*) provides that the offenses against persons and the means of transportation, as well as arson, *when committed in the Provinces of Ultramar* (the Colonies) and the possessions of Africa and Oceania, be tried by court martial.

It is true, however, than an explicit legal text was not necessary for the government to nullify the precepts of the Constitution. This was promulgated in Cuba with a preamble providing that the Governor General and his delegates should retain the same powers they had before its promulgation. The banishment of Cubans have continued after as before said promulgation. In December of 1891 there was a strike of wharf laborers in the Province of Santa Clara. To end it the Governor captured the strikers and banished them *en masse* to the Island of Pinos.

The deportations for political offences have not been discontinued in Cuba, and although it is stated that no executions for political offences have taken place since 1878, it is because the government has resorted to the more simple expedient of assassination. General Polavieja has declared with utmost coolness that in December of 1880 he had 265 persons seized in Cuba, Palma, San Luis, Songo, Guantánamo and Sagua de Tánamo, and transported the same day and at the same hour to the African Island of Fernando Po. At the close of the insurrection of 1879-1880 it was a frequent occurrence for the govern-

ment to send to the penal colonies of Africa the Cubans who had capitulated. The treachery of which General José Maceo was a victim carries us to the darkest times of the War of Flanders and the Conquest of America.

Cuba recalls with horror the dreadful assassination of Brigadier General Arcadio Leyte Vidal, perpetrated in the bay of Nipe in September of 1879. War had just broken out anew in the Eastern Department. Brigadier General Leyte Vidal resided in Mayarí, assured by the solemn promise of the Spanish commander-in-chief of that zone that he would not be molested. One month had not elapsed since the uprising, however, when having gone to Nipe, he was invited by the commander of the gunboat "Alarma" to take dinner on board. Leyte Vidal went on board the gunboat, but never returned. He was strangled in a boat by three sailors, and his corpse was cast into the sea. This villanous deed was committed in compliance with an order from the Spanish General Polavieja. Francisco Leyte Vidal, a cousin to Arcadio, miraculously escaped the same tragic fate.

The mysterious deaths of Cubans who had capitulated long before have been frequent in Cuba. To one of these deaths was due the uprising of Tunas de Bayamo in 1879.

If the personal safety of the Cubans, in a period which the Spaniards would depict with brilliant colors, continues at the mercy of their rulers, who are aliens in the country both by birth and in ideas, have the Cubans' honor and property any better safeguard? Is the administration of justice good, or even endurable? The very idea of a lawsuit frightens every honest Cuban. Nobody trusts the honesty or independence of the judges. Despite the provisions of the Constitution, without warrant and for indefinite time, imprisonments are most common in Cuba. The magistrates can tighten or loosen the elastic meshes of the judicial proceedings. They know well that if they curry favor with the government, they can do anything without incurring responsibility. They consider themselves, and without thinking it a disgrace, as mere political tools. The presidents and attorneys general of the "Audiencias" receive their instructions at the Captain General's office. Twice have the governors of Cuba aimed at establishing a special tribunal to deal with the offenses of the press, thereby undermining the Constitution. Twice has this special tribunal been established. More than once has a straightforward and impartial judge been found to try a case in which the interests of influential people were involved. On such occasions the straightforward judge has been replaced by a special judge.

In a country where money is wastefully spent to support a civil and military bureaucracy, the appropriation for the administration of justice does not reach \$500,000. On the other hand, the sales of stamped paper constitute a revenue of \$750,000. Thus the State derives a pecuniary profit from its administration of justice.

Is it then a wonder that the reforms that have been attempted by establishing lower and higher courts to take cognizance of criminal

cases, and by introducing oral and public trials should not have contributed in the least to improve the administration of justice? Onerous services have been exacted from people without proper compensation as gratuitous services. The government, so splendidly liberal when its own expenses are in question, haggles for the last cent when dealing with truly useful and reproductive services.

Is the Cuban compensated for his absolute deprivation of political power, the fiscal extortions, and the monstrous deficiencies of judicial administration by the material prosperity of his country? No man acquainted with the intimate relations which exist between the fiscal regime of a country and its economical system will believe that Cuba, crushed as it is by unreasonable budgets and an enormous debt, can be rich. The income of Cuba in the most prosperous times has been calculated at \$80,000,000. The State, provincial and municipal charges take much more than 40 per cent. of this amount. This fact explains itself. We need not draw any inferences therefrom. Let us confine ourselves to casting a glance over the aspect presented by the agricultural, industrial and real estate interests in Cuba at the beginning of the present year.

Despite the prodigious efforts made by private individuals to extend the cultivation of the sugar cane and to raise the sugar making industry to the plane it has reached, both the colonists and the proprietors of the sugar plantations and the sugar mills (*centrales*) are on the brink of bankruptcy and ruin. In selling the output they knew that they would not get sufficient means to cover the cost of keeping and repairing their colonies and sugar mills. There is not a single agricultural bank in Cuba. The "hacendado" (planter, landowner) had to recur to usurious loans and to pay 18 and 20 per cent. for the sums which they borrowed. Not long ago there existed in Havana the Spanish Bank, the Bank of Commerce, the Industrial Bank, the Bank of St. Joseph, the Bank of the Alliance, the Bank of Maritime Insurances and the Savings Bank. Of these there remain to-day only the Spanish Bank, which has been converted into a vast State office, and the Bank of Commerce, which owes its existence to the railways and warehouses it possesses. None of these gives any aid to the sugar industry.

The cigar-making industry, which was in such flourishing condition a short time ago, has fallen so low that fears are entertained that it may emigrate entirely from Cuba. The weekly "El Tabaco" came to the conclusion that the exportation of cigars from Cuba would cease entirely within six years. From 1889 to 1894 the exportation from the port of Havana had decreased by 116,200,000 cigars.

City real estate has fallen to one-half and in some cases to one-third the value it had before 1884. A building in Havana which was erected at a cost of \$600,000, was sold in 1893 for \$120,000.

Stocks and bonds tell the same story. Almost all of them are quoted in Havana with heavy discounts.

The cause of the ruin of Cuba, despite her sugar output of one million tons and her vast tobacco fields, can be easily explained. Cuba does not capitalize, and it does not capitalize because the fiscal regime imposed upon the country does not permit it. The money derived from its large exportations does not return either in the form of importations of goods or of cash. It remains abroad to pay the interest of its huge debt, to cover the incessant remittances of funds by the Spaniards who hasten to send their earnings out of the country, to pay from our treasury the pensioners who live in Spain, and to meet the drafts forwarded by every mail from Cuba by the Spaniards as a tribute to their political patrons in the Metropolis, and to help their families.

Cuba pays \$2,192,795 in pensions to those on the retired list and to superannuated officials not in service. Most of this money is exported. The first chapters of the Cuban budget imply the exportation of over \$10,600,000. Cuba pays a subsidy of \$471,836.68 to the Transatlantic Company. It would be impossible to calculate the amount of money taken out of Cuba by private individuals; but this constant exportation of capital signifies that nobody is contented in Cuba and that everybody mistrusts its future. The consequence is that, notwithstanding the apparently favorable commercial balance, exchange is constantly and to a high degree against Cuba.

On the other hand, if Cuba labors and strives to be on the same plane as its most progressive competitors, this is the work of her own people, who do not mind any sacrifices; but the government cares little or nothing about securing to the country such means of furthering its development as are consigned in the budget under the head of "Fomento."

And now, at the outbreak of the present war, Spain finds that, although the appropriations consigned in our budgets since 1878 amount to nearly \$500,000,000, not a single military road has been built, no fortifications, no hospitals, and there is no material of war. The State has not provided even for its own defence. In view of this fact, nobody will be surprised to hear that a country 670 kilometres long, with an area of 118,833 square kilometres, has only 246½ lineal kilometres of high roads, and these almost exclusively in the Province of Havana. In that of Santiago de Cuba there are 9 kilometres; in Puerte Príncipe and Las Villas not a single one. Cuba has 3,506 kilometres of sea shore and fifty four ports; only fifteen of those are open to commerce. In the labyrinth of keys, sand-banks and breakers adjacent to our coasts there are only nineteen light-houses of all classes. Many of our ports, some of the best among them, are filling up. The coasting steamers can hardly pass the bars at the entrance of the ports of Nuevitas, Gibara, Baracoa and Santiago de Cuba. Private parties have sometimes been willing to remedy these evils; but then the central administration has interfered, and after years of red tape, things have remained worse than before. In the course of twenty eight years only 139 kilometres of high-roads

were built in Cuba; two first-class light-houses were erected, three second-class, one of the fourth-class, three beacon lights and two port lights; 246 metres of wharf were built, and a few ports were superficially cleaned and their shoals marked. This was all. On the other hand the department of public works consumes unlimited millions in salaries and in repairs.

The neglect of public hygiene in Cuba is proverbial. The technical commission sent by the United States to Havana to study the yellow fever, declared that the port of the capital of Cuba, owing to its inconceivable filth, is a permanent source of infection, against which it is necessary to take precautions. There is in Havana, however, a "Junta de Puerto" (Board of Port-wardens) which collects dues and spends them with the same munificence as the other bureaucratic centres.

Does the Government favor us more in the matter of education? It will suffice to state that only \$182,000 are assigned to public instruction in our splendid budget. And it may be proved that the University of Havana is a source of pecuniary profit to the State. On the other hand, this institution is without laboratories, instruments and even without water to carry on experiments. All the countries of America, excepting Bolivia, all of them, including Hayti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Guadalupe, where the colored race predominates, spend a great deal more than the Cuban government for the education of the people. On the other hand, only Chili spends as much as Cuba for the support of an army. In view of this, it is easily explained why 76 per cent. of such an intelligent and wide-awake people as that of Cuba cannot read and write. The most necessary instruction among us, the technical and industrial, does not exist. The careers and professions most needed by modern civilization are not cultivated in Cuba. In order to become a topographer, a scientific agriculturist, an electrician, an industrial or mechanical engineer, a railroad or mining engineer, the Cuban has to go to a foreign country. The State in Cuba does not support a single public library.

Are the deficiencies of the Spanish regime compensated by the wisdom of its administration? Every time the Spanish government has undertaken the solution of any of the great problems pending in Cuba, it has only confused and made it worse. It has solved it blindly or yielded to the influence of those who were to profit by the change. It will be sufficient to recall the withdrawal from circulation of the bank notes, which proved to be a highly lucrative transaction for a few persons, but which only embarrassed and impaired the monetary circulation of the Island. From one day to another the cost of living became 40 per cent. dearer. The depreciated Spanish silver entered in circulation to drive out, as was natural, the "centen" (five-dollar gold coin), and make small transactions difficult. To reach these results the Spanish government had transformed a debt on which it had no interest to pay into a debt bearing a high rate of

interest. It is true that, in exchange, all the retail dealers, whose votes it was desirable to keep, derived very large profits from the operation. These dealers are, of course, Spaniards.

IV.

In exchange for all that Spain withholds from us, they say that it has given us liberties. This is a mockery. The liberties are written in the Constitution, but obliterated in its practical application. Before and after its promulgation the public press has been rigorously persecuted in Cuba. Many journalists, such as Señores Cepeda and López Briñas, have been banished from the country without the formality of a trial. In November of 1891 the writer Don Manuel A. Balmaseda was tried by *court martial* for having published an editorial paragraph in "El Criterio Popular" of Remedios relative to the shooting of the medical students. The newspapers have been allowed to discuss public affairs theoretically; but the moment they denounce any abuse or the conduct of any official they feel the hand of their rulers laid upon them. The official organ of the home-rule party, "El País," named before "El Triunfo," has undergone more than one trial for having pointed in measured terms to some infractions of the law on the part of officials, naming the transgressors. In 1887 that periodical was subjected to criminal proceedings simply because it had stated that a son of the president of the Havana "Audiencia" was holding a certain office contrary to law.

They say that in Cuba the people are at liberty to hold public meetings, but every time the inhabitants assemble, previous notification must be given to the authorities, and a functionary is appointed to be present, with power to suspend the meeting whenever he deems such a measure advisable. The meetings of the "Círculo de Trabajadores" (an association of workingmen) were forbidden by the Authorities under the pretext that the building where they were to be held was not sufficiently safe. Last year the members of the "Círculo de Hacendados" (association of planters) invited their fellow members throughout the country to get up a great demonstration to demand a remedy which the critical state of their affairs required. The government found means to prevent their meeting. One of the most significant events that have occurred in Cuba, and one which throws a flood of light upon its political regime, was the failure of the "Junta Magna" (an extraordinary meeting) projected by the "Círculo de Hacendados." This corporation solicited the co-operation of the "Sociedad Económica," and of the "Junta General de Comercio" to hold a meeting for the purpose of sending to the Metropolis the complaints which the precarious situation of the country inspired. The work of preparation was already far advanced, when a friend of the government, Señor Rodríguez Correa, stated that the Governor General looked *with displeasure* upon and *forbade* the holding of the great meeting. This was sufficient to frighten the "Círculo" and to secure the

failure of the project. It is then evident that the inhabitants of Cuba can have meetings only when the government thinks it advisable to permit them.

Against this political regime, which is a sarcasm, and in which deception is added to the most absolute contempt for right, the Cubans have unceasingly protested since it was implanted in 1878. It would be difficult to enumerate the representations made in Spain, the protests voiced by the representatives of Cuba, the commissions that have crossed the ocean to try to impress upon the exploiters of Cuba what the fatal consequences of their obstinacy would be. The exasperation prevailing in the country was such, that the "Junta Central" of the home-rule party issued in 1892 a manifesto in which it foreshadowed that the moment might shortly arrive when the country would resort to "extreme measures, the responsibility of which would fall on those who, led by arrogance and priding themselves on their power, hold prudence in contempt, worship force and shield themselves with their impunity."

This manifesto, which foreboded the mournful hours of the present war, was unheeded by Spain, and not until a division took place in the Spanish party, which threatened to turn into an armed struggle, did the statesmen of Spain think that the moment had arrived to try a new farce, and to make a false show of reform in the administrative regime of Cuba. Then was Minister Maura's plan broached, to be modified before its birth by Minister Abarzuas.

This project, to which the Spaniards have endeavored to give capital importance in order to condemn the revolution as the work of impatience and anarchism, leaves intact the political regime of Cuba. It does not alter the electoral law. It does not curtail the power of the bureaucracy. It increases the power of the general government. It leaves the same burdens upon the Cuban tax-payer, and does not give him the right to participate in the formation of the budgets. The reform is confined to the changing of the Council of Administration, (now in existence in the Island, and the members of which are appointed by the government,) into a partially elective body. One half of its members are to be appointed by the government, and the other half to be elected by the qualified electors, that is, who assessed and pay for a certain amount of taxes. The Governor General has the right to veto all its resolutions, and to suspend at will the elective members. This Council is to make up a kind of special budget embracing the items included now in the general budget of Cuba under the head of "Fomento." The State reserves for itself all the rest. Thus the Council can dispose of 2.75 per cent. of

of the revenues of Cuba, while the government distributes, as at present, 97,25 per cent. for its expenses, in the form we have explained. The general budget will as heretofore be made up in Spain; the tariff laws will be enacted by Spain. The debt, militarism and bureaucracy will continue to devour Cuba, and the Cubans will continue to be treated as a subjugated people. All power is to continue in the hands of the Spanish government and its delegates in Cuba, and all the influence with the Spanish residents. This is the *self-government* which Spain has promised to Cuba, and which it is announcing to the world, in exchange for its colonial system. A far better form of government is enjoyed by the Bahama or the Turks Islands.

The Cubans would have been wanting not only in self-respect, but even in the instincts of self-preservation, if they could have endured such a degrading and destructive regime. Their grievances are of such a nature, that no people, no human community capable of valuing its honor and of aspiring to better its condition, could bear them without degrading and condemning itself to utter ^{and} nullity and annihilation.

Spain denies to the Cubans all effective powers in their own country.

Spain condemns the Cubans to a political inferiority in the land where they are born.

Spain confiscates the product of the Cubans' labor, without giving them in return either safety, prosperity or education.

Spain has shown itself utterly incapable of governing Cuba.

Spain exploits, impoverishes and demoralizes Cuba.

To maintain by force of arms this monstrous regime, which brings ruin on a country rich by nature and degrades a vigorous and intelligent population, a population filled with noble aspirations, is what Spain calls to defend its honor and to preserve the prestige of its social functions as a civilizing power of America.

The Cubans, not in anger but in despair, have appealed to arms in order to defend their rights and to vindicate an eternal principle, a principle without which every community, however robust in appearance, is in danger—the principle of justice. Nobody has the right of oppression. Spain oppresses us. In rebelling against oppression, we defend a right. In serving our own cause we serve the cause of mankind.

We have not counted the number of our enemies; we have not measured their strength. We have cast up the account of our grievances: we have weighed the mass of injustice that crushes us, and with uplifted hearts we have risen to seek redress and to uphold our rights. We may find ruin and death a few steps ahead. So be it. We do our duty. If the world is indifferent to our cause, so much the worse for all. A new iniquity shall have been consummated. The principle of human solidarity shall have suffered a defeat. The sum of good existing in the world, and which the world needs to purify its moral atmosphere, shall have been lessened.

The people of Cuba require only liberty and independence to become a factor of prosperity and progress in the community of civilized nations. At present Cuba is a factor of intranquility, disturbance and ruin. The fault lies entirely with Spain. Cuba is not the offender; it is the defender of its rights. Let America, let the world decide where rest justice and right.

ENRIQUE JOSE VARONA,

Ex-Diputado a Cortes.

NEW YORK, October 23, 1895.



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