

**CUBA IN
REVOLUTION: A
STATEMENT OF FACTS**

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Cuba in Revolution: A Statement of Facts by Juan Manuel Macias

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JUAN MANUEL MACIAS

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"Taxation without representation is tyranny."—*Lord Chatham.*

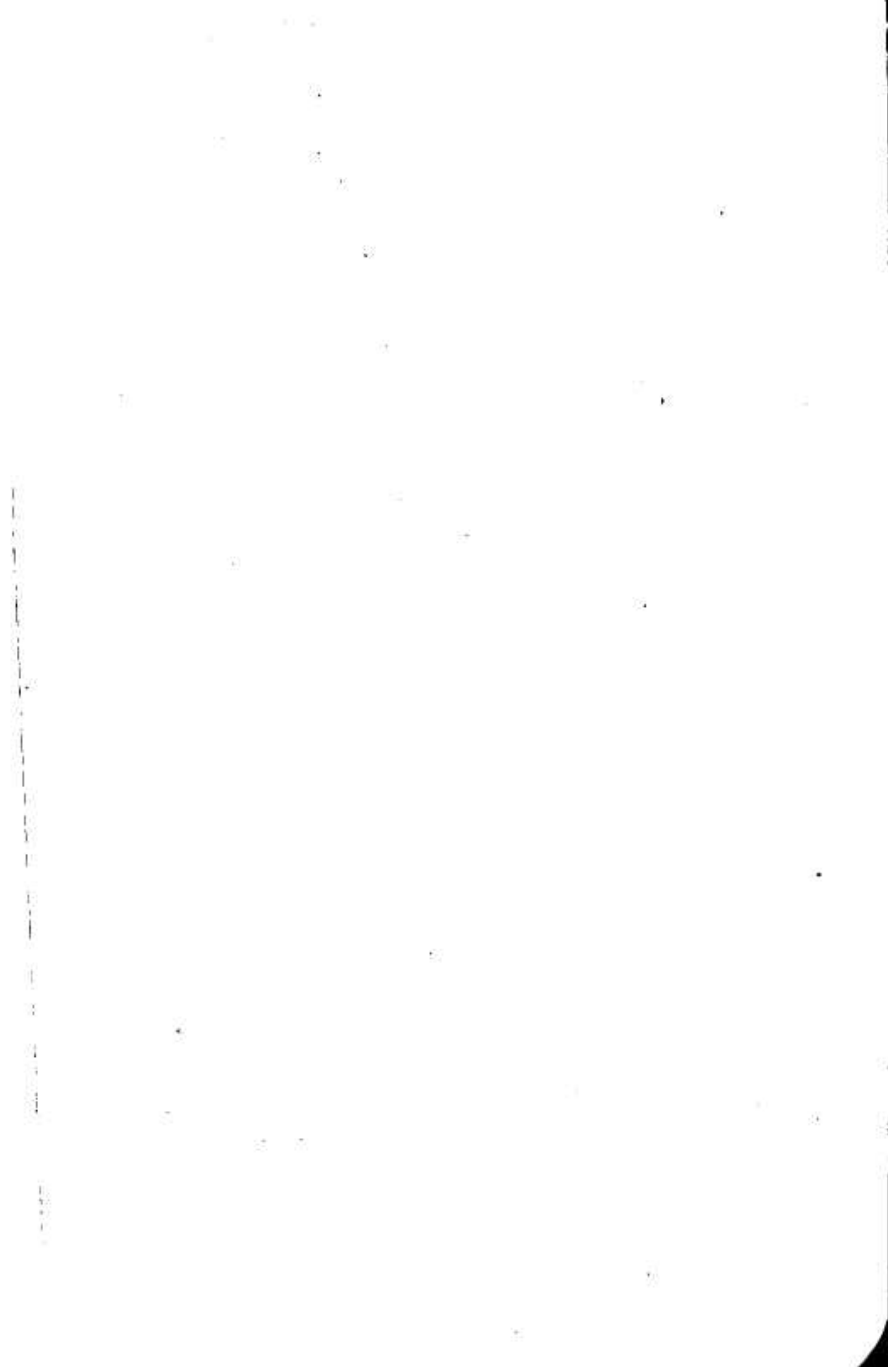
"Ask any man in Europe who opens his lips for freedom—who dips his pen in ink that he may indite a sentence for freedom—whoever has a sympathy for freedom warm in his own heart,—ask him,—he will have no difficulty in telling you on which side your sympathies should lie."—*The Right Hon. John Bright, M.P.*

"A slave is a chattel—a piece of merchandise—a beast of burden—a dumb cipher in the court of justice—an animated hoeing machine in the field—a kennel-dog at home—a leper and a parish in the house of prayer—and an outcast from the graveyard of the white man."—*George Thompson.*

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1871.



P R E F A C E .

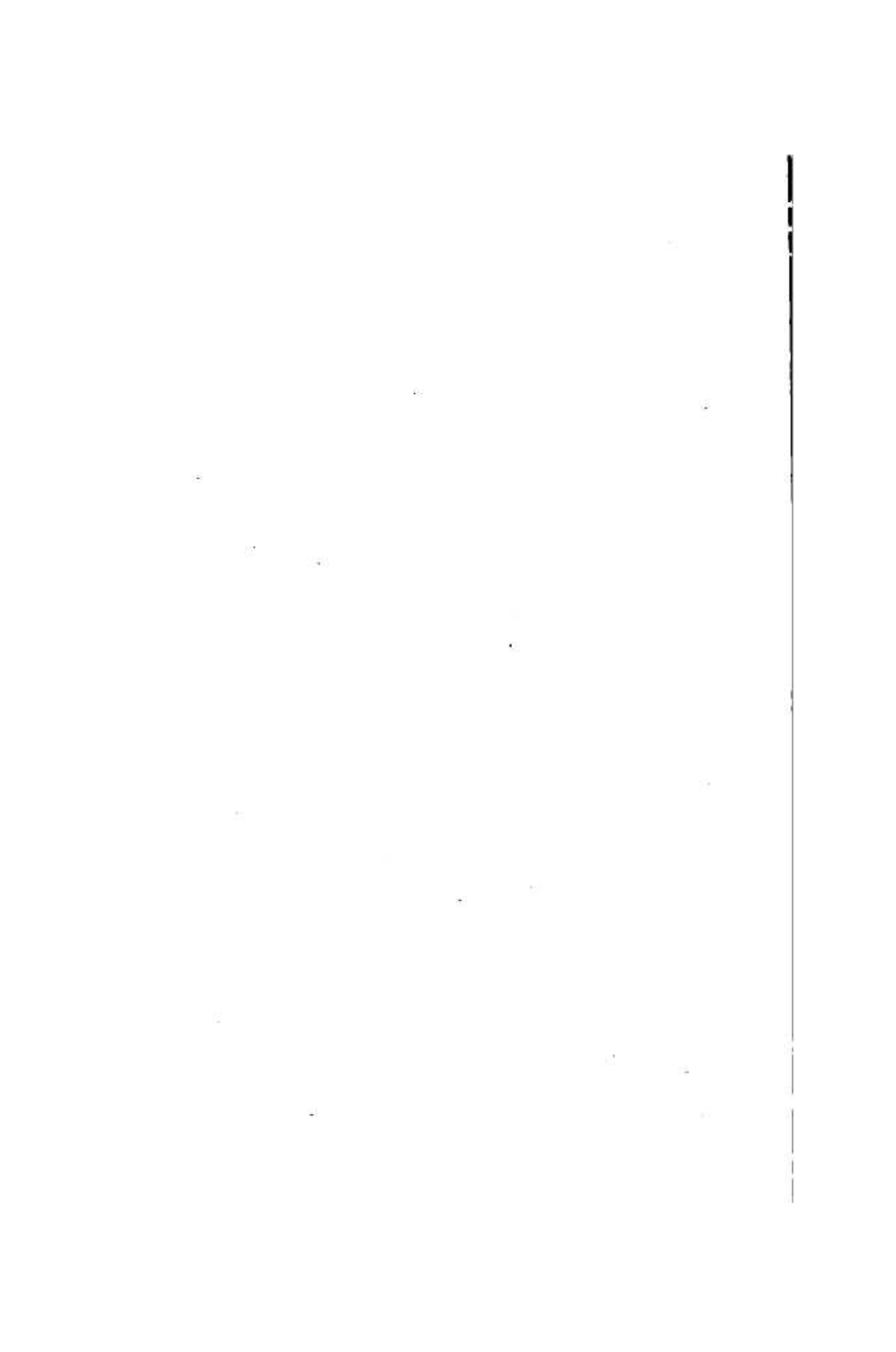
FULLY convinced that the cause of the Revolution now existing in Cuba, if rightly understood, cannot fail to command the sympathy and moral support of every enlightened and Christian people, the undersigned, acting in the name of the Republican Government of that Island, presents to the public the following plain statement of the causes which provoked and justify the uprising of the Cuban people, and of the principal events which have taken place during the three years of armed conflict, whereby the Patriot Government and forces have been enabled to maintain their control over two-thirds of the territory of the Island.

This same conflict must inevitably continue until the Spanish Government concedes willingly, or otherwise, to the people of Cuba that which they demand with singular unanimity and persistence. The Cuban people claim the right of self-government, they demand the immediate abolition of slavery, the freedom of the press, of opinion and of commerce. These things conceded upon the part of Spain, she may hope for the gratitude, the respect and the cordial friendship of the people of the Island. Denying them, she must expect only perpetual hatred, and continued warfare, maintained with unflinching zeal by the present generation of Cubans, and bequeathed, if necessary, as a holy inheritance to their children.

JUAN MANUEL MACIAS.

449, STRAND, CHABING CROSS.

April, 1871.



INTRODUCTION.

THE insurrection in Cuba, which has been waged, with varying fortunes, for a period of three years, is one of those dramatic episodes in the history of nations which have a profounder meaning than the mere superficial observer is likely to discover. Such a person will be only apt to see in Cuba a condition of anarchy which bids fair to substitute for law and order the hot sway of southern passions, and to issue in the total disruption of the social edifice. It is in one sense true that the world is now witnessing in that distracted Island the dissolution of society—that is to say, the dissolution of a slave society; but he who supposes that Cuba is in arms because the people naturally love war better than peace, that she is in a state of turbulence because the Cubans themselves are naturally turbulent, commits the error of looking at the effects of revolution instead of investigating its causes. It can have been no light motive which prompted a community that enjoyed an almost fabulous amount of material wealth and prosperity to take up arms against Spain, and to stake on the issue not only their own lives and fortunes but those of their wives and children; and now that 30,000 of those lives have been destroyed, and thousands of fortunes have been confiscated, they must assuredly be sustained in the continued prosecution of their heroic struggle by the conviction that they are fighting in a cause which is worthy of these terrible sacrifices.

In the following pages Colonel Macías has described the wrongs of his brave but unfortunate countrymen. After having been for generations oppressed and plundered by Spain, they at length demanded the rights of a free people; and conscious that the moral corruption of slavery infinitely outweighed the material benefits which they derived from that iniquitous system, they also demanded that slavery should be abolished. This language is not

rhetorical; it only expresses the sober truth. Spain, at any moment, might have restored peace on this basis, she may even now save her supremacy, and derive a legitimate share of wealth from the colony, if she will only consent to mete out equal justice to both black and white. Is this asking too much? If it be asking too much, then Spain herself has no claim to the sympathy of the world. Every argument by which she justifies the overthrow of Queen Isabella may be urged with equal force in vindication of the attempt of the Cubans to get rid of a corrupt, lawless, and tyrannical government. If the Spanish revolution was right, then the Cuban revolution is also right; and at any rate, the Spaniards at this hour labour under the stigma of claiming for themselves liberties which they deny to their oppressed colonists. The late dynasty was perfectly consistent in refusing all redress to the Cubans, in rivetting anew the fetters which the people vainly endeavoured to break; but a government which professes to be based on the will of the nation, and to adopt the maxim of the French philosopher, that "equality and liberty constitute the physical and unalterable basis of every union of men in society," cannot adopt the vicious policy of its predecessors without adding to the sins of the latter the more shameful one of hypocrisy.

There probably never was a revolution with which the English people more thoroughly, or more unanimously, sympathised than the last one in Spain. Although attached to their own monarchy because its existence jeopardises no popular right, they saw with pleasure the disappearance of a royal despotism which was wanting in every element of moral and political stability. But their approval of the new order of things was founded on the belief that Spain herself would be transformed, that she would so far imitate the good example of England as to proclaim freedom to the negro, and to establish justice in her colonies. Ample time for the inauguration of such a policy has elapsed, but hitherto she has done nothing even to give effect to the aspirations of the most enlightened of her own statesmen. Thanks to English cruisers and English diplomacy, and to the energetic protests of the Spanish abolitionists, the African slave trade is now, so far at least as the Spanish

possessions are concerned, a thing of the past; but slavery still flourishes in Cuba and Porto Rico, and the traffickers in human flesh have with cruel malignity substituted Chinese coolies for negroes in the markets of Havana, and on the sugar plantations of the West. An Act of emancipation has been passed by the Spanish Cortes, an Act so unsatisfactory in its provisions that, while the Spaniards in Cuba openly laugh at it as an idle piece of legislation, it has been publicly repudiated alike by the anti-slavery party in Spain, in Great Britain, and in the United States. That measure might with propriety be called an Act for the abolition of slavery at some future time, thereby not only cheating the present generation of slaves of their rights, but giving the slaveholding class ample time to conspire against a moral revolution which it is their passionate desire to prevent. One notable feature of the Act deserves notice. Slaves who have reached their sixtieth year are to be declared free; in other words, their masters will, by this arrangement, get rid of the responsibility of maintaining them when they are unfit for the hard work of the plantations, and when therefore they are the least able to take care of themselves. The new law, moreover, does not, even on paper, propose to interfere with the coolie traffic, the horrors of which transcend those of the African slave trade. The unhappy coolie has not the physical stamina of the negro race, and the unremitting toil and brutal severity with which he is treated make his life one of hopeless misery. It is true that nominally his period of service is limited; but if when it expires his constitution is not broken up, he is virtually compelled to re-indenture himself to his former, or to an equally implacable, task-master.

It is impossible that the people of this country can sympathise either with the dominant party in Cuba, which is engaged in perpetuating these enormities, or with its selfish mercantile allies in Madrid and Santander, who are openly agitating for what they are pleased to call a free negro immigration from Africa. We know what this means—we know what all such devices mean; they are simply intended to throw dust in the eyes of the nations which have waged war against the African slave trade; but not all the merchants in Madrid and Santander, nor the expenditure of all the